"LEO AFRICANUS" PRESENTS AFRICA TO EUROPEANS

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

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

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

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

Now free from prison, though dependent on Christian favor, Giovanni Leone thought of himself in Arabic as Yuḥannā al-Asad, or even better, as he signed a 1524 Arabic manuscript, "Yuḥannā al-Asad al-Gharnāṭi [the Granadan] previously named al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Wazzān al-Fāsi [of Fez]," suggesting the multiple identities he carried around during his Italian years.[4] To begin with, highly placed figures in the church and political life were interested in what he could tell them. Some were seeking him as a *faḳīh,* an Arab learned in Muslim law and religion (he was already called "the *faqih* Hasan" by the Vatican librarian, who was lending him Arabic manuscripts while he was in prison);[5] others wanted to learn more about Africa; others sought his service on both grounds. Until his death in December 1521, Leo X surely quizzed the former diplomat about current North African and Ottoman politics and goals, and if there was time, inquired about the poetry of the Arab nomads, which Giovanni Leone, himself a poet, knew well. Clement VII, who in 1523 became the next Medici pope, also must have put questions to him, as Sultan Sulaymān moved from triumph to triumph.

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

During these same years, Egidio da Viterbo had close ties with men in the humanist circles of Rome, and there are signs that some of them sought out Giovanni Leone for information about Africa and Mediterranean politics. For instance, the mythographer Pierio Valeriano was seeking evidence about Egypt and ancient Egyptian lore for his *Hieroglyphica,* while the papal physician and historian Paolo Giovio was eager for firsthand observations about the Mamlūk sultans and the Ottoman sultan Selīm to use for his *Histories* and other works. Giovanni Leone had been in Cairo on diplomatic missions in the days of the Mamlūk sultan Ḳānsūh al-Ghawrī and had actually encountered the victorious Selīm at Rashīd (Rosetta) in 1517. Giovio would have made sure Giovanni Leone knew that al-Ghawrī's predecessor, the great Ḳā'itbāy, had presented a giraffe to Lorenzo de' Medici and a tiger to Giangaleazzo Sforza.[7] On the other hand, these tight literary sodalities were unwilling to give full welcome to an unpredictable convert from North Africa, speaking a non-literary foreigner's Italian.

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

Ḥasan al-Wazzān had had experience in writing in Arabic during his days as a diplomat in Africa. At every court at which he had been received, whether that of a sultan or of a mere Atlas Mountain chieftain, he had given an oration, including a panegyric in metered verse; when needed, a translator had turned it into the local tongue. His dispatches back to his sultan at Fez had been couched in the "rhymed prose" (*sadjʿ*) expected from a man of letters, and which al-Wazzān still used in his Arabic dedications in Italy. Had he not been seized by pirates, he would probably have expanded the notes from his voyages for a *riḥla,* a travel account, to be read by other *faḳīhs* in the Maghreb.

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

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

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

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

The great work of Giovanni Leone's Italian years was his manuscript on Africa, which he titled *Libro de la Cosmographia et Geographia de Affrica* and whose colophon bore the date 10 March 1526.[11] He presumably had some Arabic travel notes for his years crisscrossing Africa, restored to him after his captors had emptied his diplomatic pouches; but much of the text was composed in his lively though simplified Italian, and he sometimes apologized for his "weak memory."[12]

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

Giovanni Leone eased his task of communication by several strategies. He adopted the words "Africa" and "Europe" to describe continental units for which Arabic geography had always used multiple regional or ethnic terms. He made comparisons between African and European objects or practices (from foods and ways of eating to institutions for prostitution) and sought equivalents for weights, measures, and currencies. On the difficult subject of conflict between Christian and Muslim armies in medieval al-Andalus/Spain and in contemporary Morocco (including a battle in which he had himself been a participant), he wrote with a balance rare on either side of the Mediterranean. On the sensitive subject of Islam—where Christian readers would have expected partisan denunciation, especially from a convert, and where Muslim readers would have expected the traditional expressions of piety—he wrote informatively and sometimes appreciatively (for example, about the Schools of Muslim Law in Cairo) but virtually always with detachment. His words of condemnation were those he would have shared with educated Sunnis back home, railing against the heresies of the Shia who had rent the world of Islam, and mocking excess in popular superstition. All the African courts he had visited as Ḥasan al-Wazzān were Muslim, and though he had heard of peoples, such as the mountain-dwellers of Bornu who were "neither Christian, Jewish, nor Muslim," he said nothing about their religious practices.[13] Rather he described for Europeans a range in the religious practice and understanding of Islam, from ignorant and inattentive to learned and holy.

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

Two copies of the manuscript of the *Geographia de Affrica* were circulating in Venice after the sack of Rome in 1527, when its author seems to have returned to North Africa and Islam, retaking his Arabic name and North African garb and basing himself in Tunis. When the Venetian humanist Giovanni Battista Ramusio decided to publish the manuscript as the opening to his multivolume *Navigazioni e viaggi,* he edited the text extensively so as to make its author and in some cases his Africa more acceptable to Christian European readers. Among other changes, Ramusio turned Giovanni Leone's simple but lively Italian into a complex and literary language; he changed Giovanni Leone's self-presentation as an Arab man of letters into that of Historian following professional rules; he strengthened Giovanni Leone's occasional negative statements about the Land of the Blacks (behavior that the author had specifically located centuries earlier, before the conversion of the region to Islam, was made to sound contemporary); he inserted words to make explicit that the author of the text was a Christian.[15] The French, Latin, and English translators made further changes from Ramusio's edition, adding, for instance, insulting words about Islam and the Prophet.[16]

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

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

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

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

Let us here follow one theme in the Africa book of Giovanni Leone (I will continue to call him mostly by his Italian name, since that was the name he used for his readers), a theme that would inform Europeans about one of the "civilized" rhythms of life in African communities and the products that were part of that life. What did Giovanni Leone have to say about the artisans in different regions of Africa, what they made, what their products looked or felt like, and who acquired them?

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

Portuguese writings of travel and conquest, some of them circulating only in manuscript, take readers more concretely to items produced in African lands near the coast. Thus, the captain of one of Henry the Navigator's caravels brought fishing nets back from a 1436 voyage south of Cape Bajador (in present-day Western Sahara). They were made from the bark of a tree, which could be spun into strong cords without adding any flax: "something new to note for us in Spain," was the comment of the chronicler Gomes Eanes de Zucarara.[23] In 1455-57, the young Venetian Alvise Cadamosta commanded one of Henry's caravels as far south as Gambia and beyond and later wrote up his *Navigations* in Italian. Though some of the rumors he reported are full of fancy, he did describe the cotton garments of men and women in the coastal region of Senegal and how they marveled at the woolen cloth in his Spanish-style clothes, which amazed them even more than his white skin.[24] And to give one more example, in 1498, after Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and had passed Port Natal, his diarist recorded what the Portuguese had seen in a community where they were welcomed for a five-day stop for water. The villagers' weapons were long bows and arrows and spears with iron blades. The hilts of their daggers were of tin; the dagger sheaths of ivory. Copper ornaments were twisted around their arms and legs and in their hair. They prized linen cloth, and were glad to exchange their copper for it.[25]

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

This is the world of African objects and their producers and users that Giovanni Leone opened for European readers with much greater breadth and detail, and without the constant assumption that European articles were always better.[28] As a traveling diplomat and occasional merchant, al-Wazzān would have been attentive to the look of products and their estimated value. Moreover, his family name, al-Wazzān, meant "the weigher" in Arabic; his father and grandfather may both have been associated with the *muḥtasib,* the supervisor of transactions at the *sūḳ* (market), including those concerning weights and measures. He knew the workings of markets and fairs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The naked black African, so prominent in the European imagination, made an infrequent appearance in al-Wazzān's Africa. The farmers and shepherds in the countryside around the Songhay capital of Gao were "ignorant" people: "it would be hard to find one of them who could read or write within a hundred miles" (European readers would, of course, recognize similar illiteracy among their own peasant populations). They wore sheepskin in the winter, and in the summer, only a little cloth over their private parts.[42]

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

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

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

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

Wherever he was, he had an eye for the jewelry women wore. In Fez, he could see it up close: the large gold earrings encrusted with precious jewels, undoubtedly worn in his own family, the heavy golden bracelets on each arm; and for the less wealthy, earrings, bracelets and leg rings in silver. In the villages and plains of Morocco, where the women were not covered, he described silver earrings, bracelets, and rings (several on a hand); in a High Atlas mountain he called "Ideucacal," the more prosperous women wore heavy silver earrings, sometimes four at once, along with silver on their fingers, arms, and legs, while the poorer women had to be satisfied with jewelry of iron or brass.[48] Finally there were the wealthy women of Cairo, "magnificent with jewels," which he had managed to see despite their veils; they wore them in garlands around their forehead and neck.[49] One can imagine the Venetian women's envy on hearing of such adornment.

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

For pottery, Giovanni Leone evoked the kilns and potting sheds in different parts of Morocco and Tunis. In Fez, he recalled both the unglazed white bowls, basins, and pots made and sold cheaply on the east side of town near the city wall and the beautiful colored vases and pots on display at the major market, some of the finest glazes coming from the potters in a little town not far away at the foot of the Middle Atlas. The potters of the Mediterranean town of Sousse (Sūsa) furnished Tunis and many other towns along the coast with bowls, jugs, and vases.[53] Especially he never tired of telling Italian readers about the stunning colored tiles and tile mosaics found on the walls of the mosques, madrasas, fountains, and houses in North African towns.

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

Meanwhile he also reminded them that European merchants were buying African goods at Mediterranean ports. He mentioned the special *funduqs* at Tlemcen and Tunis, hotel/warehouses to accommodate Genoese, Venetian, Catalan and other Christian merchants; other travelers had seen the traders' *funduqs* at Alexandria crammed with merchandise.[56] He recalled the boats from Venice, Genoa, Apulia, Sicily, Dubrovnik, Portugal, and from as far away as England crowding the docks of Alexandria. Economic historians have told us of the African cotton, wool, and fabrics being loaded on the boats at the North African ports, of the leather hides; of the dried fruits, olive oil, and wax; of the gold, ivory, and ostrich feathers, brought north on caravan routes across the Sahara—to give only a partial listing. Giovanni Leone talked not only about textiles and hides being exported to Europe, but, as we have heard, even about certain garments and leather products.[57]

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

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

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

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

Let us conclude with a limited inquiry about impact, that is, the use of Giovanni Leone's word-pictures of African garments by a European artist eager to depict them.[61] He is the unknown creator of the engravings in the 1556 French translation of the Africa book, published by Jean Temporal in Lyon, the only edition of the book during the sixteenth century to have images. Several of the pictures appear on the same page with Giovanni Leone's descriptions of the garments worn in Fez and other parts of Morocco and in Cairo. The artist used precise motifs in the text to fuel his visual imagination and create figures of human vitality and presence. The woolen *al-kisā'* of the Ḥāḥā is here scanty rather than voluminous as Giovanni Leone had said of it, but it is tightly wrapped to the body of the young man with his spear (fig. 32); the head covering has fewer windings than Giovanni Leone had described, but it does leave the top of the head bare. This is not a "realistic" picture of the herders and traders of the Ḥāḥā, but it does show the artist imagining a vigorous youth in a region that Giovanni Leone had said was marked by petty local war.

Similarly, in "Acoutremens de ceux de Fez" (Garments of the [men] of Fez), the prosperous man of Fez on horseback (fig. 33) is not wearing the burnoose that Giovanni Leone had detailed as the overgarment for men's outside wear. He carries a spear rather than the sword we would expect for a merchant. But his garments are layered, his coat is seamed down the front and has wide sleeves, his turban has a double wrap under his chin. If the pleasing designs on the rider's coat are the artist's playful imagining of what fine European cloth would look like in Fez or what he thought would look decorative in his picture, nonetheless he has tried to represent a determined North African man on a fine steed.

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

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

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

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

though she is an isolated and somewhat stealthy figure.

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

NOTES

1. The 1550 edition is rare. I have worked with the second edition: *La Descrittione dell'Africa. In Primo volume, et Seconda editione della Navigationi et Viaggi,* ed. Giovanni Battista Ramusio (Venice: Giunti, 1555). In this essay, all my quotations are drawn from the modern edition: *La descrizione dell'Africa di Giovan Lioni Africano* in Giovanni Battista Ramusio, ed., *Navigationi e Viaggi,* ed. Marica Milanesi, 1:19–460 (Turin: Giolio Einaudi, 1978), hereafter cited as Ramusio, *Descrizione.*

2. I have given extensive treatment to the life and thought of al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān in my book *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006; London: Faber, 2007), and readers can find documentation for the biographical material in this essay there along with bibliography. Other important studies of this figure include the pioneering book of Oumelbanine Zhiri, *L'Afrique au miroir de l'Europe: Fortunes de Jean Léon l'Africain à la Renaissance* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1991) and Dietrich Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo der Afrikaner: Seine Beschreibung des Raumes zwischen Nil und Niger nach dem Urtext* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), especially valuable for its material on Giovanni Leone's treatment of the Land of the Blacks, cited hereafter as Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo.* Among other recent publications is François Pouillon et al., eds., *Léon l'Africain* (Paris: Karthala and IISMM, 2009).

3. Al-Wazzān's full baptismal name was Joannes Leo de' Medicis. Muslim slaves and servants who converted to Christianity were given the surnames of their masters, and the policy was here followed for Giovanni Leone. He never used this as a surname, referring to himself once in January 1521, when Pope Leo X was still alive, as "servus Medecis *[sic],*" servant of the Medici. His godfathers were Bernardino López de Carvajal, Lorenzo Pucci, and Egidio da Viterbo. See Davis, *Trickster Travels,* 94–95 and illustrations, figure 3.

4. Al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān and Jacob Mantino, Arabic-Latin-German dictionary, MS 398, Manuscritos árabes, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, 117b–118a.

5. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 3966, 119, cited in Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Ricerche sulla formazione del più antico fondo dei manoscritti orientali della Biblioteca Vaticana* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1939), 101.

6. *Al-Qurʾān* in Arabic and Latin, MS D100 inf, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan.

7. Yet another figure who seems to have sought information from Giovanni Leone was the polymath and papal secretary Angelo Colocci, who was deeply interested in all systems of weights and measures as a key to God's organization of the world. He also seems to have owned Giovanni Leone's biographical dictionary (Davis, *Trickster Travels,* 71–72).

8. Zhiri, *L'Afrique,* 13–26; Sara Leskinen, "Two French Views of Monstrous Peoples in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 31, no. 2 (2008): 29–44.

9. D. Gnoli, ed., "Descriptio urbis o censimento della popolazaione di Roma avanti il Sacco Borbonica," *Archivio della R. Società do Storia Patria* 17 (1894): 420–25. See the discussion of Stephen Epstein on the term "Moor" as well as the word "Saracen" as "categories . . . mask[ing] considerable variety especially by color . . . these people came in black, white and every shade between." Stephen Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity, and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 185. Further on the range of meanings in Salvatore Battaglia, *Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana,* 20 vols. (Turin: Unione Tipogafico-Editrice Torinese, 1961–2000), 10: 921–22. On these slaves, their religious background, and their lives after manumission, see Salvatore Bono, *Schiavi musulmani nell'Italia moderna: Galeotti, vu' cumpra', domestici* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1999). For slaves of African origin, see Sergio Tognetti, "The Trade in Black African Slaves," in T. F. Earle and K. J. P. Lowe, eds., *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 213–24.

10. Al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān, *De Viris quibusdam Illustribus apud Arabes per Joannem Leonem Affricanum* and *De quibusdam Viris Illustribus apud Hebraeos per Joannem Leonem Affricanum,* MS Plut. 36.35, 31r–53v, 62r–69v, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence. Both texts were published by Johann Heinrich Hottinger in his *Bibliothecarius Quadripartitus* (Zurich; Melchor Stauffaher, 1664), 246–91.

11. *Libro de la Cosmographia* [*sic*] *et Geographia de Affrica,* V.E. MS 953, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Rome, hereafter cited as CGA.

12. CGA 19r ("secundo la debil memoria del prefato compositore"); Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 39 (changes to "questo è quanto m'è rimaso nella memoria"). For other references to his memory or to his not having seen Arabic history books in ten years, see Davis, *Trickster Travels,* 106, 319 n. 57.

13. CGA 389r [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 310]; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 386.

14. CGA 2r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 20.

15. Ramusio also changed al-Wazzān's frequent use of "he" and "the author" (or compiler, *"il compositore"*) for self-reference to the first person, thus eliminating a distancing device that the author had carefully inserted into the manuscript. See the index to Davis *Trickster Travels,* 428–29, for specific references to Ramusio's editorial changes on different matters in Giovanni Leone's manuscript.

16. *Historiale Description de l'Afrique, tierce partie du monde . . . Escrite de nôtre temps par Iean Leon, African, premierement en langue Arabesque, puis en Toscane, et à present mise en François* (Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556). Jean Bellere also published an edition at Antwerp in 1556, with Temporal's dedication to the Dauphin François at its opening. Temporal may have been the translator himself, for he had Italian connections, but all he says in his dedication is that "he has had [the book] translated" ('a fait traduire')." *Ioannis Leonis Africani, De Totius Africae Descriptione, Libri X* , trans. John Florian (Antwerp: Jan de Laet, 1556). *A Geographical Historie of Africa, Written in Arabick and Italian by Iohn Leo a More, borne in Granada, and brought up in Barbarie,* trans. John Pory (London: George Bishop, 1600).

17. Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 79–80; Dietrich Rauchenberger, "L'hypothèse du tableau," in Pouillon, ed. *Léon l'Africain,* 364–71. Claudio M. Strinati and Bernd Wolfgang Lindemann, *Sebastiano del Piombo, 1485–1547,* exh. cat., Rome: Palazzo di Venezia, Rome, Feb. 8–May 18, 2008 and Berlin: Gemäldegalerie, June 28–Sept. 28, 2008 (Milan: F. Motta, 2008), 36: discuss possible identifications of the "humanist" as Marcantonio Flaminio and as al-Ḥasan al-Wazzān/Giovanni Leone, "a difficult yet suggestive identification."

18. Marie-Geneviève Guesdon and Anne Vernay-Nouri, *L'Art du livre arabe: Du manuscrit au livre d'artiste* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2001), 23 (reed pens), 138–61 (dark leather bindings, which characteristically have leather overflaps rather than ties between the front and back cover, as in the Sebastiano del Piombo painting. In the few instances where a tie is used, it is a single leather string going from one end of the flap around the entire book).

19. J.B. Harley and David Woodward, eds., *The History of Cartography,* vol. 2, book 1: *Cartography in the Tradition Islamic and South Asian Societies* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 27–28, and fig. 2.10, 42–47, 200–201, 221–22.

20. MS Vat. Ar. 357, Biblioteca Vaticana, Vatican City. Reproduced in Davis, *Trickster Travels,* fig. 3. Another illustration of Giovanni Leone's state of mind and strategies for living between worlds is the opening and colophon to his Arabic transcription of an Arabic manuscript of Paul's Epistles, made for Alberto Pio in January 1521. These are filled with Islamic exhortatory phrases, which are at least transportable into Christianity; only one or two words are distinctly Christian (reproduced in translation in Davis, *Trickster Travels,* 186–87).

21. CGA 433r, "con la Dei gratia tornando sano e salvo del viagio de la Europa"; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 429, "con l'aiuto di Dio," leaves out "safe and sound."

22. Joannes Boemus, *The Fardle of Facions conteining the aunciente maners, customes and lawes of the peoples enhabiting the two partes of the earth called Affrike and Asia* (London: John Kingstone and Henry Sutton, 1555; facsimile edition: Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum and New York: De Capo Press, 1970), F1r, F3r, F8v.

23. Gomes Eanes de Zurara, *Chronique de Guinée,* trans. Louis Bourdon and Robert Ricard (Dakar: IFAN, 1960) 77. The captain regretted that he had not been able to capture any "Maures" to take back on the voyage. An important study of Portuguese travel literature is Josiah Blackmore, *Moorings. Portuguese Expansion and the Writing of Africa* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

24. Alvise Cadamosto, *Relation des voyages à la Côte occidentale d'Afrique d'Alvise de Ca'da Mosto, 1455–1457,* ed. Charles Schefer (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1895), 80–81, 115. This edition is drawn from the French translation that followed al-Wazzān's *Historiale Description* in the edition published by Jean Temporal in 1556. An example of a fanciful rumor is Cadamosto's account of the complicated exchange of salt from the mines at Tagaza with a mysterious people in Mali, who never allow anyone to see them (56–60). It bears no relation to the accounts of the salt trade by Ibn Baṭṭūta, who visited both Tagaza and Mali, in 1352 or al-Wazzān. Abū 'Abdallāh ibn Baṭṭūta, *Voyages,* ed. Stéphane Yerasimos, trans. C. Defremery and R.B. Sanguinette, 3 vols. (Paris: Librairie François Maspero and Éditions La Découverte, 1982–97), 3:396–412. CGA 374r, 379v–380v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 272]; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 370–71, 377.

25. [Alvara Velho], *A Journal of the First Voyage of Vasco da Gama,* trans. E.G. Ravenstein (New Delhi and Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1995), 17–18.

26. Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographiae Universalis Libri VI* (Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1559), 1151–52. In his learned study of Münster's *Cosmographia,* Matthew McLean points out that Münster had actually seen Siamese twins in Worms and comments, "Extrapolation from the shocking evidence of his own eyes, and reports of feral men in Russia and a malformed man in Cracow, perhaps meant that Münster was prepared to suspend disbelief in these outlandish races for the purposes of his book and the expectations of his readers." Matthew McLean, *The "Cosmographia" of Sebastian Münster: Describing the World in the Reformation* (Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2007), 271–72.

27. Münster, *Cosmographiae Universalis,* 1128, 1157–58. Cadamosta, *Navigations,* xiii–xvii, 114–15.

28. On production and trade in the Mediterranean, see the classic study of Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II,* 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1966), especially vol. 1. Lisa Jardine looks at objects and exchange between Europe and the Ottoman empire in *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1996). Much material on medieval industries in the Arab world is included in S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza,* 5 vols. (Los Angeles and Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967–85). A full picture of industries in the medieval Islamic world, with much material on production in Africa, is given in Maya Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: E. Brill, 1994). Giovanni Leone's picture from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century converges well with the overall figures given by Shatzmiller.

29. CGA 291v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 294.

30. CGA 321r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 322.

31. CGA, 362r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 359 (Ramusio added "tanto sottili e delicati"; CGA just said "paron di seta"). On Zerhoun Mountain in the Middle Atlas, "the women weave most beautiful (*bellissimi*) woolen cloth"; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 216, omitted *"bellissimi."* In Beni Yazgha Mountain, farther east in the Middle Atlas, the local wool was so fine that the women wove cloth "that seemed like silk"; they then made garments and bedclothes, which were sold at Fez (CGA 259r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 268). On the factory-like weaving workshops for male linen-weavers at Fez: CGA 159v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 179.

32. CGA 46r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 70.

33. CGA 104r, 110v, 111r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 127–28, 133–34.

34. CGA 81v, 236r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 107, 247.

35. CGA 274r, 281r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 280–81, 286.

36. CGA 163v–164r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 183. Burnoose trimmings: CGA 155v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 176.

37. CGA, 164r–v, 166v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 183, 185. Merchants selling women's garments, CGA, 155v, Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 176.

38. CGA, 321r–v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 321–22. Giovanni Leone added that officers at the king's court and king's soldiers did not wear the distinctive cloth.

39. CGA, 324v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 324. Al-Wazzān gave the Arabic name for the second cloth used in the headdress as *sefsari,* wrongly transcribed by Ramusio as *setfari.* The Tunisian *safsari* today (as the word is now transliterated) is a traditional veil of a single cloth that is used to cover the entire body (M.M. Charrad, "Veils and Laws in Tunisia," in Herbert L. Bodman and Nayereh Tohidi, *Women in Muslim Societies: Diversity within Unity* [Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1998], 66). If we assume that al-Wazzān was using the word correctly, forms of veiling must have changed from the sixteenth century.

40. CGA 394r–v, 414v–415r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 390–91, 412. Mamluk Egypt had an active trade with the Indian Ocean in the early years of the sixteenth century, which the Portuguese ships were trying to disrupt.

41. CGA 379v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 270], (Djenné: "li habitatori sono civili vanno ben vestiti"); Ram, 376 ("gli abitatori vestono assai bene"); CGA 380v–381r [Rauch 174, 276], (Timbuktu: "lo homini vanno bene vestiti de tele di bambace o de colore nigro o azurro anchi portani deli panni che vanno de la Europa per li mercanti de la Barbaria"); Ram 378 cuts the phrase about the men's garb and simply adds the arrival of European cloth to the economic activities in Timbuktu: "vengono ancora a lei panni d'Europa portati de mercatanti di Barberia").

42. CGA 384r–v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 288], 290; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 381.

43. CGA 60v, 93v–94r, 384v [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 290]; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 86, 118, 381.

44. CGA, water bags: 415v, saddles: 154v ("per excellentia"); Ramusio, *Descrizione,* water bags: 412–13, saddles: 175 ("eccellenti e mirabili").

45. CGA 81r, 98r, 257v, 283v–284r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 89, 107, 122, 265, 289.

46. CGA 154r–159r, 390r [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 314], 404v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 175–79, 386, 401–2.

47. CGA 47v, 49r, 52v–53r, 61r, 78r, 82v, 87v , 353r, 357r, 407r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 71, 73, 78, 86, 104, 108, 112, 351, 355, 404. At Fez, said Giovanni Leone, most of the goldsmiths were Jewish and lived in the Jewish quarter in New Fez. In principle, no Muslim could practice as a goldsmith because by Muslim law, it was forbidden as usury to sell golden or silver objects at a price above their weight. But Jews in Muslim lands were permitted by the authorities to make such sales (CGA 194r–v, Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 207). Al-Wazzān was here referring to the Muslim law of *riba,* which covered exchange of objects that could be weighed and measured and were the same kind of thing. No "excess" or "increase" was allowed in such transactions. (Joseph Schacht, *Introduction au droit musulman,* trans. Paul Kempf and Abdel Magid Turki (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1999), 124. To quote from a Maliki legal text that was cited in al-Wazzān's day: one can sell silver for silver and gold for gold only on condition that the value of each is exactly the same and the transaction is made from hand to hand. Ibn Abî Zayd al-Qayrawānî, *La Risâla. Epître sur les elements du dogme et de la loi de l'islam selon le rite Mâlikite,* trans. Léon Bercher (Paris: Éditions IQRA, 1996), 156. The extensive Jewish law on usury evidently did not cover this kind of transaction.

48. CGA 56r–v, 60r, 86v, 96v, 112r, 164v, 257v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 81, 85, 111, 120, 134, 183–84, 266.

49. CGA 415r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 412.

50. CGA 128r–v, 138v, 158r, 292r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 151, 161, 178–79, 295.

51. CGA 142r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 164. The combination of wood and ivory is found in beautiful minbars in Cairo as well (Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250–1800* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994], 89, 100). This is Giovanni Leone's sole mention of ivory products. In an entry on the elephant, he says only that elephants are found in the Land of the Blacks and killed for the sale of their tusks (CGA 442r–v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 439). Shatzmiller also notes the rarity of reference to workers in ivory in her late medieval sources, and explains this by the limited demand for luxury items made of ivory (Shatzmiller, *Labour,* 229–30).

52. CGA 157v–158r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 178.

53. CGA 148v, 149v, 159r, 260v, 329v, 370r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 170–71, 269, 328, 365.

54. CGA 190r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 201. Al-Wazzān used the third person self-reference: "the author has never seen. . . " as he did most of the time throughout his manuscript; Ramusio as usual replaced it with the first-person.

55. CGA 351r–v (Ufrān), 379r (Djenné), 380v–381r (Timbuktu), 384r (Gao) [Rauchenberger, *Johannes Leo,* 268, 274, 276, 288]; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 350, 376, 378, 381. Al-Wazzān did not specifically mention here the purchase of slaves for the return caravan, though he did describe the slave market at Gao and slave transactions in the Sus in which he was involved as an agent for the powerful ruler of southern Morocco.

56. CGA 279v, 320v; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 285, 321. On these *funduqs* or *fondacas,* see the major study of Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Comments of other travelers in 234, 267.

57. CGA 399r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 395–96. Constable, *Housing the Stranger,* 267; André-E. Sayous, *Le commerce des Européens à Tunis depuis le XIIe siècle jusqu'à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Société d'Éditions géographiques, maritimes et coloniales, 1929), 24, 55, 82–83, 87–88, 124–25; Frederic C. Lane, *Andrea Barbarigo, Merchant of Venice, 1418–1449* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1944; repr. New York: Octagon Books, 1967), 31, 52, 105; Herman Van der Wee, "Structural Changes in European Long Distance Trade, and Particularly in the Re-export Trade from South to North, 1350–1750," in James. D. Tracey, ed., *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350–1750* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 24–25; Ralph Austen, "Marginalization, Stagnation, and Growth: The Trans-Saharan Caravan Trade in the Era of European Expansion, 1500–1900," in ibid., 313, 321, 329–30.

58. CGA 76v–77r; Ramusio, *Descrizione,* 102. Once again, Ramusio replaced al-Wazzān's third-person reference to *"il compositore"* by the first person.

59. On the impact of Giovanni Leone's Africa book, see Zhiri, *L'Afrique,* and Oumelbanine Zhiri, *Les sillages de Jean Léon l'Africain: XVIe au XXe siècle* (Casablanca: Walalda, 1995).

60. "Delle navigazioni di messer Alvise da Ca'da Mosto, gentiluomo veneziano," in Ramusio, *Navigazioni,* 1:473–535.

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