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## Uncolonialism / Bāb Art

### 1 Introduction

How can we see beyond colonialism? And how might we be able to apprehend the work of those who saw themselves as living and creating outwith the strictures of imperial control?

While writers such as Sheehi, von Zinnenburg Carroll, Scott and Pinney have shown how cultural production in the late Ottoman, Australian, Indonesian, and Indian worlds often skirted, subverted or challenged hegemonic imperial norms, we still operate in a twenty-first century critical landscape in which indigenous artworks seem encrusted to the hull of a larger vessel.<sup>1</sup>

This essay explores the possibilities which inhere to the introduction of novel keywords (principally a newly-coined movement of “Bāb Art”) and a nexus of terms which flow from the concept of uncolonialism.



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

## 2 Uncolonialism

The idea of uncolonialism is founded upon the premise that we ought to enact a general moratorium on the production of scholarly works which take modern imperialism as their chief focus.

The halting of this vast academic enterprise is necessary not because we now know all that we need to know about the imperial moment, but as a result of the forms of denial which lie within such work. Only rarely do we acknowledge the fact that the generation of new knowledge about empire is relatively easily enjoined: that there always exist new archives which lie untapped, new questions

which can be asked of old documentary seams, and novel comparisons which can be made across locales.

In commissioning and supporting such research, we forget to ask what this “new” knowledge adds to the sum of human understanding, ritualistically justifying it on the grounds that these novel forms of historical comprehension better able us to grasp the nature of injustices in the world today. Even grander claims are sometimes made in implications that the past provides a kind of toolkit which enables the address and amelioration of the ills of our current world.

To take just one example, let us consider the widely-admired 2021 volume *Visualizing Empire: Africa, Europe and the Politics of Representation*.<sup>2</sup> Its constituent essays evaluate overlooked “ephemeral” forms of imperial popular culture such as comic books, board games and posters. As a collection, the articles form just one part of a much larger scholarly enterprise which encompassed a series of workshops, the Getty Research Institute’s acquisition of the ACHAC archive<sup>3</sup> and the seeding of a new sub-field of enquiry in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

What, though, do the products of this time, labor and money tell us that we did not already know? That French imperialism was a racist project like all modern empires? That colonialism was promoted to “ordinary” people through cultural forms which they encountered in everyday life?

In the closing line of their introduction to the work, the editors revealingly write that:

In their analyses of these images and rubrics of colonial France, the contributors to this volume have expanded insight into the often quiet, everyday iconographies of power and submission under empire.<sup>5</sup>

This they do, but we ought to ask whether this expansion of “insight” is in any sense qualitative as well as being quantitative. If the ultimate findings of such an exercise are that quotidian visual cultures played their part in repertoires “of power and submission under empire,” what have we come to know and how great is our need to continue reading such stories of submission?

The thinness of this gruel is supplemented by vague claims as to the manner in which the study constitutes a form of “counter-exposition” which “destabilizes the imperial archive.”<sup>6</sup> Such cues are then taken up by reviewers who see a “volume [...] replete with vital lessons on studying and historicising imperial propaganda with an eye towards contemporary resonances.”<sup>7</sup> The politics upon which this is based are framed around the claim that “society cannot dismantle colonialist ideology until its foundations are understood.”<sup>8</sup>

Such a goal sounds as though it is worthy; that it may even constitute a moral good. Yet two forms of credulity are at work here. The first is temporal, for is time not collapsed in the presumption of the pedagogic and political value of transposing past cultures onto our current frame of reference? The second is spatially revealed in the manner in which anglospherical thinking routinely erases differences across space as well as time.<sup>9</sup>

What, instead, if we chose to look at the ethics of such a project through a lens of choice-making? What if we were to evaluate such work on the basis of that which might have been discovered had these great resources not been devoted to adding to the huge stock of knowledge we already possess? What if we concentrated our energies upon research which centred the lives of indigenous peoples living in conquered lands and the evidential remains they left in the world?

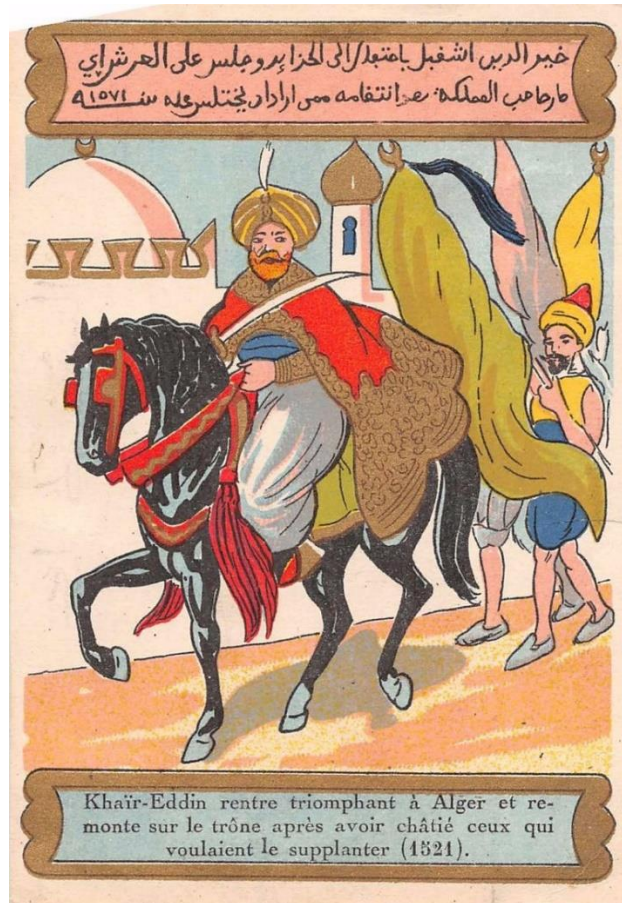
Such work would be far harder to undertake and it would seem far riskier, but might it not add to the richness of our understanding of the cultures of the past? It might demand the acquisition not

just of languages, but the reconstitution of other codes now lost to the world. It may even presuppose a willingness to embrace the partialness, absence or ruined character of documentary sources which can only be imagined as archives through processes of enfabulation.

Such uncertainty may seem unappealing, were it not set aside the narrow scope of the outputs of the imperial scholarly machine.<sup>10</sup> The radical hope, which its proponents see emerging from their labour, has a general tendency to cycle back into a systemic model of endless replication. What is more, far from stopping such processes, notions of coloniality tend towards the maintenance of this broader knowledge system.<sup>11</sup>

Whatever it might be, uncolonial study therefore needs to be grounded in the conviction that the lives of others both before and during the modern moment can be described in ways which absent empire from the fashions in which they imagined and were in the world. Their modes of being deserve to be seen as vastnesses which dwarf the narrow repertoire of imperial world-making which has hitherto consumed the stockpiling logics of such fields.

While we cannot know what we will discover in beginning such work, should a sense of uncertainty not exhilarate us? As we enter into the lives and works of those who, in many cases, saw themselves as (at least partially) unconquered beings living in imperial times, what could be more entrancing than slowly moving towards recreating accounts of their sovereignty? However many missteps such work might entail, however many projects which lead to naught, the instinct of uncolonialism is always to push towards that which lies unknown and undescribed, for in so doing we break those chains which connect empires with imperial studies.



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

### 3 Unmodernism

If the principles of uncolonialism are transferred to the study of art, what emerges is the field of unmodernism. Or, put another way, the language game of modernism dematerialises so that something else is challenged to take its place.

In many ways, scholars of visual culture already operate in advance of their peers, for the cultural specificity of indigenous modernisms have formed the mainstay of analyses of countries such as Egypt, Nigeria and Ethiopia.<sup>12</sup> There can be no disputing the value of such work, though it can at one and the same time be noted that notions of “multiple modernities” and the belated inclusion of

Southern forms alongside global (Northern) canons of modernism, do nonetheless tend towards a request for inclusion at the Master's table.

Okeke-Agulu can be right in challenging the systemic "underestimation" of African modernism and in observing that, as was the case in Nigeria, many other countries still await the arrival of scholars who will reconstitute histories of their modernisms. Yet we may also acknowledge another underlying reality, which is that the study of modernism demands a category of being called "art" and that this practice is largely imagined in the form of the production of titled canvases and sculptures made by individual artists.<sup>13</sup>

In the same way that scholars such as Finbarr Barry Flood have wondered whether the starting points of western thinking about aesthetics and painting can make sense of a field of practice called Islamic art,<sup>14</sup> African scholars are increasingly coming to doubt the adequacy of western knowledge systems in capturing the force of visual mark-making from other places. As Rowland Abiodun contends, an "urgent task" therefore lies before us in not simply documenting difference, but ensuring "the survival and essential role of African artistic and aesthetic concepts in the study of art in Africa." For this to happen, he proposes a progressive abandonment of the conventional methods of the western humanities, for their tendency is one of "concealing and even eliminating the social and religio-aesthetic foundation of the visual arts."<sup>15</sup>

Similar instincts can be perceived in Elizabeth Giorgis's stated goal of "Analysing visuality outside hegemonic Eurocentric themes."<sup>16</sup> To aspire to do this, she goes on, "brings into question the perceptual and cognitive experience of aesthetics in a tradition engaged with loftiness." This western or "lofty" art, she contends, is possessed of a haughtiness such that "only a few can comprehend" the highest, or most "soaring", desires of artworks. By contrast, African visual texts may operate with quite different hopes in the ways in which they engage their audiences.



Taking Abiodun and Giorgis together, it seems possible to make the case that alongside the redignification of African modern art, we ought also to expend time on researching, considering and re-evaluating the popular, the lowly, the forgotten, and all those forms of design, daubing, technique, and shape-making which lie far from the assumptions of soaring loftiness built into understandings of art.<sup>17</sup>



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

#### 4 The Anachronic not the Precursive

In making such claims, we ought to acknowledge the difficulties entailed in escaping the hegemonic frames of the modern, of art, of history, of empire. The likelihood of recuperation back into a

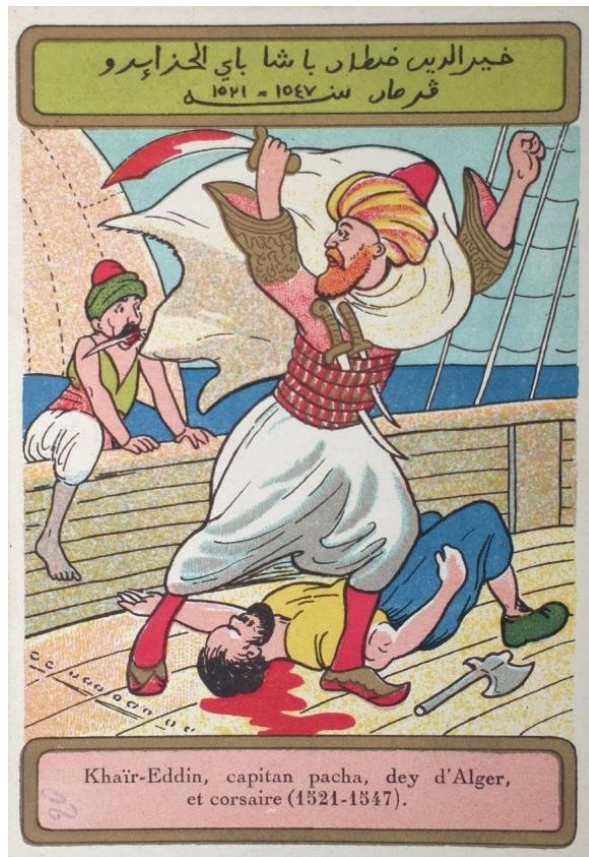


recalibrated whole is so great that a tactical response to such risks needs to be imagined at the outset.

We are fortunate that a case exists where just such a strategy has been enacted: in studies of Aboriginal painting in modern Australia. As is the case with much scholarship on this setting, acknowledgements of temporal difference serve as the basis of a process of rethinking which is relatively recent in critical origin. Following on from the “revival” of traditional forms of Aboriginal art, formerly made impermanently on sand, rock and soil, onto the new form of painted canvases from the 1970s C.E., artists and scholars have constantly engaged in forms of auto-critique as such images eventually came to stand in for the very idea of Australia itself.

This form of doubting has been especially important in the case of cultural texts which, if taken at face value, seemed to share remarkable visual similarities with western modes of abstraction. However, rather than becoming lost in the kinds of discussions of the primitive and the modern which swirled across the twentieth-century Euro-American world, Australian critics have become less and less interested in the notion that Aboriginal styles in some way anticipated later western forms (that they were *precursive*) and more inclined to question the systems of time measurement which would lead to the eventuation of such claims.

Put more distinctly, the idea of the precursive is set aside in favour of the notion of the *anachronic* in pictures made by Gordon Bennett, Ian McLean’s archiving of a new scholarly field in *How Aborigines invented the idea of contemporary art*, and von Zinneburg Carroll’s “thesis that Aboriginal art invented an anachronic archival turn.<sup>18</sup> The ultimate value of the anachronic lies in the manner in which it seeks not to classify forms in relation to a western historic yardstick (coming before or after), but instead opens itself to the idea that a Cartesian understanding of time may not anyhow constitute a universal means of apprehending the world.



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

## 5 The Shadow Artist

The illustrations accompanying this essay were made by the artist who introduced me to the idea of uncoloniality. He did not put it in as many words, but the tutelage his works provided led ineluctably down this path. Like many great teachers, his programme of instruction demanded a degree of dedication, though there exists a certain irony that the original audiences for whom these pictures were designed would easily have grasped their meanings.

This last assertion is, however, not quite as straightforward as it seems. When we speak of the work's intended viewership, this group was made up of spectators who were able to read the texts' Arabic captions as well as their French legends, and who would quickly have been able to divine any gaps in meaning which lay between these descriptions. Such readers would also have had foreknowledge of the works' subject matter, as well as the visual locution and sign systems in which they were rendered.

Confronting such texts in the twenty-first century, it seems unlikely that many viewers would possess fluency in any more than a small subset of these instinctive modes of reasoning. Indeed, most would find themselves in a position akin to the authors of *Visualizing Empire* in recognising these seemingly ephemeral art objects as doorways into an understanding of the colonial mind (which is another way of saying that such readings would mirror those of French settlers at the time the works were made).

The works' proffer of an uncolonial journey demands precisely the kinds of graft and uncertainty which I have already described. It should, nevertheless, become clear that the intellectual (and perhaps spiritual) dividends provided by such readings travel far beyond momentary engagements with visual texts.

If all this seems rather unlikely; if *you* the reader are suspicious that a chasm exists between such claims and the apparent aesthetic poverty of these pictures, *that* is the sensation and the gift of the uncolonial. *That* sense of disbelief that the un-loftiest works from colonised cultures allow us to soar into forms of understanding which show how concurrent modes of living and seeing were enjoined in quite particular ways at certain moments in distinct places.

We might think that such elucidation would be grounded upon a study of the anonymous crafter of these images, but our need for such biographical detail is purely incidental. As it happens, the story of the life of the maker of these works is an incredible one, as is the relation of these unsigned pictures to the artist's broader *oeuvre*, but there are times where we ought to sidestep that which is compelling so as to face that which is placed in front of our eyes.

What we see is not a life but a sequence of texts. It is this series of images which manifest a form of sovereignty which we may always have been able to imagine, but whose contours now seem clearer when we sit before them as pupils.

## 6 Bāb Art

What then do we see when we address the pictures which illustrate this article? We, whoever *we* are, may think that they look rather like commercial forms of advertising or, if we are pushed to consider the realms of high culture, it might occur to us that they bear formal resemblances to Pop Art. They are, after all, colourful, simply rendered, action-oriented, rigidly inked and bordered, jazzy pictures.

If we are then told that these works were made in the late 1920s C.E., we might start to think about the matter a little more. This would mean that they were produced two or three decades before an *avant-garde* Pop movement began in the UK and the USA (and its subsequent adoption as an artistic idiom around the world).

Pop, we may also recall, has always been understood to constitute a very specific form of artistic reaction to a certain moment in time, both in terms of its orientation to capital "H" History and to

the history of art. In the case of the former mode of temporalization, Pop stood as a parodic critique of the globalization of American consumer capitalism in the decades after the end of the Second World War. Not unrelatedly, in the story of the progressive development of modern art, Pop was perceived as a stark reaction to the avowed seriousness of Abstract Expressionism's existential interiority and its rough, tactile forms.<sup>19</sup>

As such context is offered, our minds may now even race to corral what we can gather about these works which seem to upend narratives and structures which have hitherto lain unquestioned.<sup>20</sup> The pictures include text in French and Arabic, so from where do they originate? How large are they? With what materials were they made? Where can they now be found? And so on.

I lay out these questions and directions of thought to reiterate the point that precursivity ought to be accorded no special status. These works predate Pop by thirty or so years, but that does not explain why they are interesting, nor does their antecedence constitute a simple means through which their reinsertion into a story of art allows its timeline to be reoriented afresh.

An uncolonial reading proceeds from the works as much as it derives from our address of them. This is what the Shadow Artist teaches us. Let us, then, consider two instances of this sequence which open uncolonial lines of enquiry.<sup>21</sup>

The subjects of the pictures are the Barberousse or "Redbeard" brothers – Bab-Aroudj, known in Turkish as Oruç Reis (ca.1474-1518 C.E.) and Khaïr-Eddin, or Hayreddin Barbarossa (ca.1466-1546 C.E.) – who were seen as archetypal heroes in north Africa. As Ottoman 'Corsairs' they had been relentlessly depicted as savage pirates in European culture, but to Muslim subjects, especially those living in Algeria, they were the Turkish founders of the modern city state of Algiers. Not only had they successfully deposed Spanish occupiers from the Maghreb, but they had also effected the

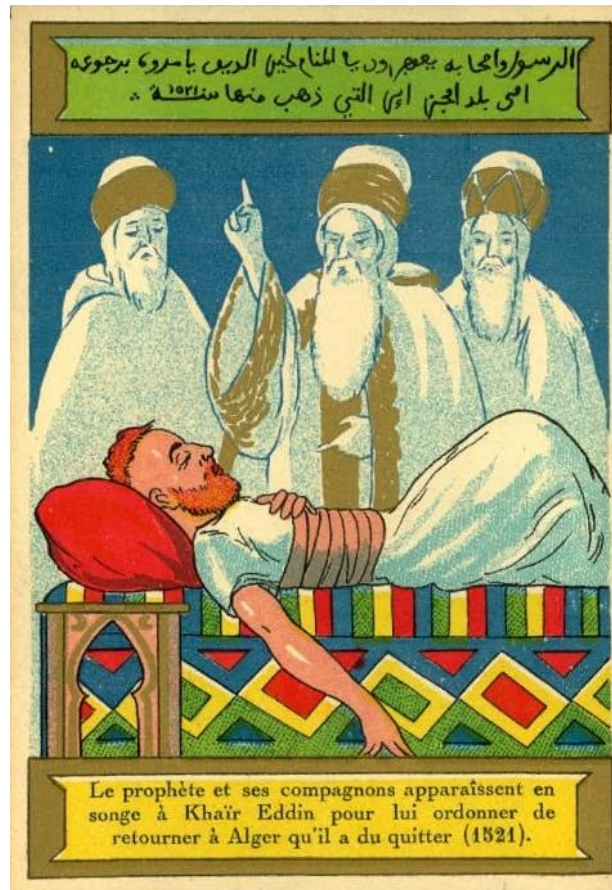
rescue of thousands of Muslim and Jewish refugees from the new Iberian states of the late fifteenth-century C.E. They were, and remained, emblems of empire as a cosmopolitan ideal in its paradigmatic struggle with the novel European idea of the nation state.



Anonymous, *Khair-ed-Din Barberousse*. Promotional trading card: Algiers, 1925. Collection of the author.

Using the idiomata of commercial European illustration which relentlessly caricatured such figures (seen here in a chocolate advertisement), Bāb (or “Gateway”) Art redeployed the aesthetics and distributive models of mechanical reproduction to create images as multiples which could be widely shared, consumed and displayed. To Europeans, such postcards constituted instances of local “colour,” but to local audiences, they were *kartpostals* whose flat exteriority invited adepts to pass inside, through the image as a gateway, towards spiritual truths. Viewers could choose between *looking* briefly at such works or *seeing* them over sustained periods of contemplation. As such, they

conformed to the traditions of the Islamic illuminated miniature in their subject matter, their use of texts and intertexts, their forms, and their ultimate goals and desires as works which sought to enable encounters with the Divine.



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

This seems clearest in the miniature which represents Prophet Mohammed and his companions appearing to Khaïr-Eddin in a dream, ordering him not to leave Algiers, but to return to the city. While the instinctive reaction of many viewers today might be to see this figurative depiction of sanctity as profoundly un-Islamic, there exist plentiful reasons for thinking that the work sees itself as lying at the heart of the Islamic tradition.

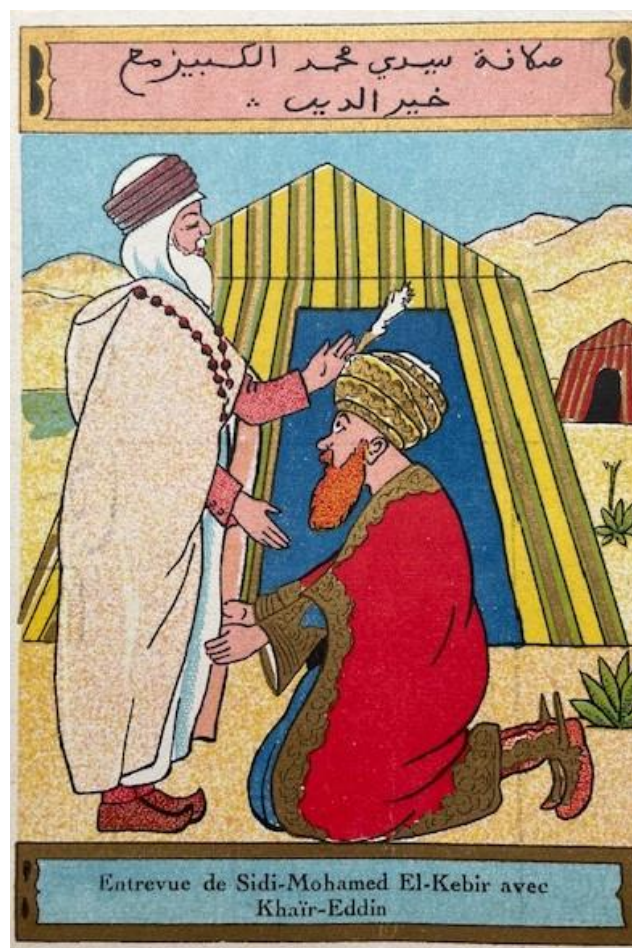


For one thing, this was a form of emergency art, produced at a moment when the need to protect Muslim subjects superceded other forms of religious injunction. It was also the case that the divination of dreams (*hulm*) and the 'experience of the true dream (*ruya*)' had long since played an important role in the spiritual life of much of the Islamic world.<sup>22</sup> Instincts of His special purpose had appeared to Prophet Mohammed in dreams in the months before the revelation of the Qur'an, while, as Ibn Arabi had remarked, "when you want to sleep, you should ready yourself to meet your Lord and you should love sleep because your meeting your Lord is in it."

What we therefore see in this image is an encapsulation of the offer of Islam. God speaks through His Prophet to show believers the right path, such that Khair-Eddin's dream might even be compared to the original miracle of the transmission of the Qur'an and God's law to Prophet Mohammed. The force and meaning of this dream extended beyond humankind's everyday capacity to understand the workings of the world, just as the revelation of the Word of God proposed an extra level of reality which could be seen by women and men, but understood only by God.

The certainty of God's love does not, however, indicate a lack of divine concern with the inhumanity of rulers who denied their subjects basic rights. God's obedient servant Khair-Eddin was therefore ordered to remain in the city of Algiers to serve as a part of a plan to bring just life back into the world, which we might imagine also underpinned the sense of duty which the artist conveyed in their own work. The Arabic verb - *yamrū* - which is used in the text (translated as the French 'ordonner', or the English 'to order') had quite specific connotations in its references to the very words of God as they were transcribed into the Qur'an by Prophet Mohammed, with the root Alif-Meem-Ra expressing God's ultimate sovereignty over the world and the duty of believers to respect the authority of God.

This sense of the need for faith in the Word of God was pictorially dramatized in the work, for Khaïr-Eddin's right hand extends over his remarkably patterned bed to rest upon the golden frame in which the meaning of the work is explained. This sense of touch expands the world of the image, so that we – the viewer – are also in some sense holding onto this frame, whilst referencing the association of touch with religious adherence and loyalty. The work's digital stress is further emphasised through the body of Prophet Mohammed, for *His* right hand is raised as an injunction which transmits the Word of God visually as well as textually, both to the sleeping figure of his servant Khaïr-Eddin and to faithful viewers of the work who see Prophet Mohammed's finger pointing to the revelatory text in Arabic at the head of the picture.



Anonymous, untitled work. Chromolithographic postcard: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

This stress on physical contact, and the specific association of touch with hands, plays an even greater role in another of the cycle's chapters which depicts the meeting of Khaïr-Eddin with Sidi-Mohamed El-Kebir.

As was the case with the depiction of Khaïr-Eddin's dream, we do not know whether the scene which it described was one which was well known in Maghrebi folk memory or whether it was an 'invented tradition.' In either case, its immediate politico-historical purpose would have seemed plain to educated local audiences (whilst remaining unfathomable to European spectators) for it connected and allied two important defenders of the integrity of north Africa. That one had lived two hundred and fifty years before the other was spiritually unimportant, for what would have mattered to contemporary audiences was the fact that the earlier figure (the sixteenth-century Khaïr-Eddin) knelt before his later master (eighteenth-century Sidi-Mohamed El Kebir). Strikingly, the image is the sole work in the series whose title does not include dates, thus pointing to its chronological evasiveness.

Such a scene of time travel presumably possessed the capacity to encourage readers of the work to reflect upon ways in which time might be bent so that the spirits of the past could once again run free in unchaining the people of Algeria. The specific hope of liberation which the work seemed to enjoin was one which had consumed the western and southern Mediterranean world since the end of the fifteenth-century (when Muslims and Jews had been driven from Spain and Portugal) in the form of a coalition of Islamicate power across the sea seen in an alliance between the Ottoman *imperium* and local political forces. Khaïr-Eddin stood as a symbol of Turkish power, yet he knelt before the north African Sidi-Mohamed El-Kebir as a supplicant rather than as an overlord.

In the hands of a believer, such an image has the potential to become a protective force; its amuletic power activated through acts of seeing, thinking and touching. These gifts are by no means unique,

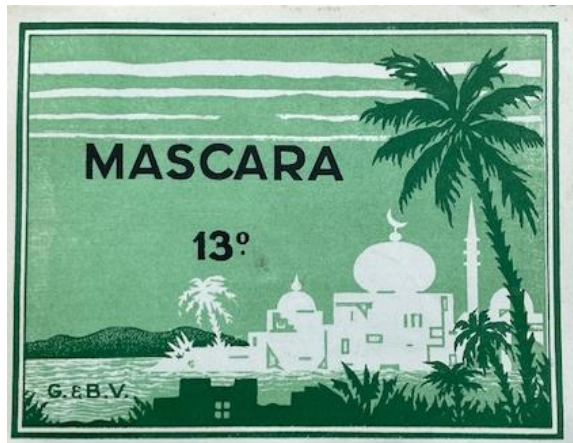
for they are a function not of an individual's encounter with a singular work of art seen at distance or through glass, but a personal, corporeal encounter with an image which can be held in the knowledge that it is also simultaneously in the possession of other believers in time and space. The picture becomes a shared form of prayer.

The manner in which Khair-Eddin kneels so as to hold the hem of the older man's cloak dramatises a relationship between a spiritual master and an adept which would have been familiar to followers of Sufi orders in the Maghreb and across the Islamic world. In return for an oath of loyalty – or *baya* – a river of spirituality flows from the teacher to the student. Although traditionally this *karama* (“wonder”) flows in a linear fashion like water down a stream, here there is a complication of the tradition as time twists so that eternal truths which were incarnated by Sidi-Mohamed El-Kebir travel backwards so as to ensure the just rule and the protection of faith in the Algerian *vilayet* which Khair-Eddin came to command.

The artist's choice of Sidi-Mohamed El-Kebir as the north African who would show that *baraka* (“spirit”) might flow in all directions in time and space was a pointed one for his Algerian audience for Sidi-Mohamed was a warrior saint who had taken part in the successful defence of Algiers against Spanish navies in 1776 C.E.<sup>23</sup> He had subsequently become the Bey of Mascara in 1779 C.E., where he had staved off famine, as well as erecting new mosques, bridges, fortifications and schools. He was, in short, a model Islamic ruler who had not only safeguarded the lives of his people, but bettered their lives through programmes of education and urban edification.

One hundred and fifty years later – at the time this image was made – what was Mascara? Its renown as a model centre of Islamic rule, had been replaced by its reputation as the location of cheap wines produced by settler colonists for domestic European markets. Its conquest was not simply political or economic, but also visual, for “Mascara” had become a shorthand endlessly

reproduced in stock Orientalist tropes as a means of entrenching French suzerainty. The native, her culture and her religion became empty ciphers connoting authenticity as one small part of the vast imageworld of fantastic representation which Algerians lived with just as much as their conquerors.



Anonymous, Untitled works. Wine labels: Algiers, ca.1925. Collection of the author.

As such, we should not therefore be surprised that new forms of art emerged as responses to this semiotic flooding of the public sphere. “The invasion of commercial brands, billboards, photographs, magazines and packaging designs that overwhelmed culture beginning in the 1960s”<sup>24</sup> (according to theorists of Pop) had, after all, long since visually confronted the peoples of conquered imperial societies.



Anonymous, *Oran – La Rue d'Arzew*. Photographic postcard, E.S.: Algiers, ca.1910. Collection of the author.

It therefore provided base matter for visual forms made by indigenous creators which were doubly innocent in their “throwaway” character and their resemblance to the most routine forms of Orientalist visual texts they encountered in the world.

The particular works considered in this piece were always there in the world, but their ‘ephemerality’ was mistaken as connoting their unimportance. Uncolonial study asks that we open ourselves to the possibility that thousands more such texts and forms of evidence lie awaiting discovery, but we will not find them if we continue to obsess as to how imperialism subjugated indigenous people; nor if we fail to acknowledge the work which will be necessary so as to acquire skills to interpret and think about such works.

We feel wholly comfortable with the idea that scholars will devote decades of their lives to the decipherment of hitherto untranslatable Mayan or Assyrian tablets, but cannot conceive of the need



or possibility of such work with poor texts from the recent past. That ‘recent past’ was scarred by imperialism’s destruction of cultures and ways of seeing which only survive today in fragmentary forms, but the reimagination of uncolonial fields offers worlds of possibilities in forms of re-envisioning which today seem strange or unlikely.

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Sheehi, *The Arab Imago: A Social History of Portrait Photography 1860-1910* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); Khadija von Zinnenburg Carroll, *Art in the Time of the Colony* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014); James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Christopher Pinney, *‘Photos of the God’: The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India* (London: Reaktion, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Rebecca Peabody, Steven Nelson and Dominic Thomas, eds., *Visualizing Empire: Africa, Europe and the Politics of Representation* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> Association Connaissance de l’histoire de l’Afrique contemporaine.

<sup>4</sup> ACHAC itself was founded by Pascal Blanchard, editor of one of the most egregious works of recent colonial study in *Sexe, Races, Colonies* (Paris: La Découverte, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Peabody et al, *Visualizing Empire*, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Peabody et al, *Visualizing Empire*, 42.

<sup>7</sup> Alexandra M. Thomas, “Lessons on Propaganda: *Visualizing Empire* Counters the Colonial Archive,” *Hyperallergic*, March 15, 2021, <https://hyperallergic.com/627279/visualizing-empire-counters-the-colonial-archive/>

<sup>8</sup> Thomas, “Lessons on Propaganda.”

<sup>9</sup> Tendencies especially evident in the work of scholars such as Tina Campt.

<sup>10</sup> As may be evident, two thinkers’ work helped structure this piece: Ludwig Wittgenstein and Audre Lorde.

<sup>11</sup> The task and object of study of uncolonialism arguably differs from decolonialism in the sense that decolonial thought thinks after empire, while uncolonial concentrates its energy on the presence of lost, mislaid or partially destroyed forms of culture from the imperial moment. There is, therefore, no sense of opposition at play, for uncolonial thought can aid decoloniality.



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<sup>12</sup> Alex Dika Seggerman, *Modernism on the Nile: Art in Egypt between the Islamic and the Contemporary* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Chika Okeke-Agulu, *Postcolonial Modernism: Art and Decolonization in Twentieth-Century Nigeria* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015); Elizabeth Giorgis, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> See Okeke-Agulu, *Postcolonial Modernism*, 4 & 7.

<sup>14</sup> Finbarr Barry Flood, "Frameworks of Islamic Art and Architectural History: Concepts, Approaches, and Historiographies," in *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, vol. 1, eds. Finbarr Barry Flood and Gülru Necipoğlu (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017): 2-56.

<sup>15</sup> Rowland Olá Abíódún, *Yoruba Art and Language: Seeking the African in African Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 4.

<sup>16</sup> Giorgis, *Modernist Art in Ethiopia*, 234-35.

<sup>17</sup> See also Allen F. Roberts, and Mary Nooter Roberts, *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal* (Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 2003) and Kobena Mercer (ed), *Cosmopolitan Modernisms* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 17.

<sup>18</sup> Khadija von Zinneburg Carroll, "Anachronic Archive: Turning the Time of the Image in the Aboriginal Avant Garde," in *Indigenous Archives: the Making and Unmaking of Aboriginal Art*, ed. Darren Jorgensen and Ian McLean (Perth: University of Western Australia Press, 2017), 342-453 (345).

<sup>19</sup> Steven Henry Madoff, "WHAM! BLAM! How Pop Art Stormed the High-Art Citadel and What the Critics Said," in *Pop Art: A Critical History*, ed. Stephen Henry Madoff (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), xiii-xx (xiii); Jessica Morgan and Flavia Frigeri (eds), *The World Goes Pop* (London: Tate Publishing, 2015).

<sup>20</sup> Though see Robert Rosenblum, 'Cubism as Pop Art,' lecture at the Guggenheim, 4/5/1974. Reel-to-Reel Collection. A0004. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum Archives, New York.

<sup>21</sup> Far more detailed explorations in these themes will feature in William Gallois, *The Shadow Artist* (forthcoming, 2024).

<sup>22</sup> Iain R. Edgar, "The Inspirational Night Dream in the Motivation and Justification of Jihad," *Nova Religio* 11, no.2 (2007): 59-76.

<sup>23</sup> Gorguos, "Notice sur le bey d'Oran Mohammed el Kébir," *Revue africaine* 1 (1856): 403-454 ; 2 (1857): 28 & 223; 3 (1858): 51, 185 & 286; 4 (1859): 347-357.

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<sup>24</sup> Jessica Morgan, *The World Goes Pop*, 15.