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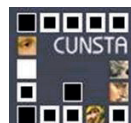
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# From Ottoman Costume to Venetian Print: Isabella Piccini and the *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*

Klara Ćapalija\*, Ivana Ćapeta  
Rakić\*\*

## *Abstract*

This paper explores the visual program accompanying the Venetian editions of Paul Rycaut's *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano* (1672 and 1673 editions), with a particular focus on the engravings signed by the Franciscan nun Isabella Piccini (1644 - 1734). Rather than offering a general assessment of her artistic oeuvre, the study seeks to uncover the modalities through which images and knowledge about the Ottoman Empire were transferred across linguistic, cultural, and editorial contexts in seventeenth-century Europe. Central to the inquiry is the question of whether Piccini's engravings represent original inventions or adaptations of earlier models. Drawing on comparative visual analysis and historical contextualization through archival and bibliographic sources, the paper demonstrates that the engravings are reinterpretations of pre-existing visual material – primarily derived from earlier editions published in London, Paris, and Amsterdam. Special attention is given to the transnational circulation of imagery: from Ottoman *Kıyafet* al-

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bums, through the typological engravings in the English editions, to more elaborate narrative scenes in the French versions, some of which incorporate motifs from artists such as Melchior Lorck. Within this complex visual genealogy, Piccini emerges not as an originator, but as a skilled intermediary who adapted and translated existing imagery into the Venetian print tradition.

Questo saggio analizza l'apparato visivo che accompagna le edizioni veneziane dell'*Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano* di Paul Rycaut, con particolare attenzione alle incisioni firmate dalla monaca francescana Isabella Piccini. Piuttosto che offrire una valutazione generale della sua produzione artistica, lo studio mira a indagare le modalità attraverso le quali le immagini e le conoscenze sull'Impero Ottomano vennero trasferite tra contesti linguistici, culturali ed editoriali nella Europa del Seicento. Al centro della ricerca si trova la questione se le incisioni della Piccini rappresentino invenzioni originali o adattamenti di modelli precedenti. Attraverso un'analisi visiva comparativa e una contestualizzazione storica basata su fonti archivistiche e bibliografiche, il saggio dimostra che le incisioni costituiscono reinterpretazioni di materiali visivi preesistenti, tratti principalmente da edizioni precedenti pubblicate a Londra, Parigi e Amsterdam. Particolare attenzione viene dedicata alla circolazione transnazionale delle immagini: dagli album ottomani di *Kıyafet*, attraverso le incisioni tipologiche delle edizioni inglesi, fino a scene narrative più elaborate nelle versioni francesi, alcune delle quali incorporano motivi di artisti come Melchior Lorck. All'interno di questa complessa genealogia visiva, Piccini emerge non come ideatrice, ma come abile intermediaria che seppe adattare e tradurre immagini esistenti nella tradizione editoriale veneziana.

## 1. Introduction

One of the more widely read and influential books on the administrative organization of the Ottoman Empire in the seventeenth century was Paul Rycaut's *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire: Containing the Maxims of the Turkish Politie, the Most Material Points of the Mahometan Religion, Their Sects and Heresies, Their Convents and Religious Votaries: Their Military Discipline, with an Exact Computation of Their Forces Both by Land and Sea. Illustrated with Divers Pieces of Sculpture, Representing the Variety of Habits Amongst the Turks. In Three Books*<sup>1</sup>. This comprehensive work is divided into three parts. The first discusses the Ottoman constitution, the education of the ruling classes, the principal state offices, and the relationship between the central authority and foreign powers. The second part focuses on religion and morality, while the third is dedicated to the military system, offering insight into the organization and discipline of the Ottoman armed forces<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Rycaut 1667.

<sup>2</sup> Further information on the internal structure of the book can be found in: Darling 1994, pp. 71-97; Schweickard 2015, p. 188; Anderson 1989, pp. 40-48.

The book was soon translated into several European languages, including Italian. During the second half of the seventeenth century, three Italian editions were printed in Venice under the title *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano. Nella quale si contengono le massime politiche de' Turchi. I punti principali della religione mahomettana. Le sette, le eresie, e gli ordini diuersi de' suoi religiosi. La disciplina militare, il conto essatto delle forze per mare, e per terra, e delle rendite dello stato loro*. The first two editions were published in 1672 and 1673 by the printers Combi & La Noù, while a third, expanded edition was issued in 1681 by Iseppo Prodocimo<sup>3</sup>. The first two editions were illustrated, and a comparative analysis has confirmed that they are entirely identical, with the sole exception of the title page, which was updated to reflect the new year and edition number<sup>4</sup>. In addition to the engraved frontispiece, both editions were enriched with twenty-one intaglio prints. These engravings depict members of the Sultan's court – from Sultan Mehmed IV himself (1642–1693) and his personal attendants to various religious and military officials, including emirs, dervishes, and janissaries. The plates were signed by the Venetian graphic artist and Franciscan nun Isabella (Elisabetta) Piccini, from the Santa Croce convent. By contrast, the third Venetian edition, although expanded in textual content, was issued without illustrations and is therefore not included in the scope of this study. While this later edition attests to the continued circulation and reception of Rycaut's text, it is the presence of visual material in the first two Venetian editions that defines the primary focus of this research. Building on these illustrated editions, the paper examines the transformation and reuse of visual material related to the Ottoman Empire in seventeenth-century print culture. By tracing the migration of images – from their likely origins in Ottoman courtly and ethnographic representations, through intermediate editions published in London, Paris, and Amsterdam, to their final reinterpretation in Venice – the study highlights the multiple layers of mediation involved in their adaptation and production. At the center of this research is the figure of Isabella Piccini, a cloistered Franciscan nun whose artistic labor contributed to the visual dimension of Rycaut's Venetian editions. Despite her physical seclusion, Piccini was able to participate in the making of imagery that purported to represent a distant and politically charged world. Rather than offering a general overview of her artistic career, this study focuses on the specific circumstances that enabled such representations: the visual sources and textual materials that may have been available to her, the mech-

<sup>3</sup> Rycaut 1672; Rycaut 1673; Rycaut 1681.

<sup>4</sup> This research draws on copies of the editions held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, the Biblioteca della Fondazione Giorgio Cini, and the Biblioteca della Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice, as well as the libraries of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb and the University Library in Split. We are grateful to the staff of these institutions for providing access to the materials and for allowing us to photograph selected items for the purposes of this study.

anisms through which knowledge circulated within monastic and editorial circles in Venice in the late seventeenth century.

## 2. A concise description of the illustrations in the first two Venetian editions of *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*

The editions open with a full-page antiporta depicting a scene from the Ottoman Empire – most likely a significant political, ceremonial, or military event involving the Sultan, accompanied by his entourage and subjects (Fig. 1). The central figure in the composition is the Ottoman Sultan, shown in opulent attire, including a richly decorated kaftan and turban. His elevated status is emphasized by his upright stance atop a raised platform draped in luxurious textiles, positioned on the right side of the image. Below him, Ottoman subjects kneel with their arms crossed over their chests – a gesture of submission – while his attendants and military guards, armed with sabres and shields, stand behind and around him. In the middle ground, a cityscape emerges, featuring a domed mosque topped with a crescent and surrounded by four slender minarets – visual cues indicating that the setting is an Islamic city, most likely Istanbul. In front of the city stands a tall pedestal, possibly bearing a Roman statue, around which a mounted procession of the Ottoman army winds its way. The illustration is signed *S. Isabella P. F.*, the mark of the engraver. The remaining illustrations are smaller in scale than the antiporta, horizontally oriented, and occupy roughly half the height of the book page. Their distribution is irregular: approximately half appear in the first volume, while the rest are dispersed across the second and third volumes. There is no consistent correlation between the illustrations and chapter divisions – some chapters feature two images, while others contain none. Each engraving includes a caption placed above the image, offering the reader a brief explanation of the scene depicted and serving as a key interpretive element of the visual material. These illustrations can be broadly grouped into three thematic categories: Courtly Life and Palace Hierarchy; Figures Associated with Religious Life and Military Figures.

### 2.1. Courtly Life and Palace Hierarchy

At the beginning of the second chapter in the first volume, the reader encounters an engraving identified by the caption *Sultan Mahomet Han, oggidi Imperadore dè Turchi / in età d'anni 29 nel 1671* – a reference to Sultan Mehmed IV, depicted at the age of 29 in the year 1671 (Fig. 2). Directly beneath the caption appears the signature *Suor Isabella Piccini, monaca in S(anta) C(roce) d(i) V(enezia)*. The setting is an interior lavishly decorated

with Islamic ceramics and textiles. The Sultan is seated on a throne atop a raised platform, his authoritative posture – legs apart, one hand resting on his hip – reinforcing his commanding presence<sup>5</sup>. To his right stand several members of his court and military entourage, many of whom are later portrayed in greater detail. One such scene, found in Chapter Five of the first volume, features two male courtiers dressed in elaborately patterned robes and ornate headgear, indicating their high status within the palace hierarchy. Set within an open architectural frame, the background reveals a distant plain where two cavalry groups engage in combat with lances, observed by a crowd – possibly depicting a military drill or ceremonial tournament. The inscriptions above the figures read *Paggio de l'Hasoda, ouero di Camera di Gran Signor* and *Tulbentar Aga, ouero quello che porta il Turbante del Gran Signor* (Fig. 3). The left-hand figure is a page from the *Has Oda*, the Sultan's private quarters, responsible for personal care and grooming, while the right-hand figure is the official entrusted with carrying the Sultan's ceremonial turban. A composition of similar structure presents another pair of palace officials. The left-hand figure, labelled *Selictar Aga, ouero quello che porta la Simitara del Gran Signor*, is the bearer of the Sultan's scimitar, while the right-hand figure, *Ebrietar Aga, ouero quello che da a lauar le mani al Gran Signor*, is the attendant responsible for ritual handwashing. As in the previous image, each carries the attribute of his role: a curved blade and a water vessel. The figures are shown indoors, with additional turbaned courtiers subtly rendered in the background. Other depictions include deaf-mute attendants, whose animated gestures convey their condition, and two court dwarfs engaged in lively exchange. At the outset of Chapter Nine, a composition introduces *Kustir Aga, ouero Capo delli Eunuchi negri delle donne* – the Chief Black Eunuch, who oversaw the Sultan's harem. This highly influential figure, second only to the Grand Vizier, held substantial administrative authority between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. His jurisdiction extended beyond the harem to include financial oversight, command of the *Baltacı* corps (palace halberdiers), and influence over matters of state. Behind him appear several dark-skinned figures, likely fellow eunuchs in service. A subsequent engraving depicts two women from the imperial harem, with the accompanying caption clarifying that the intent is to illustrate their distinctive clothing. Chapter Ten introduces three further court officials, among them the *Hosaki*, a herald or messenger responsible for delivering the Sultan's commands. Further into the volume appears an image of a *Holvagi* – a palace confectioner whose duties included preparing sweet dishes and ceremonial foods for the imperial household (*Sarayı*). He is accompanied by an *Agiamoglano*, a young palace servant assigned to physical-

<sup>5</sup> Regarding the iconography of gesture, see Frugoni 2010, pp. 3-48.

ly demanding tasks such as gardening, cooking, gathering firewood, or portage. Dressed in a rough linen robe and a conical cap resembling a sugarloaf, he is easily distinguishable among the many court servants. Two dynamic equestrian portraits follow: one features the superintendent of the palace gardens and fountains, and the other depicts the Grand Vizier on horseback, accompanied by members of his entourage. A smaller, vertically oriented illustration stands out for its format and content. It depicts the distinctive turban worn by members of the *Divan*, the imperial council. According to the accompanying text within the chapter, the inclusion of this image was the author's initiative, intended to draw the reader's attention to the turban's unusual and visually arresting design<sup>6</sup>.

## 2.2. Figures Associated with Religious Life

Next sequence of engravings turns to figures associated with religious life. It begins with an equestrian portrait of the Chief Emir (*Emir Başa*), believed to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (Fig. 4), followed by a depiction of the imam of one of the Sultan's mosques. The sequence continues with an image presenting four dervishes, differentiated by their attire and hierarchical roles. Among them are a wandering dervish and the head of a *tekke* (dervish lodge). Another engraving isolates a lone figure from the *Kalenderi* order, one of the most unorthodox branches of Sufi dervishes. Shown standing, the *Kalenderi* dervish is bald, wears low boots, and has a short cloth wrapped around his waist, to which a drinking gourd is attached. His shoulders are draped with a lion's skin, and he holds a basket in one hand and a club-like staff in the other – visual markers of his ascetic, itinerant lifestyle. Further depictions include a monk from the *Edbemi* order and a revered Turkish holy man, the latter in fact repeating the iconography of the *Kalenderi* dervish, likely to emphasize shared visual or symbolic traits across devotional figures. Before the narrative shifts to the military structure of the Ottoman Empire, which dominates the third volume, the second concludes with an image intended to illustrate the styles of dress worn by women in Constantinople – a visual counterpart to the earlier harem scenes. Though distinct from the male devotional figures, this image of women aligns with the Ottoman understanding of marriage as a sacred, legally codified act, where female modesty was part of the broader religious and moral framework.

<sup>6</sup> Rycaut 1673, pp. 64-65.

### 2.3. *Military Figures*

The third volume opens with a dynamic portrayal of a sipahi, a cavalryman shown mid-charge with a lance in hand. The martial context is further underscored by a background scene featuring a clash between mounted troops. Another engraving introduces a janissary, identified by his distinctive *börk* – a headdress characterized by an elongated flap hanging down the back. This detail symbolically recalls the cloth with which Hacı Bektaş Veli, the legendary spiritual founder of the Janissary corps, is said to have blessed its first member. In the right middle ground, three additional janissaries are shown escorting their *ağa*, or commander, on horseback. In the far distance, a cityscape emerges, possibly alluding to the urban backdrop of military operations or ceremonial procession. Subsequent images remain focused on infantry forces, including two of the Sultan's elite guards: the *Solak* and the *Paiok*, each distinguished by their specific roles and attire. Chapter Nine of the third volume presents two final figures in the visual sequence: the *Chiaon Basci* (chief gatekeeper of the *Divan*) and a *Deli*, one of the Grand Vizier's personal guards. This composition also marks the conclusion of the illustrated program within the book.

### 3. *Paul Rycaut and the First Editions of the Book in London*

Paul Rycaut, the author of the work under discussion, was born in 1629 and served as both a historian and a diplomat in the English service. He spent over fifteen years in the Ottoman Empire – initially attached to the English embassy at the Sublime Porte, and later as consul in Smyrna. His command of the Turkish language, personal relationships with local communities, and keen interest in the political and cultural life of the region informed a work that came to be regarded as the first comprehensive account of the Ottoman Empire written in English<sup>7</sup>. The book was first published in London in 1666 by John Starkey and Henry Brome and received considerable acclaim. In the epistle to the reader, Rycaut stated his aim to present an accurate and coherent model of Ottoman governance and religion – systems which, he noted, often appeared opaque and even barbaric to Western observers. He was careful to distinguish his method from that of earlier travel writers, whose reports were often based on anecdote and hearsay gathered during fleeting encounters, resulting in numerous misconceptions. By contrast, Rycaut grounded his ac-

<sup>7</sup> Schweickard 2015, pp. 187-188. For an overview of other works on the Ottoman Empire, see Ingram 2009.

count in direct observation and lived experience. Alongside his own insights, he drew upon a range of earlier written sources, which he explicitly cited. These included Edward Pococke's *Specimen Historiae Arabum* (1650), a Latin treatise on Arab history, as well as Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq's *Itinera Constantinopolitanum et Amasianum*<sup>8</sup>.

### 3.1. *Sources for the Visual Material in the First Edition (1666-1667)*

To enhance the reader's understanding of the book's structure and content, Rycaut appears to have acquired one or more Ottoman costume albums, the contents of which were subsequently adapted into engravings to complement his textual account of Ottoman society and hierarchy<sup>9</sup>. Costume albums of this kind, known as *Kıyafet*, were highly popular among European collectors and travelers, who frequently brought them back from the Ottoman Empire as prized curiosities<sup>10</sup>. These albums served not merely as aesthetic objects, but also functioned as visual ethnographies – categorizing social types through their clothing and posture. The figures typically represented a range of Ottoman subjects, including military officials, court functionaries, religious scholars, merchants, and artisans, each rendered with precise detail to underscore distinctions in status, profession, and regional identity. By including these images, Rycaut aligned his work with the growing European appetite for ethnographic and cultural documentation of the East. At the same time, he repositioned the costume album – traditionally a private collector's item – within the public and printed realm of scholarly discourse. In doing so, he elevated what had often been treated as decorative exotica into a tool for systematic cultural knowledge. The decision to convert the miniatures into printed engravings also reflects the importance Rycaut placed on visual evidence as a supplement to textual analysis, reinforcing his claim to empirical authority. Upon returning to London in April 1666, Rycaut handed over both the manuscript and the costume illustrations to his publishers. The miniatures were then adapted into printed form – likely by a skilled engraver – transforming the visual material of the Ottoman *Kıyafet* into a format suitable for publication. This process of

<sup>8</sup> Rycaut 1673, pp. 76, 157.

<sup>9</sup> According to Alexander Bevilacqua and Helen Pfeifer, the engravings in Rycaut's book were based on two distinct Ottoman costume albums: one attributed to the court painter Musawir Hüseyin, and another produced collaboratively by Ottoman and Venetian artists working under the auspices of the Venetian Bailo in Constantinople. See Bevilacqua, Pfeifer 2013, pp. 87–91. While their hypothesis is compelling, the precise provenance and composition of the visual sources remain open to further investigation.

<sup>10</sup> On the albums of Ottoman costumes, see Atasoy 1986, pp. 22–30; Schick 1999, pp. 625–628; Wilson 2007, pp. 97–139; Fraser 2018, pp. 45–59; Fraser 2020, pp. 349–378.

visual adaptation marked an important shift in how Ottoman cultural material was mediated for European audiences. The engravings not only preserved the essence of the original miniatures but also allowed for their wider dissemination through print, reaching readers beyond elite collectors or diplomatic circles. Rycaut received a presentation copy of the book in August of that same year, although the title page bore the date 1667 – a common convention for books printed in the latter part of the calendar year<sup>11</sup>.

### 3.2. *Editions and Surviving Copies: First, Second, and Third Impressions*

Tragically, nearly all copies of the first edition were destroyed shortly thereafter in the Great Fire of London in early September 1666<sup>12</sup>. In response to continued demand, a second edition was issued in 1668 by the same publishers, John Starkey and Henry Brome<sup>13</sup>. Textually almost identical to the first, it featured continuous pagination and minor typographical corrections. A third edition followed in 1670, likewise printed in London. Rycaut's treatise continued to circulate widely in England and beyond, with further editions appearing in 1675, 1681, 1682, 1686, 1687, 1701, 1703, and 1704 – some under the revised title *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire*. While these later editions testify to the enduring popularity of the work, the early editions – those of 1666/1667, 1668, and 1670 – are particularly relevant to this study, as they precede with the publication of the Venetian editions illustrated by Isabella Piccini<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Anderson 1989, p. 42.

<sup>12</sup> Some copies of the first edition have been preserved. One copy is held at Queen's College, Oxford. For more on the others, see Anderson 1989, p. 43, n. 69.

<sup>13</sup> Sonia P. Anderson, author of a monograph on Paul Rycaut, notes that the second edition, published in 1668, is often mistakenly identified as the first, as the title page does not indicate that it is a revised edition. Anderson 1989, p. 43.

<sup>14</sup> For the purposes of this analysis, however, attention is focused on a comparison between the digitized version of the first edition (1667) and two extant copies of the third edition from 1670, held by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich and the Ohio University Library, respectively. See Rycaut 1667. The first edition is available in digitized format at the following link: <[https://archive.org/details/bim\\_early-english-books-1641-1700\\_the-present-state-of-the\\_rycaut-paul-sir\\_1667/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/bim_early-english-books-1641-1700_the-present-state-of-the_rycaut-paul-sir_1667/mode/1up)>, 18.11.2024; Rycaut 1670a, held under shelf mark 4 Turc.104 d., is available in full digital format at: <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb10692593?page=1>>, 8. 11. 2024; and Rycaut 1670a, held by the Ohio University Library, can be accessed at: <<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435075055426&seq=7>>, 8.11.2024.

### 3.3. *Engravings in the Early London Editions*

The first and second editions of *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* comprised 218 pages and featured twenty-two engraved illustrations<sup>15</sup>, while the third edition, slightly shorter at 216 pages, included twenty-one engravings along with a frontispiece that reprises the first illustration within the same volume. Executed in intaglio, the images are predominantly vertical in format and depict one or more figures set against a blank background. Although a faint ground line occasionally hints at a landscape, the setting remains intentionally undefined. Sixteen plates portray individual standing figures occupying only part of the page; two plates feature paired portraits placed side by side, while two others display four smaller, isolated figures, symmetrically arranged to fill the full page (Fig. 5). Collectively, the engravings offer a representative cross-section of Ottoman society, distinguished visually through rank, occupation, and religious identity. Several figures are explicitly identified – such as the Grand Vizier, the Aga of the Janissaries, the Chavus Basha (Imperial Messenger), and the Deli – while others bear more generic labels, including a Turkish Lord or a Turkey Merchant. Religious types are also present, most notably the Emir, wearing the characteristic green turban that signifies descent from the Prophet, as we shall see further. Emphasis is placed on sartorial detail: richly patterned kaftans, fur-lined cloaks, and distinctive headgear serve as visual indicators of each figure's status and institutional role. This typological system likely draws on Ottoman *Kıyafet* albums, which codified official roles through standardized costume imagery intended for record-keeping, protocol, and display. The engraver remains anonymous, though several extant copies show signs of having been hand-colored post-printing. A copy of the first edition once owned by the diarist Samuel Pepys, and another held by the Ohio State University Library, both feature such additions<sup>16</sup>. In the latter, the frontispiece shows a seated Sultan Mehmed IV, identified by a handwritten note as being twenty-six years old. He appears enthroned, wearing a dark green tunic beneath a sleeveless white mantle, and a white turban adorned with a gold ornament. The same image appears again at the beginning of Chapter Two in the second book, this time captioned as Mehmed IV at age twenty-three, in the year 1666, and dressed in a purple mantle and turban, with the dark green tunic unchanged. Though the identity of the colorist is unknown, the choices made closely follow the textual descriptions. For example, the Emir's turban

<sup>15</sup> In the first edition, the first two books are paginated continuously from page 1 to 168, while the third book has separate pagination from page 1 to 50. The second edition, by contrast, features continuous pagination throughout.

<sup>16</sup> On the book once owned by Samuel Pepys, see Loveman 2010, pp. 214–229; on the copy held by the Ohio State University Library, see the following link: <<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=osu.32435075055426&cseq=7>>, 8.11.24.

is tinted a deep green, consistent with Rycaut's remark: "We may here bring in the Emirs [...] who for distinction sake, wear about their heads Turbants of a deep Sea-green which is the Colours of their Prophet..." (Fig. 6). A comparison with the engravings produced by Isabella Piccini for the Venetian editions reveals both overlap and divergence. Most notably, Piccini situates her figures within clearly articulated settings – architectural interiors or exterior views that include cityscapes or prominent Islamic monuments. Her figures also conform more closely to Western artistic conventions: they are more slender, and in scenes with multiple figures, she often emphasizes interpersonal interaction and narrative context. These compositions, though shaped by Western pictorial norms, retain a faint resonance of the typological mode found in *Kıryafet* albums – an echo already refracted through the lens of the English engravings, themselves likely adapted from Ottoman models.

#### 4. *Translations and Editions of The Present State of the Ottoman Empire Published in 1670*

##### 4.1. *The 1670 Paris Editions: Translation, Format, and Visual Program*

While the third English edition of *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* appeared in London in 1670, two distinct French editions were published that same year in Paris<sup>17</sup>. The translation from English into French was undertaken by Pierre Briot<sup>18</sup>, and both editions were issued by the Parisian publisher Sébastien Mabre-Cramoisy<sup>19</sup>. Each of the French editions contains illustrations: the first includes a total of twenty-five images, excluding the frontispiece, while the second comprises twenty-one. The second French edition was published in a smaller format, which necessitated a different typographic layout. The illustrations were printed on larger sheets of paper that were folded to fit the volume – a common technical solution in book production that allowed for detailed engravings despite format constraints. As a result, the three images placed above the titles of the book's three parts in the first edition could not be included, nor could the frontispiece, which had occupied an entire page.

<sup>17</sup> Rycaut 1670b; Rycaut 1670c. The first French edition is available in digitized format at the following link: <[https://books.google.hr/books?id=-wDPxppqAu1oC&dq=Histoire+de+l%27e%CC%81tat+pre%CC%81sent+de+l%27Empire+ottoman,+contenant+les+maximes+politiques+des+Turcs&hl=hr&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.hr/books?id=-wDPxppqAu1oC&dq=Histoire+de+l%27e%CC%81tat+pre%CC%81sent+de+l%27Empire+ottoman,+contenant+les+maximes+politiques+des+Turcs&hl=hr&source=gbs_navlinks_s)>, 10.11.2024. The second edition can be accessed here: <[https://books.google.hr/books?id=08\\_mlkj3lccC&dq=Histoire+de+l%27e%CC%81tat+pre%CC%81sent+de+l%27Empire+ottoman,+contenant+les+maximes+politiques+des+Turcs&hl=hr&source=gbs\\_navlinks\\_s](https://books.google.hr/books?id=08_mlkj3lccC&dq=Histoire+de+l%27e%CC%81tat+pre%CC%81sent+de+l%27Empire+ottoman,+contenant+les+maximes+politiques+des+Turcs&hl=hr&source=gbs_navlinks_s)>, 10.11.2024.

<sup>18</sup> For information on Pierre Briot, see Blom 2021, pp. 361-395.

<sup>19</sup> Schweickard 2015, p. 190.

Consequently, for the second edition, the engraver Noël Robert Cochin created a new frontispiece based on Leclerc's design but adapted it to the smaller dimensions of the new format. The illustrations present in the first edition but omitted from the second include a portrait of the Grand Vizier of Greek origin and commander of Sultan Mehmed IV's army. Framed like a painting and occupying most of the page, the portrait appears immediately after the frontispiece, accompanied by a caption below. Additionally, three horizontally oriented engravings – placed above the titles of each of the book's three parts – depict scenes of military engagement and Ottoman troops set against architectural backdrops evocative of the Ottoman world. These were likewise excluded from the second Paris edition. All of these illustrations – as included in the first Paris edition – were executed by Sébastien Leclerc, a French engraver born in Metz in 1637. Initially trained in geometry, physics, and perspective in Paris, Leclerc turned to engraving at the urging of Charles Le Brun, eventually becoming the official engraver to Louis XIV. At the time of his death in 1714, Leclerc had produced approximately 3,400 engraved plates, attesting to the remarkable scope of his graphic output<sup>20</sup>.

#### 4.2. *Leclerc's Artistic Sources and Adaptations*

For the illustrations in the French translation of Rycaut's book, Leclerc likely relied on one of the earlier London editions as his visual source. He reinterpreted the original designs – created by an anonymous artist and featured in the English editions – by transforming a series of vertically oriented, isolated figures into horizontally composed narrative scenes. In doing so, he grouped individual figures into cohesive compositions, each occupying roughly half a page in the first French edition. Compared to the English version, Leclerc's figures are more three-dimensional and slender, their garments rendered with richer ornamentation. The scenes are situated within clearly articulated architectural or landscape settings evocative of the Islamic world, carefully constructed with attention to perspective. Leclerc also expanded the visual narrative by incorporating a greater number of figures into each scene. In this process, he drew upon a variety of earlier visual sources, most notably the work of Melchior Lorck, produced nearly a century earlier<sup>21</sup>. Melchior Lorck, a Danish-German engraver, was employed in 1555 – either by the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire or the emperor himself – to accompany an imperial envoy to Istanbul.<sup>22</sup> During his stay in the city, Lorck created a series of detailed drawings portraying urban scenes, archi-

<sup>20</sup> Blom 2021, p. 377, n. 41; Michael, Williamson 1889, p. 34.

<sup>21</sup> Ertinghausen 1972, p. 328.

<sup>22</sup> Westbrook *et al.* 2010, pp. 62-87.

itecture, Ottoman soldiers, women, everyday life, and other evocative aspects of the Ottoman world. In 1570, Lorck began work on his most ambitious project, *Wolgerissene und geschnittene Figuren...* (*Well-Drawn and Engraved Figures*), a book devoted to Turkish subjects based on sketches made more than a decade earlier. Intended to provide artists with accurate visual references for themes often imagined or invented<sup>23</sup>, the work was only published posthumously, most likely in 1626<sup>24</sup>. Leclerc's illustration of Sultan Mehmed IV enthroned (Fig. 7) includes several background figures – such as pages and soldiers – three of whom are directly borrowed from Lorck's woodcuts. One such figure is a foot soldier shown in profile, holding a shield and spear, with a feathered helmet<sup>25</sup> (Fig. 8). Leclerc places this figure in the background, detached from a small group in the right-hand corner of the throne room<sup>26</sup>. He subtly elongates the soldier's form and captures it in motion, reducing the original level of detail – partly due to the smaller scale in the new composition. A second figure adapted from Lorck is a Kurdish warrior (Fig. 9), depicted in Leclerc's engraving among the four characters positioned closer to the sultan. In Lorck's version, the warrior wears a patterned cloak and a turban adorned with two feathers. He holds a shield in his left hand, while two clubs rest on the ground beside him<sup>27</sup>. While retaining the figure's pose, Leclerc elongates the body, renders the drapery in a more generalized style, and alters the facial features – replacing Lorck's prominent mustache with a fuller beard and a rounder face. The third figure borrowed from Lorck is a bearded archer. In Leclerc's version, the archer – identifiable by his quiver – is placed in the right-hand background group<sup>28</sup>. While Leclerc adapts this figure more freely, repositioning the quiver to face the viewer (a departure from Lorck's orientation), certain details – including the sabre type, turban shape, and the cut of the sleeve at the elbow – clearly indicate the connection to the original model. Leclerc applies this method throughout the volume, populating his background scenes with figures such as foot soldiers, archers, Kurdish warriors, water carriers, Persian priests, and others. It is important to note that a wide range of visual sources depicting Ottoman military, social, and religious types circulated in Europe at the time. One particularly influential example was *Les quatre premiers livres des Navigations et peregrinations Orientales...*, published by Nicolas de Nicolay in 1568. Nicolay's images, like those of Lorck, were frequently adapted and reinterpreted in European visual culture<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> Clair 1969, pp. 411-423.

<sup>24</sup> Fischer *et al.* 2009.

<sup>25</sup> Ettinghausen 1972, p. 328.

<sup>26</sup> Ettinghausen 1972, p. 328.

<sup>27</sup> The British Museum, n. 1871,0812.4590.

<sup>28</sup> The British Museum, n. 1871,0812.4601.

<sup>29</sup> De Nicolai 1568.

### 4.3. *The Amsterdam Editions: Reprints and Reconfigurations*

That same year, in 1670, Briot's French translation was also published in Amsterdam by the publisher Abraham Wolfgang<sup>30</sup>. This edition includes a frontispiece and nineteen illustrations. The frontispiece and images are copies of those from the French editions, but the engraver did not sign them, and their authorship remains unknown. All illustrations – except the frontispiece – are reversed in orientation compared to their Parisian models. This reversal likely resulted from the copying process during engraving, a typical phenomenon when images are transferred from existing prints. In contrast to the Paris editions, which included separate depictions of a “holyman Turkish man” and a monk of the *Edhemi* order, the unknown engraver of the Amsterdam edition combined the two into a single composition. The same Amsterdam publisher also released a Dutch translation of the book in 1670, translated by Jan Hendrik Glazemaker. This edition contains no frontispiece and includes twenty illustrations, the final one of which is printed twice<sup>31</sup>. Both Amsterdam editions used the same set of engravings. This is confirmed by the captions describing individual scenes, which in both cases are written in French, and by the mirrored orientation of the images relative to those in the Paris editions.

### 4.4. *Visual Translation Across Borders*

These transnational editions underscore the widespread European interest in the Ottoman Empire and reveal the adaptability of Rycaut's work to diverse editorial, artistic, and linguistic contexts across major publishing centres. Leclerc's engravings, although grounded in Western visual idioms, retain a distant echo of the costume-based classifications found in earlier English editions, themselves shaped by the Ottoman *Kıyafet* tradition. Yet while the English illustrations emphasize isolated typologies, Leclerc reanimates them into narrative scenes framed by spatial and interpersonal relationships. This transformation not only enhances the visual appeal but also reflects a shift in the expectations of a continental readership, who may have sought greater narrative coherence and pictorial depth than their English counterparts. In tracing how Rycaut's text and its imagery were interpreted and transformed across linguistic and geographical borders, these editions reveal how the boundaries

<sup>30</sup> Rycaut 1670d. The Dutch edition in French is available at the following link: <<https://books.google.hr/books?id=PRclzxKVUfEC&printsec=frontcover&hl=hr#v=thumbnail&q&f=false>>, 10.11.2024.

<sup>31</sup> Rycaut 1670e. The Dutch edition in Dutch is available at the following link: <[https://books.google.hr/books?id=vRB5OOVszIMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Jan+Hendrik+Glazemaker+rycaut&hl=hr&sa=X&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.hr/books?id=vRB5OOVszIMC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Jan+Hendrik+Glazemaker+rycaut&hl=hr&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false)>, 10.11.2024.

between documentation and imagination, between replication and reinvention, remained porous and negotiable across linguistic and cultural borders.

## 5. *Transferring Text and Image: The Italian Editions of Rycaut's Book and Isabella Piccini's Engravings*

### 5.1. *Translation and Publication Context*

On 30 January 1672 (30 January 1671 *more veneto*), Costantino Belli signed the preface to his Italian translation of Rycaut's work, dedicating it to the Doge of Venice. The book, printed by the Venetian publishers *Combi & La Nou*, clearly states on its title page that the text was translated from the French rather than the English original. It remains uncertain, however, whether Belli relied on the Paris or the Amsterdam edition of the 1670 French translation<sup>32</sup>. The publishers *Combi & La Nou* played a key role in transmitting both text and image across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The firm was founded around 1650 through the merger of the Venetian Combi family business and the Dutch bookseller Giovanni (Joannes) La Nou, who had relocated from Leiden to Venice. A copy of one of the French or Dutch editions of Rycaut's book likely reached Venice through La Nou's international network, possibly serving as the basis for both the translation and the visual program. With agents at the Frankfurt Book Fair and commercial ties to Amsterdam, Paris, and London, *Combi & La Nou* became one of the most internationally connected and efficient publishers in late seventeenth-century Venice. Their cross-border reach expanded further through the involvement of La Nou's cousin, Andrea Frisio, who managed a bookshop in Amsterdam that served as a central collection and distribution hub for Anglo-Dutch-German books bound for the Italian market<sup>33</sup>.

### 5.2. *The Artist: Isabella Piccini*

As previously noted, the illustrations for both Italian editions were created by the Franciscan nun Isabella (Elisabetta) Piccini, whose copper plates

<sup>32</sup> To this day, only a single copy of the French translation printed in Amsterdam in 1670 survives in Venice. It is held at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, the city's national library.

<sup>33</sup> Mirto 1989, pp. 287-305; Mirto 1992, pp. 61-88. For general discussions of Venetian printing and publishing networks in the seventeenth century, see: Infelise 1989; Infelise 1980; Infelise 2013, pp. 651-674.

were reused in the 1673 edition<sup>34</sup>. Born in Venice in 1644, Elisabetta was the daughter of Giacomo Piccini, a prominent figure in the development of reproductive printmaking in seventeenth-century Venice<sup>35</sup>. He taught her the intaglio technique – engraving images into copper plates – a method particularly well-suited to large print runs. Thanks to her skill, Isabella's work became highly sought after by publishers, not only for inclusion in books but also as standalone devotional prints for private use. After Giacomo's death, Isabella briefly collaborated with her brother Pietro, but she soon surpassed him in both technical mastery and artistic output<sup>36</sup>. In November 1663, at just nineteen years of age, she petitioned the Doge of Venice for exclusive printing rights to several of her own designs<sup>37</sup>. These privileges, granted on 1 December of that year, allowed her to print and profit from specific works for a fixed term – typically between five and ten years – while protecting her images from unauthorized reproduction. In 1666, she entered the Franciscan convent of Santa Croce in Venice, where she took the religious name Isabella<sup>38</sup> and remained until her death in 1724 at an advanced age<sup>39</sup>. Over the course of her long career, she worked across a wide range of visual genres and collaborated with many of the leading Venetian artists of her day, including Antonio Zanchi, Gregorio Lazzarini, Domenico Uberti, Giovanni Antonio, Ludovico Antonio David, Valentino Lefèvre, and Giuseppe Pamfilio. Her engravings encompassed religious subjects, portraits of nobility and ecclesiastical figures, as well as secular, genre, and allegorical scenes. Isabella worked with a broad spectrum of Venetian publishers – among them Baglioni, Ciera, Lovisa, Poletti, Pezzana, Pitteri, Ruinetti, Hertz, and Combi & La Noù – and also received commissions from clients beyond Venice, including Padua, Verona, Lucca, Ferrara, and Mantua<sup>40</sup>.

### 5.3. *Artistic Process and Recognition*

Surviving correspondence between Isabella Piccini and the publisher Remondini offers valuable insight into the working processes behind her engraving.

<sup>34</sup> More on Isabella Piccini can be found in: Bagatti 1931, pp. 3-27; Valcanover 1985, pp. 29-48; Gosen 2001; Di Vaio 2003, pp. 8-13; Cvetnić 2013; Gastaldello 2013, pp. 97-122; Baccanelli 2022, pp. 134-145.

<sup>35</sup> For a discussion regarding Elisabetta Piccini's birth year, consult Di Vaio 2003, pp. 8-13, n. 2.

<sup>36</sup> Trevisan 2013, p. 26. For insights into Isabella's collaboration with her brother Pietro, refer to Pavanello 2007, pp. 346-352.

<sup>37</sup> Gosen 2001, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> Di Vaio 2003, pp. 8-13.

<sup>39</sup> Gastaldello 2013, p. 99.

<sup>40</sup> Gastaldello 2013, p. 100.

ings<sup>41</sup>. Since no documentation is known to have survived regarding Piccini's collaboration with *Combi & La Noù*, who published the Italian editions of Rycaut's book, her correspondence with the publisher Remondini remains the most informative source on her professional practice. Typically, Remondini would provide a copper plate, a model drawing, and specific instructions. The engraver would then reproduce the model onto the plate and send back a proof. The client could either approve the work or request modifications. While Remondini allowed little artistic autonomy, other publishers – particularly those familiar with an engraver's skill – offered more creative freedom<sup>42</sup>. In 1690, the Venetian publisher Giovanni Giacomo Hertz released *La Conchiglia celeste. Elogii di prencipi ed huomeni illustri d'Italia*, written by the Franciscan preacher Giovanni Battista Fabri and illustrated by Isabella Piccini<sup>43</sup>. The publication was accompanied by a sonnet in which Fabri praised Piccini as the sole creator of the book's illustrations, highlighting the esteem in which her work was held. The accompanying sonnet reads as follows:

In lode Della M.R. Madre Suor Isabella Picini celebre intagliatrice di cui son tutte le Figure del presente Volume.

Non scalpelli, pennelli, ò penne frali  
 Tratta Costei, ch'in humil Claustro viue,  
 Ed in terfo metallo opre immortali  
 Pinge con dotta man, scolpifce, e scriue.  
 Ma con vgnà d'acciar note vocali,  
 Delinea, e monti finge, e amene riue,  
 Fiere, Augelli, Città, squadre Nauali,  
 E di Regi, e d'Heroi fsembianze viue.  
 Cofì senza martel, colori, ò inchiostri  
 Di tre grand'Arti il pregio à goder viene  
 ISABELLA splendor de' giorni noftri.  
 Degna non fol, che i Cigni d'Hippocrene,  
 Ma di fua gran Virtù cantino i moftri  
 Le motrici de' Cieli alme Sirene<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> The correspondence was first published by Vittoria Gosen and further clarified by Giada Gastaldello. Gosen 2001; Gastaldello 2013, pp. 97-122.

<sup>42</sup> Gastaldello 2013, p. 101.

<sup>43</sup> Fabri 1690.

<sup>44</sup> In praise of the Reverend Mother Sister Isabella Piccini, celebrated engraver, by whom are all the figures in the present volume.

Not with chisels, brushes, or fragile pens  
 Does this lady, who lives in a humble cloister, work,  
 But in polished metal she creates immortal works,  
 Painting with learned hand, she engraves, and she writes.  
 But with a steel nail she traces vocal notes,  
 She sketches mountains, and imagines pleasant streams,  
 Beasts, birds, cities, naval fleets,  
 And living likenesses of kings and heroes.

Piccini's engravings for this work were noted by the editors of the *Acta Eruditorum*, who published the following praise in their 1691 Leipzig edition:

Caeterum multum gratiae accedit volumini huic a non paucis figuris perquam elegantibus, quas Isabella Piccina, monialis ad S. Crucis Veneta, pinxit ac aeneis tabulis incidit, egregio hoc opere merita, ut ipsius elogio Franciscanus noster panegyrico suo sinem imponeret [Moreover, this volume is greatly enhanced by numerous exceptionally elegant illustrations made by Isabella Piccina, a nun of Santa Croce in Venice, who both designed and engraved them on copper plates. Her outstanding work earned her a laudatory mention at the conclusion of our Franciscan's panegyric]<sup>45</sup>.

This suggests that, at least in certain commissions, Isabella Piccini was granted a remarkable degree of creative freedom, allowing her not only to execute but also to invent her own visual compositions. Her refined technique, distinctive style, and occasional iconographic innovations left a lasting imprint on the history of Venetian printmaking. So influential was her work that, after her death, it continued to circulate – often copied, and in some cases even forged<sup>46</sup>.

#### 5.4. Sources, Copying, and Adaptation

A comparative analysis of the English editions of Rycaut's book, the French translations published in Paris and Amsterdam, and the Dutch editions printed in Amsterdam reveals that the illustrations Isabella Piccini produced for the Venetian versions were not original compositions. These images were not conceived within the Venetian artistic milieu, nor do they reflect a locally developed iconographic tradition, but were instead adaptations of earlier French and Dutch visual programs. Just as the Italian text was translated from the French rather than the English original, the visual content likewise appears to have been adapted from foreign sources. It remains unclear, however, which specific edition served as Piccini's direct model. In the process of copperplate engraving, reproductions are typically printed in reverse: images are transferred directly from the model to the plate, which then produces a mirror image in print. This phenomenon is evident when comparing the Amsterdam engravings with their Parisian counterparts. In Piccini's Venetian edition, only nine images are mirrored relative to the Paris versions, while the rest retain the same directional ori-

Thus, without hammer, colors, or inks,  
 She comes to enjoy the honor of three great Arts:  
 ISABELLA, the splendor of our days.  
 Worthy not only that the Swans of Hippocrene sing of her,  
 But that, for her great Virtue, even the mighty beings  
 – the heavenly, life-giving Sirens – sing her praises.

<sup>45</sup> *Acta Eruditorum*, pp. 203-204.

<sup>46</sup> Trevisan, Zavatta 2013, p. 90.

entation. Numerous small discrepancies introduced during the transfer process further distinguish the Venetian engravings. One such example can be found in the depiction of Sultan Mehmed IV on his throne. In the background, a foot soldier with shield and spear appears in profile, wearing a feathered helmet. In the Paris edition – engraved by Leclerc after a design by Lorck – this soldier lacks a sleeve line, leaving the arm seemingly bare. In the Amsterdam edition, an unknown engraver added the sleeve line, presumably working from the Paris model. Piccini included this sleeve detail in her version as well. A similar pattern appears in the depiction of a bearded archer on the far right of the same composition. Leclerc’s version diverges from Lorck’s original by placing the quiver on the viewer-facing side. The Amsterdam engraver modifies the turban, rendering it with a blooming, outward flourish. In Piccini’s engraving, the turban is so transformed that it more closely resembles a papal tiara than an Ottoman headdress. These visual clues suggest that Piccini most likely used the Amsterdam edition as her primary model. Yet despite this strong connection with the Amsterdam engravings, two illustrations in the Venetian edition diverge from that source. The first is the image of a wandering dervish from the *Kalenderi* order (Fig. 10), which appears only in the Parisian and Venetian editions. In Piccini’s version, the image is mirrored relative to the Paris original (Fig. 11). The second is a composite image pairing the same *Kalenderi* dervish – now labeled as a “holy Turkish man” – with a monk of the *Edbemi* order (Fig. 12). This combination appears only in the Venetian and Amsterdam editions, while in the Parisian versions, the *Edbemi* monk is shown alone (Fig. 13). Taken together, this evidence suggests that Piccini may have worked from more than one printed source – or that she received preparatory drawings copied from various editions by an unknown intermediary, which she then engraved onto copper plates. In either case, her engravings reflect a complex process of visual translation in which local production intersected with transnational influences. While not original in iconography, Piccini’s engravings remain a remarkable testament to the circulation, adaptation, and reinterpretation of Rycaut’s Ottoman imagery in late seventeenth-century Venice.

## 6. Conclusion

This study did not aim to offer a comprehensive analysis of Isabella Piccini’s artistic oeuvre, but rather to investigate the modalities through which images and knowledge were transmitted in the context of the illustrated Venetian editions of Paul Rycaut’s *Istoria dello stato presente dell’Imperio Ottomano*. At the core of the inquiry was the question of whether the engravings signed by Piccini were her own invention or adaptations of pre-existing visual models. A comparative analysis has shown that these illustrations were not original in an

iconographic sense, but were instead reworkings of earlier French and Dutch editions – particularly those published in Amsterdam, which served as her most likely source. The research has also underscored the pivotal role of the publisher, Combi & La Nouè, whose strong international ties – especially with Paris, Amsterdam, and London – facilitated the arrival of both textual and visual materials in Venice, and their adaptation within the local publishing and cultural environment. In this context, not only transnational print networks but also broader mechanisms of knowledge circulation emerged as key to understanding the production of these illustrations. Although physically confined within the walls of a convent, Isabella Piccini operated within a wider cultural system, adapting and transferring visual models into a Venetian editorial framework. Her engravings for Rycaut's book were not the product of original invention, but rather a technically skilled and interpretative reproduction of already established iconography. The visual material that ultimately appeared in the Venetian editions had undergone multiple layers of transformation – originating in Ottoman *Kıyafet* albums that served as ethnographic registers of social types, simplified and engraved in London editions, then expanded into more complex narrative scenes in the Paris editions, where they were blended with motifs from earlier sources such as the work of Melchior Lorck. Piccini's task was to absorb this layered imagery and translate it into a visual idiom suited to the Venetian print tradition. In this regard, her engravings serve as a valuable example of how images of the Ottoman world circulated and evolved within early modern European visual culture. This study ultimately highlights the importance of understanding visual production not as a purely individual act of creation, but as the outcome of broader processes of mediation, transmission, and cultural exchange – processes that crossed linguistic, spatial, and confessional boundaries.

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*Appendix*

Fig. 1. Isabella Piccini, frontispiece of *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1672. Library of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb. Photo: Ivana Čapeta Rakić



Fig. 2. Isabella Piccini, Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV at the age of 29, 1671, *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1673. University Library in Split. Photo: Klara Čapalija



Fig. 3. Isabella Piccini, Paggio de l Hasoda and Tulbentar Aga, *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1673. University Library in Split. Photo: Ivana Čapeta Rakić



Fig. 4. Isabella Piccini, Chief Emir (Emir Başa), *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1673. University Library in Split. Photo: Ivana Čapeta Rakić



Fig. 5. Anonymous engraver, Ebrietar Aga, Selictar Aga, Tullbentar Aga, and a page from the Has Oda, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, London, 1670. The Ohio State University. Photo: Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)



Fig. 6. Anonymous engraver, Chief Emir (Emir Başa), *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, London, 1670. The Ohio State University



Fig. 7. Sébastien Leclerc, Ottoman Sultan Mehmed IV at the age of 26, 1669, *Histoire de l'état présent de l'Empire ottoman*, Paris, 1670. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Source: gallica.bnf.fr



Fig. 8. Melchior Lorck, foot soldier with shield and spear, British Museum, London. Source: © The Trustees of the British Museum. Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)



Fig. 9. Melchior Lorck, Kurdish warrior, British Museum, London. Source: © The Trustees of the British Museum. Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)



Fig. 10. Isabella Piccini, wandering Sufi dervish of the *Kalenderi* order, *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1672. Library of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb

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## HISTOIRE DE L'EMPIRE

## CHAPITRE XVII.

*De l'Ordre des Kalenderis.**vn SANTON, ou S.<sup>t</sup> homme des Turcs.*

**C**EUX qui font profession de cét Ordre, méritent mieux d'estre appellez Epicuriens, que personnes retirées du monde pour mortifier leurs passions, comme font tous les autres Religieux Turcs. Cependant ces phanatiques prétendent par vne voie toute opposée à celle des autres, estre de bons Religieux en s'abandonnant au liberrinage & au relâchement; ce qu'ils font si publiquement, qu'ils n'ont pas honte d'avouër des coûtumes aussi impures, que je les vas décrire.

Ils disent que sur le point que *Mahomet Mansur*, fils de *Melkasis Ohoma*, fils de *Silahlir*, estoit prest à rendre l'ame,  
&

Fig. 11. Sébastien Leclerc, wandering Sufi dervish of the *Kalenderi* order, *Histoire de l'état présent de l'Empire ottoman*, Paris, 1670. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Source: gallica.bnf.fr



Fig. 12. Isabella Piccini, monk of the *Edhemi* order and a holy Turkish man, *Istoria dello stato presente dell'Imperio Ottomano*, Venice, 1673. University Library in Split. Photo: Ivana Čapeta Rakić

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## CHAPITRE XVIII.

## Des Edhemis.



**L**E premier Fondateur de cet Ordre, estoit vn nommé *Ibrahim Edhem*, dont les disciples & les sectateurs mesme parlent fort obscurément. Ils disent que son pere estoit esclave, & Abissin de nation, qu'il alla vn jour au fort *Horonan*, pour s'entretenir avec *Ibnimelik* Roy du Caire, que c'estoit vn homme bien fait, fort honneste, & agreable dans sa conversation, soigneux de plaire à Dieu, & qui passoit les jours & les nuits dans les Mosquées à lire l'Alcoran le visage en terre, & à prononcer souvent ces paroles. O Dieu! tu m'as donné tant de sagesse, que je connois évidemment, que tu prens soin de ma conduite, &

Ll ij

Fig. 13. Sébastien Leclerc, monk of the *Edhemi* order, *Histoire de l'état présent de l'Empire ottoman*, Paris, 1670. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Source: gallica.bnf.fr

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