

- GOMEZ-GÉRAUD M.-C., *Le crépuscule du Grand Voyage: les récits des pèlerins à Jérusalem (1458–1612)* (Paris: 1999)
- GREAVES J., *Pyramidographia, or a description of the Pyramids in Aegypt* (London: 1646)
- , *Discourse of the Romane Foot, and Denarius* (London: 1647)
- , *Binae tabulae geographicae, una Eddini Persae, altera Ulug Beigi Tatarum* (London: 1652)
- , *Miscellaneous Works of Mr. John Greaves, Professor of Astronomy in the University of Oxford* . . . , ed. Birch T., 2v. (London: 1737)
- HAMILTON A., *William Bedwell, the Arabist, 1563–1632* (Leiden: 1985)
- HAYNES J., *The Humanist as Traveler: George Sandys's Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610* (Rutherford: 1986)
- HOWARTH D., *Lord Arundel and His Circle* (New Haven: 1985)
- MERCIER R., "English Orientalists and Mathematical Astronomy", in Russell G.A. (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth Century England* (Leiden: 1994) 158–214
- MOMIGLIANO A., "Ancient History and the Antiquarian", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* XIII (1950) 285–315
- MORRISH P.S., *Dr. Higgs and Merton College Library: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Book-Collecting and Librarianship* (Leeds: 1988)
- NELLEN H.J.M., "'Such Is My Rambling Destiny': Travellers to the Levant in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", in Bots H. – Waquet F. (eds), *Commercium litterarium*, 207–28
- RUBIÉS J.-P., "Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See", *History and Anthropology* 9, 2–4 (1996) 139–90
- SHALEV Z., "Measurer of All Things: John Greaves (1602–1652), the Great Pyramid, and Early Modern Metrology", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 63, 4 (2002) 555–75
- SMITH T., *Clarissimi ac doctissimi viri, Joannis Gravii, olim astronomiae in academia Oxoniensi professoris Saviliani, Vita* (London: 1699)
- STAGL J., *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel, 1550–1800* (Chur: 1995)
- TINGUELY F., *L'écriture du Levant à la renaissance: enquête sur les voyageurs français dans l'empire de Soliman le magnifique* (Genève: 2000)
- TOOMER G.J., *Eastern Wisdom and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: 1996)
- YERASIMOS S., *Les voyageurs dans l'Empire Ottoman, XIV^e–XVI^e siècles: Bibliographie, itinéraires et inventaire des lieux habités* (Ankara: 1991)

PEIRESC, THE LEVANT AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Peter N. Miller

Peiresc (1580–1637) was as responsible as anyone else of his generation for the great advance in European learning about oriental languages that occurred in the seventeenth century. But because of his decision not to publish—indeed, because he believed that learning was most advanced by serving those best endowed by nature and training, rather than by pursuing one's own glory—only his contributions to the study of Coptic and Samaritan are at all known, and these through the publications of others (Athanasius Kircher and Jean Morin, respectively).¹ His commitment to Ethiopic seems to have remained isolated among the group of Capuchins he corresponded with, two of whom were martyred in Gondar in the year after his own death, and the achievements of a third, Father Gilles de Loches, forgotten. His interest in Hebrew as part of a living culture in both ancient and medieval times is known only to those familiar with the life of the Bulgarian-born rabbi of Carpentras, Salomon Azubi.² Peiresc's knowledge of Arabic was non-existent; but he had for the times rather a large collection of Arabic coins and inscriptions (found in Marseilles), and encouraged contacts in the Levant (and in Marseilles) to seek out Arabic manuscripts that were

¹ See Miller P.N. "Copts and Scholars: Kircher in Peiresc's Republic of Letters", *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything*, ed. Findlen P. (London: 2004) 133–48; "An Antiquary Between Philology and History: Peiresc and the Samaritans", *History and the Disciplines: The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Kelley D.R. (Rochester: 1997) 163–84; "A Philologist, a Traveller and an Antiquary Rediscover the Samaritans in Seventeenth-Century Paris, Rome and Aix: Jean Morin, Pietro della Valle and N.-C. Fabri de Peiresc", *Gelehrsamkeit als Praxis: Arbeitsweisen, Funktionen, Grenzbereiche*, eds. Zedlmaier H. – Mulsow M. (Tübingen: 2001) 123–46.

² The survival of Peiresc's notes on a series of conversations with the Rabbi of Carpentras, made during the conversations, has made it possible for me to re-construct part of their face-to-face relationship. See Miller, "The Mechanics of Christian-Jewish Intellectual Collaboration in Seventeenth-Century Provence: N.-C. Fabri de Peiresc and Salomon Azubi", *Hebraica Veritas? Christian Hebraists, Jews, and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Coudert A. – Shoulson J. (Philadelphia: 2003) 78–101.

translations of Greek texts, as well as those produced by Eastern Christians.³

All these activities, were they known, would surely earn Peiresc a place in the first rank of European scholars on the eve of the formal beginning of oriental studies. But what marks Peiresc as absolutely exceptional is the extent to which these intellectual projects were not only accompanied by experience of the 'real world' but were in a very real way generated out of that practical knowledge. If he started from a fascination with the past, and with the languages and literatures of the Near East in particular, Peiresc's Levant was, nevertheless, part of the living, breathing reality of the early seventeenth-century Mediterranean. And Peiresc himself, as a resident of Aix-en-Provence, and frequent visitor to Marseilles, to which he was in any event closely tied through family, friendships and clientage, was part of that Mediterranean reality. If he had lived in Rome, or Paris, or Leiden, or London, or any of Europe's political and intellectual capitals, he might still have become a famous antiquary and naturalist. But it was proximity to the great commercial hub of Marseilles that cast these intellectual inclinations as a Mediterranean vocation.

For Peiresc's Levant stretched far beyond Egypt and Syria, to Algiers in the west and to the Yemen in the east—the world of the Ottoman Empire. But in addition to its politics and its peoples, Peiresc was also a keen student—perhaps the keenest of his day, and for many days to come—of the natural history of the Mediterranean, both north and south, as well as east and west. The 'scientific invention of the Mediterranean', to speak in the current parlance, took place in Aix in 1630, not in Napoleon's Egypt or, even, Braudel's Algiers.⁴ But here we shall necessarily remain concerned most closely with only a part of this vast tableau: Peiresc's human network in the Ottoman Empire.

I

Although, like many of his generation, Peiresc began with an interest in Hebrew, he added the more unusual fascination with Samaritan—or paleo-Hebrew script—as early as his sojourn in Padua in 1600. The great influence of Joseph Scaliger kept alive this interest in the Samaritans through the third and fourth decades of his life (i.e. until 1620). But it was only with his return from Paris to Provence in October 1623 that Peiresc developed—and was able to develop—this Mediterranean vision.

We can follow the steps by which Peiresc deepened his involvement in the Levant thanks to the chance survival of part of what was a ledger, or register, of his outgoing correspondence. The fragment that we possess covers the period between October 1622 and November 1632.⁵ It lists all the destinations of all the letters he sent, their date, and the means by which they were carried. This is precisely the detailed information that we lack for the years before 1622 and after 1632.⁶ Not only does the register map out Peiresc's Republic of Letters in the Levant, but, because of his nodal position pivoting between north and south, it also describes the vectors through which information about the Ottoman Empire became part of the general fund of European knowledge.

Because of its importance, a word about this document, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises (B.N. N.a.f.) 5169, is in order. It has 5,178 entries, yielding 793 correspondents, of whom 415 received only one letter. Of the remaining 378 the recipients of Peiresc's letters can be ranked in descending order:

⁵ Do other, similar, documents exist for other periods of Peiresc's life? Is the surviving manuscript a fragment of that larger whole? We know that the series of Peiresc manuscripts catalogued as N.a.f. 5172–4 had been stolen by Libri and later recovered. Indeed, examination of N.a.f. 5169 reveals that pagination begins at '16' and was, presumably, re-numbered to begin at '1' after the partial recovery of the document. Given that the manuscript in our possession contains only 50 pages quite a considerable amount is missing for the period prior to 1622—and no doubt a great deal for the period 1632–37.

⁶ We cannot, however, extrapolate from the activity over this ten-year period to the years before 1622 and after 1632 because in this way correspondence does reflect life: the movement of individuals and of ideas is contingent, and the interests that Peiresc developed and pursued altered with these changes. What was true of Peiresc in 1628 was not true of him in 1618 nor 1608 nor, in the same way, in 1637.

³ Some of this is discussed in Miller P.N., "Peiresc in Africa: Arm-Chair Anthropology in the Early Seventeenth Century", *Les premiers siècles de la république européenne des Lettres (1368–1638)*, ed. Lion-Violet M. (Paris: 2005).

⁴ For example, *L'invention scientifique de la Méditerranée. Égypte, Morée, Algérie*, eds Bouguet M.-N., Leptit B., Nordman D., Sinarellis M. (Paris: 1998).

Loménie 203, Vallavez [Peiresc's brother] 186, Dupuy 166, Bonnaire 122, Barberini 117, Alejandro 108, Fetan 104, Jacquet 87, Cardon 83, Le Beauclerc 81, Oppède 75, Mondevergues 74, Rubens 74, Aubery 69, Callas [Peiresc's father] 68, Bagni 62, Guittard 62, Eschinard 60, Le Peletier 58, Suares 57, Du Val 54, Agut 53, Gassendi 53, Lumaga 53, Seguiran 53, Bentivoglio 49, Roumouilles 47, Spinola 53, Barclay 42, Viaz 41, La Ville aux Clercs 40, Holstenius 39, Malherbe 34, Bardi 33, Pacius 33, Pignoria 32, Fourbin 31, Gastines 30, Menestrier 30, Robin (Vespasian) 30, Cobelluzzi 29, de Thou 29, Ranchin 28, Rigault 28, de Brèves 23, dal Pozzo 21, G.B. Doni 21. Based on the reduced total of 4,738 letters, Serge Mapouet has calculated that Paris is the destination of 30%, Rome 17%, Lyons 7%, Aix 6%, Provence (aside from Aix and Marseilles) 5%, Marseilles 4%, Bordeaux and Toulouse 3%, Antwerp, Guitres, Genoa 2%, Toulon, Valence, Montpellier, Brussels, Venice, Padua, Istanbul 1%, Geneva, Grenoble, Nîmes, Orange, and London less than 1%.⁷

But just as scholars have tended to overlook the family in the Republic of Letters—and the location of Peiresc's brother, Vallavez, is the key to the changing shape of his own correspondence network—they have over-emphasised the glamorous long-distance correspondence between great men. Most intellectual life in the Republic of Letters took place on a local level. More than 15% of all the letters were to recipients in Provence, or to Provençaux in the Levant. And if we add to this the fact that the bulk of early modern learned life took place face-to-face we see just how local—how *Mediterranean*—Peiresc's Republic of Letters actually was.

In N.a.f. 5169 we meet the anonymous friends, lackeys and locals who carried Peiresc's mail: André Rive, Sandin, Astruc, Emeric d'Ières, La Fayé, Estienne, Le Gascon, among many others. But there are also the almost-as-anonymous-but-actually-very-important figures such as Pierre Fort, and the merchants referred to only as Signier and de Gastines, Peiresc's financial brokers and agents in Marseilles. For Peiresc's letters actually trace for us the web of *their* commercial contacts, in Spain, Italy, Egypt, or Syria. Only a tiny

⁷ For this information I am indebted to Maupouet S., *Le registre des correspondants de Peiresc, ou le réseau épistolaire et relationnel, européen et méditerranéen d'un humaniste aixois dans la troisième décennie du dix-septième siècle*, 4 vols. Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris XII—Val de marne, Faculté des Lettres—Département d'Histoire, 1996. The figures are his. I thank Françoise Waquet for making this available to me. Jacquet was the 'Sieur de Fetan' so these entries actually refer to the same person.

handful of letters to these three men survive, but the frequency of their mention in this register—as well as internal evidence from those few extant letters—suggest that these are only a fraction of the whole. In fact, they were intimately connected and internal evidence suggests that they sometimes exchanged several letters *each day*.

It was through this local network that Peiresc's longest-distance correspondence was undertaken. His letters to the Levant were carried from his doorway to the deserts of Syria and Egypt by a series of Provençaux—servants, merchants, diplomats, missionaries. At the receiving end were more merchants, more diplomats, more missionaries, and the occasional traveller. While the number of these letters is indeed small in proportion to the mass of his correspondence, it is exceptionally large in proportion to that of contemporaries, including contemporary merchants, and is without comparison with that of other scholars. An individual letter, moreover, could be quite long and packed with information. Anyone who takes the time to compare the size and richness of Peiresc's letters with the slack and slim replies these elicited will come away with an appreciation of their quality as well as quantity.

Peiresc's geography was, then, crucial to his success. He lived in what we might describe as the Marseilles metropolitan area during its years of greatest economic vigour.⁸ Despite the constant complaints of its merchants that trade was decayed compared to the golden age just past—but never precisely defined anywhere—in the 1620s and 30s scores of relatively small and defenceless ships sailed out of Marseilles, and to a much lesser extent Toulon, Martigues and Sixfours, for the *échelles* of the Levant. These were the vehicles

⁸ The debate over the fate of Marseilles's economy in the seventeenth century is one waiting to happen. Contemporaries complained of decline, almost from the beginning of the seventeenth century. If there was an ideal moment for Marseilles's trade, it was so brief (maybe a couple of years after Lepanto, maybe a couple of years under Henri IV in the first decade of the seventeenth century) as to be irrelevant. Yet scholars have for the most part taken the rhetorical bait, designed always to win better financial terms from Paris, at face value. The received view—the 'declinist theory'—was canonised by Masson P., *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: 1896) and was propagated by Braudel, who was in any event much more absorbed by the Spanish and Italian Mediterraneans than the French. Michel Morineau's response to Braudel and Masson appears now as the opening shot of a battle that never materialized ('Flots de commerce et trafics français en méditerranée au XVII^e siècle (jusqu'en 1669)', *XVII^e siècle*, 86–87 (1970) 135–72).

of Peiresc's oriental studies, and he inquired after their sailings and fates as keenly as he did after the precious freight they carried for him. If Peiresc joined the two halves of the Mediterranean, the bankers, patrons, captains and sailors of Marseilles were his collaborators.

This is the story told in shorthand over the ten years of letter-writing documented in this manuscript. It reminds us that, from whatever Olympian eminence we wish to view the Mediterranean, its history, like all human history, is made by human beings. Peiresc's Mediterranean is no exception. However much it belongs to and even illustrates the mega-trends of the early seventeenth century, such as deepening confrontation between France and Spain, the inroads of the Dutch and English, the guerilla war with the Algerian corsairs, and the crumbling, but still iron, curtain separating the Christian and Ottoman worlds, it too was driven by these human relationships.

The first of any significance was with Sanson Napollon, the Corsican-born Marseilles merchant-turned-diplomat whose tours of duty took him, and Peiresc with him, from the centre of the Ottoman Empire to its wild western periphery (1623–33). The second impulsion came from the travels of François-Auguste de Thou, son of the revered Jacques-Auguste de Thou, and a friend in his own right. From Italy in 1628 he journeyed across the Ottoman Levant before returning to France. Third, in 1629, perhaps under the spell of de Thou's own discoveries, Peiresc equipped and organised the departure of the Minim Théophile Minuti, who also travelled in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria, before returning home. The fourth major contribution to the development of Peiresc's human network in the East during the period under review came from the embassy of Henri de Gournay, Comte de Marcheville, discussed at greater length by Alastair Hamilton in this volume. Appointed ambassador to the Sublime Porte as the replacement for the debt-ridden Comte de Césy, his departure in 1631 was viewed by Peiresc as an opportunity to send along a learned team that would report back to him. Finally, just at the end of the period covered by this document, Peiresc met the Capuchin orientalist Gilles de Loches upon his return from Egypt in July 1633, and the renewal of his relationship with Jean Magy, a merchant based in Cairo but who also happened to be back in Marseilles in July 1633.

II

Peiresc's relationship with Napollon began after the latter had already passed from merchant to diplomat (he was consul in Aleppo between 1614 and 1616). At the end of 1623 Napollon was sent on a special mission to Istanbul to try and mediate between the Ambassador and the French commercial community. He landed at Izmir in January 1624 and by March of that year was reported in the capital. Oliver Ollivier wrote to Loménie in May of 1624 trying to get back into French service, like his father. The 'Padri Jesuiti' interceded on his behalf, and so, too, did 'sig.^r Sanson Napolon consolo a Smirni'.⁹ Napollon was mentioned as consul in Izmir in letters written by the French Ambassador, Césy, in July and again in October of that year.¹⁰ Napollon wrote to the Premier Président of the Parlement of Provence, Mr d'Oppède, from Izmir in September 1624 stating that he had completed his mission and would soon return.¹¹ At the end of October he was sent from Izmir to Aleppo. He was in Izmir by April of 1625 and back in Provence by June 1625.¹² It was sometime during his time in Izmir that Napollon participated in one of the great learned discoveries of the seventeenth century: the recovery of what we know as the 'Arundel Marbles' but which were, for a short time, 'Les Pierres Peiresciennes'. The story is told by Gassendi but supporting documentation seems not to have survived.¹³

Napollon was one of a series of special delegates sent by the French King to oversee the chaotic goings on in the *échelles du Levant*: he

⁹ Ollivier to Loménie, 11 May 1624, Bibliothèque Nationale de France [= B.N.], Paris, MS. 500 Colbert 483, fol. 90.

¹⁰ Césy to Villeauxclercs, 21 July 1624, B.N., Paris, MS. V Cents 500 Colbert 483, fol. 135v: 'J'ay reçu une lettre du S^r Sanson Napolon Consul a Smirne par laquelle il me mande que estoy avoir nommé un homme pour Venise'; Césy to Villeauxclercs, 11 October 1624, B.N., Paris, MS V Cents 500 Colbert 483, fol. 169.

¹¹ A copy of the letter is Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine, Carpentras [= Carp.], MS. 1777, fol. 85, dated 4 September 1624 'de Sunion'.

¹² The 'Memoire du S^r de la Picardiere', 21 October 1624, B.N., Paris, MS. V Cents Colbert 483, fol. 184r-v mentions that Napollon was going to monitor the commerce of Aleppo; Césy to Villeauxclercs, 22 December 1624, fol. 205 places Napollon in Aleppo, sent by Picardiere. A letter from Napollon to Césy in Istanbul dated 18 April 1625 shows him still to be in Izmir (B.N., Paris, F.fr. 16162, fols. 2–3).

¹³ Gassendi P., *Mirror of True Nobility and Gentility* (London: 1657), year 1629, page 33.

was preceded by Deshayes in 1621 and followed by La Picardière in 1630. In March of 1626 Peiresc sent his friends in Marseilles—the Consul Durand, the poet Baltasar Viaz and the merchant Signier—a copy of Deshayes de Cormenin's *Voyage du Levant fait en l'année 1621* (Paris, 1624) [17r]. Napollon was himself in Marseilles to receive Peiresc's letter of 13 April [17v]. In an entry dated 15 June 1626 Peiresc indicates that he sent his brother the 'paquet de Napolon à Mr. de la Villeauxclercs' (the Secrétaire d'État Loménie) [17v]. On 11 December 1626 the register records a letter to Vallavez 'avec la lettre de Constantinoble' [22r]. On that same day, Peiresc wrote to Louis de Bonnaire in Rome with the 'mémoires' of the Capuchin Fathers [sic] Louys de la Breillac and Daniel Aymini. What this concerns, we cannot know, but Aymini was a cousin of Peiresc's friend Gallaup de Chasteuil, and was soon to be based in Syria, where he would provide signal assistance to Théophile Minuti (he was a Recollet, not a Capuchin, suggesting that Peiresc at this stage had no direct acquaintance with him) [22r].

On the 6th of January 1627, a letter from Vallavez contained a 'paquet' for Napollon. On the 8th January, Peiresc wrote to François-Auguste de Thou in Rome. He wrote again on the 27th January [23r]. On 23 February 1627 Peiresc sent some 'medailles Arabiques' to his friend, the medical doctor Charles Cassagnes, at Marseilles. [23v] On the 28th February he sent a box of Arabic medals to Cassagnes and Viaz at Marseilles [24r]. On 30 March he sent Viaz a payment of 4 seizins for 'Sayet', a naturalized Moroccan who lived at Marseilles and helped Peiresc with the translation of some Arabic inscriptions [24v].¹⁴

All this is only indirect proof of Peiresc's interest in the East. But in June 1627 we find him writing directly to the East, to M. Viguier, then Consul in Aleppo, resident in Marseilles, to the vice-consul in Cyprus, M. Anthoine Espannet, and to Captain Danmartin, a merchant who traded along this route. Peiresc's request was for old manuscripts, in particular the Assises of Jerusalem [26r; 25 June 1627]. In August 1627, Peiresc must have met Napollon, for there are indications of letters consigned to him for delivery to M. de Gastines in Marseilles and Villeauxclercs in Paris [7 August and 10 August; 26r].

¹⁴ Evidence of their collaboration is preserved in Peiresc's dossier on Arabic coins, found in The Hague, Museum Meermano-Westreenianum, MS. C.10.31.

On the 14th, though, Peiresc was writing to Napollon in Paris [27r]. On the 28th, Peiresc wrote again to Dr Cassagnes in Marseilles, this time including a 'paquet' for the jeweler Nicolas Gilloux about to return to India, and for the three mummies of Patron Bene [27r]. On the 5th of September, Cassagnes in Marseilles was sent 'les proverbes Arabiques' [27v]. On the 19th, Peiresc wrote to Napollon in Paris, and enclosed other letters for him from their friends at Marseilles [28r]. On 3 October Peiresc sent Vespasian Robin in Paris—the royal gardener—'la boîte de plantes de Constantinoble' [28r]. At the end of that month the register records sending letters to Aleppo to Nicolas Gilloux, 'soubs l'enveloppe d'Isoard son beaufrere' and to Espannet in Cyprus [30 October; 28v]. On 6 November, a letter to Napollon was sent 'sur la barque d'Algers' [28v]. On the 17th, more letters were sent to Napollon [29r]. On 28 November, another series of letters were sent to the trio of Viguier, Espannet and Danmartin, still on the trail of the Assises of Jerusalem [29r]. On 13 December Peiresc noted that his manuscripts from Cyprus had arrived [29r].

In January of 1628 Peiresc records that the letter to his kinsman and sometime factotum, Guittard, in Paris, also contained a 'paquet du Sr. Napolon, & du Mr. de Brèves ou pour les lettres d'Algers' (fol.30r). Here, Peiresc was serving as the trans-shipper, mediating between Napollon in Algiers and the Court in Paris. On 22 January Peiresc again forwarded to de Brèves a letter containing a "paquet" from Napollon [30r]. De Brèves was a former ambassador to Istanbul and Rome who long remained a key player in the making of France's—and Peiresc's—Mediterranean strategy.

All this was the preliminary to the serious transformation of Peiresc's focus in 1628. We can pinpoint several key events, as well as longer term continuities that added up to a qualitative shift during this year. First of all, in this year de Thou actually departed from Italy for the Levant. Their letters, back and forth, brought Peiresc face-to-face with contemporary Egypt, Syria and Lebanon and helped refine his own thinking. Second, in this year the Polyglot Bible project was launched in Paris and Peiresc's imagination was fired. Although he was not contacted directly by any of the protagonists in Paris, Peiresc volunteered his services and mobilized his friends as if he had been.

On February 13th 1628, Peiresc sent letters described for the first time as 'pour le Levant', to François-Auguste de Thou in Venice. These included correspondence from the Premier President of the

Parliament of Provence, M. d'Oppède, for the consuls of Alexandria, Aleppo, Sidon, and Scio; from M. Guez of Marseilles to his brother, then living in Galata, along with a credit of 1000 escus; from M. de Valbelle, the Lieutenant of the Marine and thus effective chief of the Admiralty in Marseilles, to Alexandria, Sidon and Aleppo; from Sr. Viguier, the consul in Aleppo (residing in Marseilles) to Ollivier in Aleppo, Estelle in Sidon and Blanchet in Alexandretta [30v]. A few days later, on the 19th, Peiresc sent a further batch of four letters to de Thou in Venice, but these were from Napollon with recommendations of people he knew at Istanbul and Scio; at the same time Peiresc also sent letters from Napollon to de Brèves [19 February; 31r].

On 26 March 1628 Peiresc served as the conduit for the transmission to Girolamo Aleandro in Rome of a 'pacquet' of Père Jean Morin, of the Oratory. Morin had just begun his work on the Samaritan Pentateuch that was to appear as the sixth volume of the Paris Polyglot and in an assortment of scholarly works, commencing with *Exercitationes Ecclesiasticae in utrumque Samaritanorum Pentateuchum* (Paris, 1631) [32r]. A few days later, on 1 April, Peiresc was transmitting to the Dupuy brothers in Paris a letter from Cairo [32r].

In May of 1628, Peiresc could acknowledge the arrival, from Rome, of the long-sought manuscript of the Assises of Jerusalem [33r; 26 May].¹⁵ On the 30th, he wrote again to M. Viguier, the consul of Syria, in Marseilles, for Espannet in Cyprus [33v].

At the beginning of August, Peiresc wrote to de Thou at Istanbul via Venice [3 August; 35r]. Then he wrote a letter on the 6th to Guez in Marseilles to be sent on to his brother in Istanbul. On the 25th he sent Aubery in Rome a packet from 'M. Servian de Constantinople' [35v]. De Thou remained a focus into September. On the 20th, Peiresc wrote to him at Alexandretta or Sidon, and also to Guez [36r]. The same combination was addressed a couple of weeks later, on 7 October. On the 18th of October, a new name appears, Pietro della Valle, the famous traveller. Peiresc had written to him at the suggestion of Aleandro, on behalf of the Samaritan

¹⁵ I cannot explain the difference between the December 1627 recording of the 'Arrivée des M.SS DE CYPRE' and this one, except to observe that in May the manuscript was accompanied by other materials from Rome, so the elapsed time might account for its arrival in Rome and, later, Provence.

project in Paris [36v]. On 13 December, Peiresc wrote to Tarquet, vice-consul in Sidon, in Marseilles, with letters for de Thou in Alexandria, to an unnamed Capuchin father in Sidon who might well be Gilles de Loches, head of the mission and later one of Peiresc's closest collaborators, and to Sr Estelle, the vice-consul in Sidon [37v].

If de Thou's travels offered Peiresc tantalizing returns from the living Levant in 1628, those of Father Théophile Minuti in 1629 were orchestrated by Peiresc to achieve specific objectives. His interest in things Samaritan picqued by the Bible project in Paris and contact with Della Valle and Morin, Peiresc planned for Minuti to seek out Samaritan artefacts. The preparations included a series of memoranda on which places to visit, what sort of manuscripts and medals to look for, and what to pay for them.¹⁶ On the 15th of February, Peiresc wrote letters to 'Sr l'Empereur', sometime consul in Jerusalem and old eastern 'hand', and to l'Empereur's brother in Marseilles, and to Tarquet in Marseilles, all on Minuti's behalf [39r].

Minuti prepared to leave in May 1629, amidst a flurry of letter-writing. These recommendations map Peiresc's own private Levant. There were the diplomats Espannet in Cyprus, Fernoulx in Egypt, Estelle in Sidon and L'Empereur in Jerusalem. But other recipients, such as Guez in Istanbul and César Lambert in Alexandria, were merchants based in Marseilles. And, of course, the line separating merchant from diplomat in the Échelles is hard to discern: Tarquet in Marseilles provided Estelle in Sidon with a credit of 30 or 40 escus to be used on Minuti's behalf, which Peiresc promised to pay back in Marseilles. Minuti also travelled with a box of casts of Egyptian 'marmousets' as well as Samaritan and Greek medals. The whole was bracketed and labelled by Peiresc 'EN SYRIE & AEGYPTE' [40v]. At the beginning of June, Peiresc wrote again to Marseilles—Minuti's departure having been held up at the last minute—with an additional letter for Minuti. [4 June; 41r] Meanwhile, the fruits of an earlier voyage to the Levant reached Peiresc; on the 10th Peiresc sent the Dupuy brothers a copy of a letter from Pietro della Valle

¹⁶ Carp. MS. 1821 fols. 480–89. These have been partially published in Aufrère S., *La Momie et la Tempête: Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc et la curiosité égyptienne en Provence au début du XVII^e siècle* (Avignon: 1990).

along with a sample from his Samaritan Pentateuch and of 'l'Alphabet Aegyptien des Coptites' [41r]. The next day, the 11th, Peiresc wrote to Della Valle about his materials [41v].

One chapter began while another closed: on 16 June, Peiresc went to Marseilles to greet the returning de Thou [41v]. In a shipment dated 12 August, Peiresc sent Dupuy the two Coptic manuscripts that de Thou had acquired [42v]. The material end of the trip was reached with Peiresc's description, in a letter to Dupuy of 6 November 1629, of the contents of de Thou's chest of acquisitions [44r]. All the while, Peiresc kept up his contacts in Barbary: on 19 August 1629 Peiresc sent his cousin Guittard in Paris a letter 'avec tous les papiers, de Napolon d'Algers' [f.42v]. An 'Advis d'Alger' of 26 August 1629 was sent on to Guittard on 18–20 November 1629 [f.44].

In November 1629, after regular communication from Provence to the rest of the world had been disrupted by an outbreak of the plague, the Mediterranean seaways remained open. Peiresc was still able to write to Sidon, with letters for Tarquet, to the Recollet Daniel Aymini, to Estelle, to Charles le Blanc and to a 'Sr. Maynier' in Damascus. [16 Nov.; 43r] In February 1630 Peiresc wrote again to Sidon, listing the recipients as Estelle, Aymini, Charles le Blanc, 'Mallon en Damas', Thibaud and Tarquet [27 Feb.; 43r]. Duplicates to Estelle, Aymini, Mallon and le Blanc were sent to Peiresc's friend Honoré Aycard in Toulon, probably to be sent in a second ship from his home port [43r].

A month later, some of the fruits of Minuti's trip began to be tasted: Peiresc sent the Dupuy brothers a sample of Samaritan characters from the Triglot acquired by Minuti and Aymini in Syria [23 March, 44v]. And Minuti himself now returned: two letters are addressed to him at Livorno [1–3 March; 43r]. On 15 May, Peiresc sent a sample of Samaritan scripts to della Valle in Rome [43v]. In that same Italian-bound post of 15 May Peiresc also included a letter for the Baron d'Allègre, in Livorno, who had just come back from Lebanon, 'pour le recouvrement des plantes de Facardin' [43v]. In June of 1630, Peiresc sent to Paris a letter from the vice-consul in Cairo, Gabriel Fernoulx, destined for the widow of Savary de Brèves. Madame de Brèves was a frequent correspondent of Peiresc's and since Henri IV had given the consulate of Egypt to de Brèves, who had in turn appointed Fernoulx as the resident vice-consul, this correspondence would have been of interest to her [5 June; 44v]. And, finally, on 5 July, the plants from the Emir's garden in Sidon arrived [45r].

For later that month the register documents the fascinating arrival and passage of two Portuguese jewelers, quite possibly *conversos*, on their way to India. Fernand Nuñez and Manuel da Costa arrived at Aix on 16 July. The three days of their residence *chez* Peiresc have scattered a trail of memoranda in the archive: on travel to the East and on precious stones, like diamonds. They are listed as departing on the 19th of July, on a Marseilles boat. They carried Peiresc's letters to Nicolas Gilloux, 'aux Indes', to Gaspar da Costa, Manuel's brother, at Goa, and to Augustin Herryard, another jeweler, and resident at the Mogul court at Lahore [45r].

A few days later, the register documents another encounter—not a letter sent, but a person met—and the beginning of another adventure. On 26 July, Peiresc recorded his return from Toulon with the Comte de Marcheville, appointed ambassador to Istanbul, though not yet departed for the East [45v]. Marcheville's departure for Paris, the next day, allowed Peiresc to write to de Thou, Dupuy and Gassendi, the latter 'pour Constantinople'—perhaps the first surviving inkling of Peiresc's plan to piggy-back his own 'scientific' mission atop Marcheville's diplomatic one [27 July, 45v]. Publication of Jacobus Golius's manuscript catalogue in Paris, in 1630, engineered by Gassendi, is registered here only indirectly, in Peiresc's dispatch to Della Valle 'avec les MSS Arabes de Golius' [27 October; 45v].

In January 1631, Peiresc was scurrying to find books on surgery that were desired by Jean Mallon, a correspondent of his at Aleppo [18 January; 46r]. The books finally left on the 20th of February [46v]. The years of 1631 and 1632 are only sparsely recorded in the register and, more generally, in Peiresc's surviving correspondence. His isolation at Belgentier seems to have been most severe during these years. Yet, while there is no record of it, we know that Peiresc was deeply involved in the embassy of Marcheville, which left Marseilles in the summer of 1631. Peiresc had tried to attach his friends to the legation for the purposes of scientific gathering. Gassendi and Holstenius were his first choices; in the event, neither was available. So, in the end, he was left with something of a 'B team', Minuti, and the Aixois François Gallaup de Chasteuil, a passable orientalist who was less interested in studying the Eastern Christians than in becoming one. In the end, he did achieve this, gaining some small fame as the 'Solitaire du Mont Liban'. The missions, both Marcheville's and Peiresc's, were essentially disappointing, though Marcheville's failure was more complete and had far worse consequences than his friend's.

Peiresc's correspondence with Thomas d'Arcos in Tunis also developed during these years of isolation. It was conducted via Aycard at Toulon. (Toulon seems not to have been much affected by the quarantine and closure of Marseilles.) The first indication of any contact between them is the reference on 16 July 1630, "TUNIS au Sr. Thomas de Arcos" (f.45r). Another letter went out to Arcos on 8 November 1630 (f.45v). On 23 May 1631 Peiresc sent letters to d'Arcos 'avec 2. tonneaux de vin' (46v). On 18 July 1632 Peiresc again wrote to Arcos at Tunis (f.49r). Their correspondence continued until Peiresc's death.

The very last entry in the register, for 9 November 1632, records the sending to Father Morin in Paris, 'des Pentateuques Samaritains Tritables et simples. Au Sr le Jay des volumes du Nouveau Testament Syriaque et Arabe et de R. Salomon avec le texte du Pentateuque des Juifs et les 3 versions Chaldee, Arabique & Persienne' [51r]. The letter to Le Jay, and another to the King's printer of oriental texts, Antoine Vitre, were professional and logistical; the very long one to Morin—entirely intellectual—marks the deepening of Peiresc's involvement in the Polyglot project.¹⁷

III

For the next few years, despite the silence of the register, we can reconstruct at least the addresses for Peiresc's activities in the Levant. A series of conversations that took place in Aix during the following summer have left us a trail of crucial documents.

In July 1633 Jean Magy returned from Egypt and was debriefed in Aix by Peiresc, as were two Capuchins, Gilles de Loches and Césarée de Rosgo, also on their way back from Cairo. Gilles de Loches and Magy are the sources for two memoranda, in Peiresc's hand, that identify individual contacts in Egypt and Syria.¹⁸

¹⁷ For Peiresc and Morin, see Miller "A Philologist, a Traveller and an Antiquary Rediscover the Samaritans in Seventeenth-Century Paris" (note 1) and "Making the Paris Polyglot Bible: Humanism and Orientalism in the early Seventeenth Century", *Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus/The European Republic of Letters in the Age of Confessionalism*, ed. H. Jaumann, (Wiesbaden: 2001) 59–86.

¹⁸ For Magy see Boud'hors A., "François Daniel. Un 'marchand d'Égypte' provençal

Gilles de Loches provided Peiresc with valuable information about the Venetian Santo Seghezzi, who would claim the consulship of Cairo in 1634—and became embroiled in a terrible fight with the former consul, Brémond—and who was one of Peiresc's most reliable agents. Peiresc observed that Seghezzi had a relative in Marseilles named Géla. In Cairo, there was also a goldsmith from Lyons named Bertier who had a fabulous collection, especially of medals, mummies, and bunnies. In Sidon, where Gilles de Loches had resided from 1626 to 1631, he recommended addressing letters to a Mr Payen of Marseilles, whose brother still lived there. In Cyprus, Gilles de Loches recommended as reliable the Dutch consul Daniel van Steenwinkel.¹⁹

A second list, drawn up by Peiresc from information shared with him by Magy and César Lambert, a partner of de Gastines who also traded in Egypt, goes over the same ground but includes new names.²⁰ It mentions a Recollet Father 'Genie de Saintes' who was the chaplain of the French vice-consul, but was now back in Paris. He was said to 'hate' the Maronites and Greeks who lived in the Venetian quarter and from whom he learned Arabic, and who possessed a number of manuscript books. The Coptic Christians, or 'Nassarans', were described as amongst the greatest writers in the land and as having an unsurpassed quantity of books. They were not as 'traiterous' as the Greeks. The memo then identified particular individuals: 'Sr Domenico' from Marseilles managed Lambert's household and acquired Peiresc's mummy. Mr 'le Gris', a doctor, had a fine collection of porcelain. 'Stephano da Petra', from Messina or Reggio, possessed the two marble mummy covers that came to Marseilles. There was 'Sr Albert', who was so rich as to lack nothing at his house. Giacomo d'Alvise, of Messina, possessed many curiosities from the Red Sea, and was '*le maître des Mommyes*' [underlining in original] on account of his loaning money to the black Africans who, in exchange, made everything available to him as soon as their caravans reached Cairo. Then there was 'Sr Bertier', the jeweler from Lyons, who was 'fort curieux'. He had strange serpents, and other animals. He was the one who bought most of Lambert's

au service des premiers orientalistes français", in *Hommages à Jacques Leclant* vol.4, (Istanbul: 1994) 19–27.

¹⁹ Carp. MS. 1864, fol. 257r-v.

²⁰ B.N., Paris, N.a.f. 5174, fol. 25r-v.

vases. There was 'Simon de Dime', the Venetian vice-consul in Rosetta, so 'fort Franc et genereux' that despite being 'le plus curieux du Cayre' he gave away his acquisitions too freely. Then Peiresc listed the French Capuchins who had set up the mission in Cairo. The superior was Gilles de Loches, who had been at Sidon, and the others were Césarée de Rosgo, from Brittany, and Thomas de Vendôme, a 'grand astronome ou mathématicien', who argued with the Venetians. The Capuchins were returning to France to establish a mission from La Rochelle to the Congo with the hope of proceeding from there across the African isthmus to Ethiopia.

What is also interesting about this memo is that we can see how it served as the basis for further inquiries. Alongside the listing of Fathers Gilles de Loches and Césarée de Rosgo, but in the margin, Peiresc wrote 'est a Rome' and 'Encor a Rome'. Bracketing both, he noted 'ils ont passé par Aix le 25-26 Juillet 1633'. This suggests an earlier date for the body of the memorandum and, at least, a *terminus a quo*.

A third memorandum, labelled 'JEAN MAGI' after its probable source, lists the important figures who crossed Magy's path in Egypt, including the Roman traveller Pietro della Valle, the Venetian Vincenzo Colonna and the Franciscan Tommaso da Novara. The others who are listed are unknown to us but were necessary to ventures like Peiresc's. These included 'Joseph Bauchue Droguiste à Marseilles pour le recouvrement des quelques livres', 'un Cordelier espagnol qui s'est fait Juif et nommé ABRAAM GAYT qui a grande creance entr'eux pour la doctrine et sembloit avoir songé de retourner à Rome ayant prins lettres de recommandation pour cet effect', 'un evesque Cophite qui est des principaux chefs de l'église du pais et de Saint-Macaire', 'un Turc, ou *cavagy*, qui a quantité des livres en Arabe et aultres langues orientales, tant de l'histoire d'entre l'Egypte et le Pays de l'Hiemen que aultres plus anciennes', 'Sieur Bobaquer Soala, marchand damasquin, des plus curieux du Cayre qui a correspondance aux Indes, Hiemen, Abyssinie, Alep', 'le medecin d'Andalusie . . . nommé AQUIN MUSTAPHA, lequel passa icy et vit Mr du Vair avant l'expulsion des Morisques', 'les sieurs Vignon', 'Mr le Gris Medecin', and 'L'Hoste, commis du Sr Lambert'. On the reverse of the memo Peiresc noted simply, 'Santo Segueti Venitien ami de P. Gilles de Losches'.²¹

²¹ Carp. MS 1864, fol. 256r-v. The text is published in Aufrère, *La Momie et la Tempête* (note 16), 106-7.

The Capuchin network in the Levant, into which Peiresc sought so successfully to insinuate himself—and which is most evident in his Ethiopian enterprise—is reflected in another memo on Gilles de Loches's contacts on the Greek island of Scio (or Chios).²² But even here, at the heart of the Mediterranean, connections with northern Europe are inevitable: one of the Capuchins had been a slave in Turkey along with some Englishmen who had sailed to Russia for the cod fishery. Nor could Peiresc's ethnographic curiosity be reined in by considerations of geographical inappropriateness alone. He noted that their ships were covered by pelts for protection against the cold, that trade with the Russians was carried on at the seashore, and that moustaches froze.

IV

N.a.f. 5169 breaks off, then, just as Peiresc's oriental studies reach a kind of 'take-off' point. In November 1632 Rabbi Salomon Azubi came to him at Aix and they studied Jewish metrology, religious ritual, and Samaritan. In the spring of 1633 Peiresc first met Athanasius Kircher, who had arrived not long before in Avignon. In July, as we have just seen, Peiresc again played host to Azubi, but also to Magy and Gilles de Loches. In September, Kircher returned and they discussed Egyptian hieroglyphics—it was during this meeting that Peiresc uncovered Kircher's fraudulence leading to the latter's abrupt departure for Rome. In February 1634, Peiresc opened up a channel to Zacharie Vermeil, the jeweler from Montpellier then assisting the Emperor of Ethiopia. In April, pursuing Father Gilles' hint about the possibility of reaching Ethiopia from the Congo,

²² 'Le R.P. EVANGELISTE de Suippe (d'auprez de Reims) des missionnaires en Grece, estoit a present a Scio, et estoit bien curieux des Mathematiques. Le R.P. BERNARD DE PARIS Supérieur à suivre l'est bien encores. Le Sr. STEPHANO GIUSTINIANO de Scio, qui est si fort accredité sur les lieux, et qui à esté esclave du G.S. avec des Angloys qui avoient faict le voyage de Moscovie par le lieu de la pesche des morues dans ces barques couverts de draps et de peaux outre le boys, et les victres, pour se deffendu de l'extremité du froid, les Moscovites apportent les marchandises au bord de la mer. Que le nez gelé en la moustache a la grille et que au vent froit, succédé un vent si chaud qu'on estouffé'. [underscoring in original] Carp. MS. 1777, fol. 365.

Peiresc began an important conversation with Father Colombin de Nantes that opened up into one of the earliest European, and certainly the most ethnographically arresting, discussions about the Kingdoms of Benin and its neighbours on the Guinea Coast. Peiresc's letters to d'Arcos in Tunis continued, with Peiresc being supplied with information about ancient Carthage, modern Tunis, and contemporary sub-Saharan Africans. From Egypt Peiresc received, and retained, an extraordinary series of memoranda on the revenues and finances of that Ottoman province. In 1635 Peiresc began planning for a simultaneous lunar eclipse observation with instructions sent out to his friends in Tunis, Cairo, Sidon and Aleppo. The goal of this was to correct existing sailing charts of the Mediterranean by accurately fixing longitudes. A series of fascinating letters went back and forth in 1634–36 between him and Pieter Golius, a.k.a. Father Célestine de Sainte-Lidiwine, the brother of the great Leiden orientalist Jacobus Golius, and a Catholic convert later to become Professor of Oriental Languages in Rome. These letters remain unpublished, as do those he wrote to his brother and Catholic uncle in Antwerp and sent to Peiresc—who kept copies of them—for forwarding: silent proof of contemporary recognition that Peiresc's Levant was much closer to Europe than anyone else's. Peiresc also tried to mediate in a struggle between Seguezzi, appointed consul in Cairo in 1634, and the former consul, the Marseilles merchant Bremond. It was through information gleaned from Cairo that Peiresc was able to write up reports on volcanic eruptions in Ethiopia and the Kasimid overthrow of the Ottomans in the Yemen.

All of the events and episodes mentioned in the foregoing paragraph—to which others could be added—are attested only in Peiresc's correspondence and working papers. Without them, this small but not trivial part of human history would be lost. This makes especially fortunate the publication in 1890 of Peiresc's letters to the Capuchins in Egypt in the years 1634–1637.²³ These amount to approximately 125, and a considerable number of them are of riveting intellectual

²³ Peiresc to Gilles de Loches, 22 August 1633, *Correspondance de Peiresc avec plusieurs Missionnaires et Religieux de l'ordre des Capucins 1631–1637*, ed. P. Apollinaire de Valence (Paris: 1891) 5.

interest. Some, for instance, have simply been reprinted by a historian of the Capuchin missionary enterprise in West Africa because they contain decisive material not found elsewhere.²⁴ But for the same period there remain approximately 255 unpublished letters to other correspondents in the Levant in that *same* dossier alone.²⁵ To these we can add roughly 167 to the Levant or to those in Marseilles with an interest in the Levant beginning in 1627 and found in a different dossier.²⁶ And then there are scattered letters, amounting to hundreds, probably bringing the whole of those concerned with the Levant and the Mediterranean to around one thousand letters. This gives some sense of the scale of Peiresc's Mediterranean venture, and some sense, also, of how tentative any assertions about the workings of the Republic of Letters in the Levant, or of the beginnings of oriental studies in Europe, must be until this *tel* is finally, and meticulously, excavated.

Selective Bibliography

Manuscript sources

Carpentras, Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine
MS. 1777
MS. 1821
MS. 1864
MS. 1874
MS. 1876

The Hague, Museum Meermano-Westreenianum
MS. C.10.31

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France
MS. V Cents Colbert 483
MS. Fonds français 16162
MS. Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 5169
MS. Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 5174

²⁴ *Monumenta Missionaria Africana*, 11 vols (Lisbon: 1952–1971); *Africa occidental (1631–1642)*, ed. & annot. Padre Antonio Brásio (Lisbon: 1960) vol. 8.

²⁵ Carp. 1874.

²⁶ Carp. 1876.

Printed sources

- AUFÈRE S., *La momie et la tempête: Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc et la curiosité égyptienne en Provence au début du XVII^e siècle* (Avignon: 1990)
- BOUD'HORS A., "François Daniel. Un 'marchand d'Égypte' provençal au service des premiers orientalistes français", in *Hommages à Jean Leclant*, vol. 4 (Istanbul: 1994) 19–27
- BRASIO A., *Monumenta Missionaria Africana* 11 vols (Lisbon: 1952–1971), vol. 8, *Africa occidentalis* (1631–1642) (Lisbon: 1960)
- MASSON P., *Histoire du commerce français dans le Levant au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: 1896).
- MAUPOUET S., *Le registre des correspondants de Peiresc, ou le réseau épistolaire et relationnel, européen et méditerranéen d'un humaniste aixois dans la troisième décennie du dix-septième siècle*, 4 vols. Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris XII—Val de Marne, Faculté des Lettres—Département d'Histoire (1996)
- MILLER P.N., "An Antiquary through philology and history: Peiresc and the Samaritans", in D.R. Kelley (ed.), *History and the Disciplines: The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, (Rochester: 1997) 163–84
- , "Copts and Scholars: Kircher in Peiresc's Republic of Letters", in *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything*, P. Findlen ed. (London: 2004) 133–48
- , "Making the Paris Polyglot Bible: humanism and orientalism in the early seventeenth century" in H. Jaumann (ed.), *Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik im Zeitalter des Konfessionalismus/The European Republic of Letters in the Age of Confessionalism* (Wiesbaden: 2001) 59–86
- , "The Mechanics of Christian-Jewish intellectual collaboration in seventeenth-century Provence: N.C. Fabri de Peiresc and Salomon Azubi", in A. Coudert – J. Shoulson (eds), *Hebraica Veritas? Christian Hebraists, Jews, and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe*, (Philadelphia: 2003) 78–101
- , "Peiresc in Africa: Arm-chair anthropology in the early seventeenth century" in M. Lion-Violet (ed.), *Les premiers siècles de la république européenne des Lettres (1368–1638)*, (Paris: 2005)
- , "A Philologist, a traveller and an antiquary rediscover the Samaritans in seventeenth-century Paris, Rome and Aix: Jean Morin, Pietro della Valle and N.C. Fabri de Peiresc" in H. Zedlmaier – M. Mulsow (eds), *Gelehrsamkeit als Praxis: Arbeitsweisen, Funktionen, Grenzgebiete*, (Tübingen: 2001) 123–46
- MORINEAU M., "Flots de commerce et trafics français en Méditerranée au XVII^e siècle (jusqu'en 1669)", *Dix-septième siècle*, 86–7 (1970) 135–72
- PEIRESC N.C.F. de, *Correspondance de Peiresc avec plusieurs missionnaires et religieux de l'ordre des Capucins 1631–1637*, ed. Apollinaire de Valence (Paris: 1891)
- , *Lettres de Peiresc aux frères Dupuy*, ed. P. Tamizey de Larroque, 7 vols (Paris: 1888–98)

‘TO DIVEST THE EAST OF ALL ITS MANUSCRIPTS AND
ALL ITS RARITIES’. THE UNFORTUNATE EMBASSY OF
HENRI GOURNAY DE MARCHEVILLE¹

Alastair Hamilton

Seldom has a French embassy to the Ottoman Empire been planned with such intellectual ambitions and ended in such failure as the one led by Henri de Gournay, Comte de Marcheville, in 1631. It was originally intended to be a scientific expedition which would surpass in magnificence and in the standard of the scholars accompanying it anything organised previously. Its object, according to Joseph Bougerel, the biographer of Pierre Gassendi, was ‘rien moins que d’enlever à l’Orient tous ses manuscrits et toutes ses raretez’.² Yet it ended with Marcheville’s being enticed onto a vessel and sent back to France on the orders of the sultan, Murad IV, who had narrowly failed to have him murdered. Historians have consequently been hard on Marcheville.³ Their judgement, although by no means incorrect, is based largely on reports written by his fiercest enemy, Philippe Harlay, Comte de Césy, the ambassador whom Marcheville was supposed to replace and whose blunders he was supposed to repair. This article proposes to reassess Marcheville, whom some of his contemporaries seemed readier to forgive than posterity and who, in his efforts to bring the most brilliant members of the Republic of Letters to the Levant, met with particular favour among scholars.

Henri de Gournay de Marcheville was born in the duchy of Lorraine. He was the second son of Regnaut de Gournay, bailiff of Nancy and head of the Council of State of Lorraine, by his second

¹ I am particularly grateful to Professor Peter N. Miller for supplying me with copies of Peiresc’s letters in the Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine, Carpentras.

² Bougerel J., *Vie de Pierre Gassendi* (Paris: 1737) 91.

³ Tongas G., *Les relations de la France avec l’empire ottoman durant la première moitié du XVII^e siècle et l’ambassade à Constantinople de Philippe de Harlay, Comte de Césy (1619–1640)* (Toulouse: 1942) 23: ‘Son caractère extravagant, sa conduite insensée transformèrent son séjour en Turquie en une série ininterrompue d’insuccès et d’aventures indignes de sa qualité d’ambassadeur de France’. Tongas seems to have been dazzled by his admiration for the singularly worthless Harlay de Césy.

INTERSECTIONS

YEARBOOK FOR EARLY MODERN STUDIES

VOLUME 5 – 2005

Editorial Board

B. BLONDÉ (University of Antwerp)
K.A.E. ENENKEL (University of Leiden)
A.J. GELDERBLOM (Utrecht University)
J.L. DE JONG (University of Groningen)
E.E.P. KOLFIN (University of Amsterdam)
W. NEUBER (Free University of Berlin)
H.F.K. VAN NIEROP (University of Amsterdam)
P.J. SMITH (University of Leiden)
M. VAN VAECK (Catholic University of Louvain)

Advisory Board

K. van Berkel (University of Groningen) · F. Egmond · A. Grafton (Princeton University)
A. Hamilton (University of Leiden) · G.L. Heesakkers (University of Amsterdam)
H.A. Hendrix (Utrecht University) · F.J. van Ingen (Free University of Amsterdam)
I. Israel (Institute for Advanced Studies, Princeton, N.J.) · M. Jacobs (Free University of Brussels)
K.A. Ottenheym (Utrecht University) · K. Porteman (Catholic University of Louvain)
E.J. Sluijter (University of Amsterdam)

General Editor

Karl Enenkel
Chair of Neo-Latin Literature
Faculty of Arts, University of Leiden
P.O. Box 9515, 2300 RA Leiden-NL
e-mail: K.A.E.Enenkel@let.leidenuniv.nl

THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS AND THE LEVANT

EDITED BY

ALASTAIR HAMILTON
MAURITS H. VAN DEN BOOGERT
BART WESTERWEEL



BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON
2005