Studenten aan Zet: onderzoek van de Historici van Morgen

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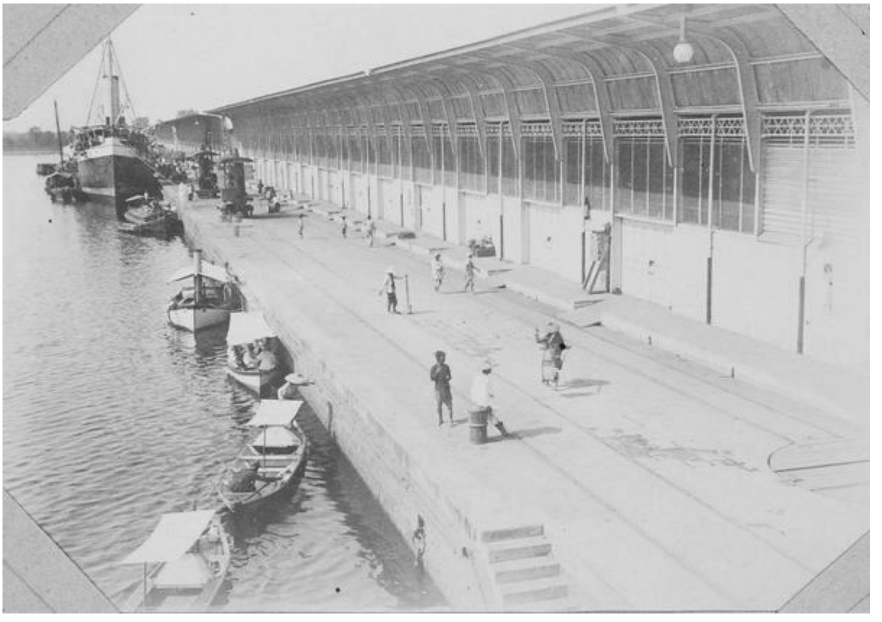

Kade te Tandjoengpriok bij Batavia, anoniem (tussen 1899 en 1900).
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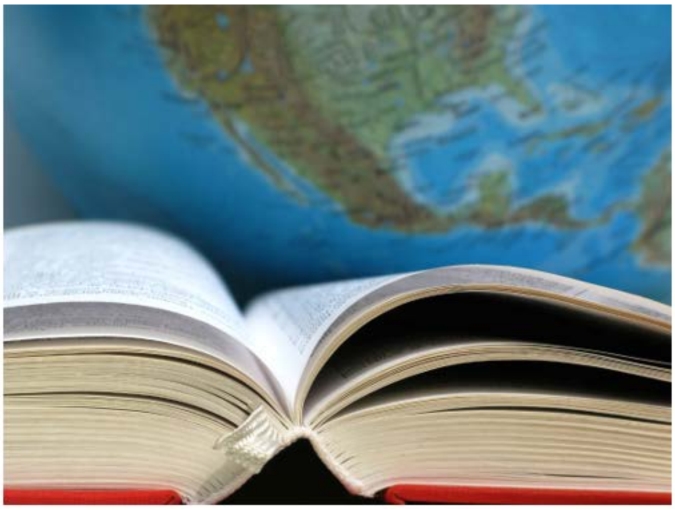

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Beste lezer,

Met trots presenteren we deze speciale 'Leidse Scriptie'-editie van Leidschrift, waarin Geschiedenisstudenten uit Leiden hun onderzoek en inzichten met ons delen.
Deze editie opent met een inleiding van Herman Paul, die met een geschiedfilosofische blik bronnenkritiek onder de loep neemt – een fundament van historisch onderzoek. Vervolgens nemen de studenten ons mee op uiteenlopende tijdreizen: door het Pompeii ten tijde van de Late Republiek ofwel het Vroege Romeinse Rijk waar de discriminerende waarde van kledingstijl wordt bekeken (Babs van Eijk); naar middeleeuws Hongarije waar vorstelijke propaganda onder de loep wordt gelegd (Robin Koch); langs de Zijderoutes voor rietsuiker aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw (Daan van der Mark); via twee rebelse vrouwen naar het Russische Keizerrijk waar zij zich keerden tegen de gevestigde orde (Ina-Maria Duynhouwer); om de reis af te sluiten met onderzoek naar narrativisme en de ethiek van geschiedschrijving in contemporaine media (Maud Rijks).
Het is een editie die, ondanks het ontbreken van een overkoepelend thema, toch samenhangt door de gedrevenheid en passie van deze jonge historici. Als redactie zijn we trots dat we hen dit podium kunnen bieden.
Veertig jaar geleden werd het allereerste nummer van Leidschrift gedrukt. Met dit nummer nemen wij echter afscheid van onze gedrukte uitgave; vanaf de volgende editie zal Leidschrift enkel online verschijnen. Onze trouwe lezers willen wij bedanken voor hun jarenlange steun en het vertrouwen in onze nieuwe digitale bestaansvorm. We hopen dat deze laatste gedrukte editie een laatste keer zijn plekje ontvangt op uw boekenplank en u hem met plezier zult lezen. Veel leesplezier gewenst!

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Inleiding: peer-review als een gamechanger voor geschiedfilosofen

Herman Paul

Als ik achter de katheder in Lipsius 019 mijn best doe om geschiedenisstudenten in te wijden in de wondere wereld van de geschiedfilosofie, put ik mij graag uit in voorbeelden. In mijn ervaring blijven abstracte begrippen namelijk in de lucht zweven, ver boven de hoofden van de studenten, als ik ze niet uitleg aan de hand van herkenbare voorbeelden. Daarom bespreek ik steevast een paar klassiekers uit het vak – boeken als *Ordinary Men* van Christopher Browning – of, iets dichter bij huis, het werk dat we dagelijks doen. 'Als jullie een werkstuk schrijven', zeg ik, 'schat je ook voortdurend in, bewust of onbewust, hoe bruikbaar een bron is voor het argument dat je wilt maken.' Of: 'Als ik een artikel schrijf, probeer ik ook te bedenken: wat zou iemand tegen mijn betoog kunnen inbrengen?'

Dat studentenwerkstuk en het artikel van de docent zijn bijna inwisselbare voorbeelden. Beide berusten op historisch onderzoek, proberen een historisch verschijnsel te verklaren en doen dat in gesprek met bestaande literatuur. Beide essays zijn ook talige constructies, die je zou kunnen analyseren op woordgebruik of verhaalvormen ('narratieve sjablonen'). Maar er is één belangrijk verschil. Terwijl het studentenwerkstuk meestal maar één lezer kent – de docent die er een cijfer voor moet geven – gaat het artikel van de beroepshistoricus langs heel wat kritische meelezers. De meeste historici hebben de gewoonte hun conceptartikelen aan collega's voor te leggen. Als ze het manuscript vervolgens indienen bij een tijdschrift, stuurt de redactie het door naar twee of meer reviewers, die met hun commentaar de redactie helpen een beslissing te nemen: gaat dit stuk gepubliceerd worden, al dan niet na een verbeterronde, of wordt het afgewezen? En als het artikel eenmaal online staat, vindt het als het goed is zijn weg naar de voetnoten van andere publicaties. Collega's reageren erop, soms met een simpele verwijzing ('zie hierover artikel X van collega Y'), maar als het meezit met uitvoeriger commentaar – wat vooral gebeurt als het artikel nieuwe wegen baant of controversiële thesen opwerpt.

Al dit kritische meedenken van vakgenoten, formeel of informeel, noemen we *peer review*. Daarbij onderscheiden we tussen *pre-publication* en *post-publication* peer review. Over die eerste fase is tegenwoordig veel te doen. Is het wel eerlijk om de publicatie van een artikel te laten afhangen van commentatoren die soms heel andere interesses hebben of methoden prefereren dan de auteur van het ingediende manuscript? Werkt het procedé geen conformisme in de hand, omdat out-of-the-box ideeën nooit alle reviewers zullen overtuigen? Daar komt bij dat het systeem in haar voegen kraakt, omdat vrijwilligers voor onbetaalde peer review-arbeid steeds moeilijker zijn te vinden. [1] *Post-publication* peer review heeft van deze problemen gelukkig minder last. Al verschijnen er meer boeken dan recensenten ooit kunnen behappen, het wetenschappelijke principe dat je je eigen bevindingen vergelijkt met die van anderen zorgt ervoor dat de belangrijkste studies na kortere of langere tijd als vanzelf opduiken in de voetnoten van nieuwe publicaties. In het historiografische debat worden ideeën getoetst, hypothesen bijgesteld en niet-overtuigende interpretaties terzijde geschoven.

Tot voor kort hadden geschiedfilosofen voor dit soort peer-reviewprocessen weinig oog. Hun interesse ging uit naar thema's als de waarheid van historische uitspraken, de relatieve plausibiliteit van historische interpretaties en de vormen die historische verklaringen kunnen aannemen. Hoe die uitspraken, interpretaties of verklaringen precies tot stand komen – of er wel of geen collega's kritisch meedenken – is voor hun juistheid of geldigheid niet van belang. In termen van Karl Popper: die ontstaansgeschiedenis behoort tot de *context of discovery* ('how it happens that a new idea occurs to a man'), niet tot de *context of justification* ('whether the idea is justified').[2]

Maar hoe 'justified' is dit onderscheid zélf? Als je buurjongen je vertelt dat 8 tot de macht 3 gelijk is aan 512, kun je de juistheid van die berekening controleren zonder de vraag te stellen hoe hij eigenlijk bij die 512 is gekomen. Of hij het zelf heeft uitgerekend, opgezocht op internet of afgekeken van een klasgenoot is voor de juistheid van het antwoord irrelevant. Maar bij historisch onderzoek ligt dat niet zo eenvoudig. Je kunt als lezer het onderzoek niet overdoen. Als je niet goed in de thematiek bent ingevoerd, is het lastig een boek op zijn merites te beoordelen. Hoe evenwichtig is het exposé; waaraan gaat het stilzwijgend voorbij? Als lezer ga je daarom af op het oordeel van deskundigen: reviewers die het manuscript voor publicatie beoordelen en recensenten die na publicatie hun bevindingen met

[1] Zie bijvoorbeeld Malcolm Tight, 'Critical Reflections on the Journal Peer Review Process', *Higher Education Research and Development* 43 (2024) 1203-1209; Nikki Forrester, 'Fed Up and Burnt Out. "Quiet Quitting" Hits Academia', *Nature* 615 (2023) 751-753.

[2] Karl R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (Londen 1959) 31.

vakgenoten delen. 'Peer reviewed' is dus een kwaliteitskeurmerk: het zegt dat een studie de kritische blik van collega's heeft doorstaan.

Terecht hebben geschiedfilosofen hieruit afgeleid dat Poppers *context of justification* zich niet scherp laat onderscheiden van de *context of discovery*. Maar dat ging niet zonder slag of stoot. De eerste stap werd gezet door filosofen die nadachten over de notie van 'waarheid'. Zolang je vasthoudt aan de correspondentietheorie van waarheid – een uitspraak is waar als deze overeenkomt met een stand van zaken in de werkelijkheid – kun je het waarheidsgehalte van een historisch betoog niet rechtstreeks vaststellen: je hebt immers geen tijdmachine waarmee je het verleden zelf kunt inspecteren. Je zult je daarom met indirecte criteria ('*truth-tracking* criteria') moeten behelpen: de mate waarin een betoog zorgvuldig onderbouwd is, met de bronnen overeenstemt en objectief van premisses naar conclusies redeneert.[3] Dit zijn, niet toevallig, criteria van het soort dat ook reviewers hanteren. Kun je daaruit afleiden dat de maatstaven die peer reviewers aanleggen graadmeters zijn voor het waarheidsgehalte van historische betogen?

Ja, zeiden geschiedfilosofen als Raymond Martin en Mark Day: als we begrippen als 'waarheid' voor de historische wetenschap willen operationaliseren, moeten we onderzoeken hoe historici de plausibiliteit van elkaars werk beoordelen. Laten we daarom in kaart brengen wat voor kwaliteitscriteria reviewers in de geschiedwetenschap hanteren. Beide geschiedfilosofen deden dat op hun eigen manier: Martin door historiografische debatten te analyseren en Day door recensies te ontleden. (Waarom beiden kozen voor *post-publication* review, zal geen toelichting behoeven: *pre-publication* review is vertrouwelijk en laat daarom veel minder publiek toegankelijke sporen na.) Interessant genoeg waren hun bevindingen bijna identiek. Zowel Martin als Day concludeerde dat de overtuigingskracht van een historisch betoog afhangt van de mate waarin het accuraat, volledig, genuanceerd en met bronnen onderbouwd is.[4] Filosofisch gezien is dit een belangwekkende conclusie. Martin en Day definieerden het begrip 'waarheid' niet zelf; ze lieten dit over aan peer reviewers in de geschiedwetenschap.

Op deze tweede stap volgde recent een derde. Martin Jay betoogde dat reviewers niet alleen de kwaliteitsstandaarden van de geschiedwetenschap definiëren en implementeren, maar ook een actieve rol spelen in het proces

[3] Noël Carroll, 'Interpretation, History, and Narrative', *The Monist* 73 (1990) 134-166, aldaar 161.

[4] Raymond Martin, 'Progress in Historical Studies', *History and Theory* 37 (1998) 14-39, aldaar 27; Mark Day, *The Philosophy of History. An Introduction* (Londen 2008) 24.

van kennisverwerving. Reviewers zijn *co-creators of knowledge* voor zover hun ideeën, suggesties en tegenwerpingen een plek krijgen in het gepubliceerde werk. Dat betekent dat we ons niet moeten verkijken op de ene auteursnaam die boven het artikel of op het kaft van een boek staat. Achter deze ene naam gaat een hele groep historici schuil die op enigerlei wijze hebben bijdragen aan het resultaat. Bovendien spelen vakgenoten na publicatie een cruciale rol in het valideren van de opgedane kennis. Pas in het historiografische debat wordt duidelijk welke inzichten overeind blijven en welke moeten worden bijgesteld. Met een lelijke term spreekt Jay daarom over 'institutional justificationism' – dat wil zeggen, over de rechtvaardiging ('justification') van historische kennis via mechanismen ('institutions') als peer review.[5]

Nu opent dit een doos van Pandora. Wie zijn die peer reviewers precies? Zijn het recensenten in vakbladen en collega's die beoordelingsrapporten voor professionele tijdschriften schrijven, of ook commentatoren op internet? Aan welke eisen moet je voldoen – een MA-diploma op zak of een succesvol afgerond promotietraject – om tot het illustere gezelschap van peer reviewers te worden toegelaten? En wie bepaalt die eisen dan? Kun je daartegen in beroep? Op deze kwesties zullen geschiedfilosofen nog even moeten kauwen.

Belangrijker is echter dat groeiende interesse voor peer review een wissel omzet in de geschiedfilosofie, of misschien zelfs twee wissels. 'Institutional justificationism' nodigt geschiedfilosofen uit hun conceptuele analyse – waar ze vanouds sterk in zijn – uit te breiden met empirische analyse. Wie niet in abstracto wil spreken over wat 'waarheid' betekent, maar wil nagaan hoe peer reviewers het waarheidsgehalte van historische interpretaties bepalen, zal een beweging moeten maken van 'conceptual' naar 'empirical philosophy of history'.[6] Dat wil zeggen dat geschiedfilosofen toenadering zullen moeten zoeken tot collega's die ervaring hebben met empirische studie van historische wetenschap, zoals historici van de geschiedschrijving. Net zoals wetenschapsfilosofen en wetenschapshistorici elkaar ooit vonden in wat ze 'history and philosophy of science' (HPS) noemden, zouden geschiedfilosofen en historiografen kunnen samenwerken in een 'history and philosophy of history' (HPH), waarin historische en filosofische analyses van

[5] Martin Jay, 'Historical Truth and the Truthfulness of Historians', in: Christian B. Miller en Ryan West (red.), *Integrity, Honesty, and Truth Seeking* (Oxford 2020) 240-273.
[6] Raymond Martin, *The Past Within Us. An Empirical Approach to Philosophy of History* (Princeton 1989) 3-15.

praktijken zoals peer review elkaar verrijken.[7] Peer review is, met andere woorden, een gamechanger voor zover ze geschiedfilosofen uitdaagt conceptuele analyse te koppelen aan empirisch onderzoek.

In het verlengde hiervan zou nog een tweede gamechanger denkbaar zijn. Terwijl geschiedfilosofen gewend zijn interpretaties, verklaringen en verhalen op te vatten als producten van individuele historici, wijst peer review op de sociale aspecten van het historisch bedrijf. Peer review is een groepsactiviteit, die kennis oplevert waaraan meerdere mensen hun steentje hebben bijgedragen. Dit brengt ons op het terrein van de sociale epistemologie – een relatief nieuw, maar sterk groeiend vakgebied in de analytische filosofie. Zoals de naam al zegt, is *social epistemology* geïnteresseerd in groepskennis. Een van haar centrale vragen luidt: Wat betekent het om kennis op gezag van iemand anders (een journalist, een wetenschapper) aan te nemen? Voor zover historici werken met bronnen – getuigenissen van auteurs in het verleden – is deze vraag onmiddellijk relevant voor de geschiedfilosofie. Nog relevanter is echter een tweede onderzoeksvraag: Wat betekent het om kennis op te vatten als product van een groepsproces? Kan kennis het eigendom zijn van een collectief? En, zo ja, volgt daaruit dan dat individuen deze kennis altijd maar ten dele bezitten of kunnen overzien?[8] Een sociale epistemologie van de geschiedwetenschap is nog door niemand ontwikkeld, maar zou een logische vervolgstap zijn voor geschiedfilosofen die hebben ontdekt hoe belangrijk peer review voor hedendaagse historici is.

En wat dit heeft te maken met de vijf artikelen in dit nummer van *Leidschrift*, gebaseerd op papers of scripties die zijn geschreven in het kader van de Leidse BA of MA Geschiedenis? Voor zover ik weet, zijn de stukken niet ter beoordeling naar externe peer reviewers gestuurd. Maar in artikelvorm betreden ze de wetenschappelijke openbaarheid: ze stellen zich bloot aan *post-publication* peer review. Met een beetje geluk worden ze de komende jaren geciteerd door historici die naar vergelijkbare thema's onderzoek doen. (Wie

[7] Herman Paul, 'History and Philosophy of History (HPH). A Call for Cooperation', in: Jouni-Matti Kuukkanen (red.), *Philosophy of History. Twenty-First Century Perspectives* (Londen 2020) 165-179.

[8] Ik ontleen deze 'central topics in social epistemology' aan Cailin O'Connor, Sanford Goldberg en Alvin Goldman, 'Social Epistemology' (22 maart 2024), in: Edward N. Zalta en Uri Nodelman (red.), The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, online op https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology-social/ (geraadpleegd 22 oktober 2024). Zie ook Miranda Fricker e.a. (red.), *The Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology* (Londen 2018).

'Leidschrift' intypt in Google Scholar, ziet dat dit geen onrealistische gedachte is: sommige artikelen zijn in de secundaire literatuur al tien of twintig keer aangehaald.)

Concreet gaat het om de volgende bijdragen. Aan de hand van fresco's in Pompeï laat Babs van Eijk zien hoe kleding in het Romeinse Rijk een uiting van sociale status kon zijn. Ze interpreteert de fresco's als bijdragen aan een gesprek zonder woorden over sociale verschillen in een stedelijk milieu. Robin Koch onderzoekt vervolgens hoe Stefanus I van Hongarije fungeerde als een *lieu de mémoire* met uitgesproken politieke connotaties. Al in de veertiende eeuw beriepen Hongaarse machthebbers zich graag op hun elfde-eeuwse voorganger, onder andere door zich in woord en beeld te representeren als rechtstreekse afstammelingen van de koning die in 1083 heilig was verklaard. Daan van den Mark gaat na waarom suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië rond 1900 op zoek gingen naar afzetmarkten in China en Japan. Zijn verklaring is dat het Nederlandse overheidsbeleid te protectionistisch werd, waardoor het onrendabel werd om suiker naar Nederland te verschepen. Ina-Maria Duynhouwer voert twee Russische vrouwen ten tonele die zich in de late jaren van het Keizerrijk ontpopten tot gewelddadige revolutionairen. Ze betoogt dat context, klasse en leeftijd belangrijke variabelen waren, maar dat de stap van deze vrouwen niet verklaard kan worden zonder aandacht voor hun individuele persoonlijkheden. In een geschiedfilosofisch essay neemt Maud Rijks het ten slotte op voor 'critical fabulation' zoals gedefinieerd door Saidiya Hartman. Ze ziet deze praktijk geïllustreerd in Tiya Miles' *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack, a Black Family Keepsake* – een boek dat is geprezen om zijn 'bold and innovative approach' en 'ability to wield an extraordinary empathy'. [9] Wat nog maar eens bewijst: peer review is overal. Zelfs onalledaagse historische studies als die van Miles worden direct na verschijning blootgesteld aan de kritische blik van vakgenoten.

[9] Colin Grant, bespreking van Tiya Miles, *All That She Carried*, *The Guardian* (12 juli 2023), online op https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/jul/12/all-that-she-carried-by-tiya-miles-review-social-fabric (geraadpleegd 22 oktober 2024).

Dress to Impress?: how dress created diversity in Pompeii (Late Republic – Early Empire)

Babs van Eijk

Introduction

Contrary to what has often been suggested, the emergence of the Roman Empire has not only led to more uniformity, this also created diversity – not just between diverse cultural groups, but also among the different social groups within Roman society itself.[1] Along with the growing differences among people, for example in status, gender and wealth, showing your place within the community became more important. One way to do this was by the way you dress. Visible appearance, consisting of the quality of garments, accessories, jewellery, but also hairstyles, were all part of one's identity and a way to confirm, showcase, perform and claim a place within society.[2] In this article the term 'dress' will be used to describe this totality of someone's visible appearance.[3]

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[1] I would like to use this first footnote to thank Leidschrift for giving me the opportunity to transform my Research Master paper into an article. Additionally, I want to thank the Leidschrift editors for their feedback. Lastly, I would like to thank dr. Miko Flohr under whose supervision I wrote this Research Master paper within the interesting and innovative research seminar 'Empire and Diversity in the Roman World' (Leiden University 2023).

[2] C. R. Potts, 'The Art of Piety and Profit at Pompeii: A New Interpretation of the Painted Shop Façade at IX.7.1-2', *Greece & Rome* 56.1 (2009) 55-70: 68-69; L. L. Lovén, 'Priests, priestesses, and clothing in Roman cult practices' in: C. Brøns and M. L. Nosch ed., *Textiles & Cult in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Oxford; Philadelphia, PA 2017) 135-141; M. J. Perry, 'Status' in: R. S. Bagnall, K. Brodersen, C. B. Champion, A. Erskine and S. R. Huebner ed., *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012).

[3] One of the important debates within this field of study focuses on which term should be used when analysing visible appearance in general. In the book *The World of the Roman Costume* (Madison 1994), edited by J. L. Sebesta and L. Bonfante, the term 'costume' is used, which consist of the entire visible appearance of a person. Batten and Olson suggest using the term 'dress'. According to them 'costume' is often associated with specific events, like holidays, or theatre. Moreover, 'fashion' implies a focus on the elite society. Therefore, Batten and Olson conclude that 'dress' is more neutral and best suitable to use in the research on this topic. In this article I will therefore use 'dress' to refer to one's visible appearance. See for the discussion by

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was one of the first to write about clothing history.[4] With the growing interest in social and cultural history in the second half of the twentieth century this topic became more meaningful and widely studied.[5] An important book within this field of interest with a specific focus on antiquity is *The World of the Roman Costume* (1994), which is edited by Sebesta and Bonfante. However, many twentieth century studies on the topic of dress, such as this book, are very descriptive instead of analytic. Meaning that most works describe, for example, what sort of dresses and jewellery were worn without a study of the reasons and meanings behind them. Since the 2000s, these perspectives have received increasing attention in the historical discipline. An example is the recent volume *Dress in Mediterranean Antiquity* (2021), edited by Alicia J. Batten and Kelly Olson. Due to the broadness of the topic, diverse research relating to dressing has been conducted, from gender and identity to cultural exchange.[6] But what happens when we look at visible appearance through the lens of empire formation, leading to diversity?

Many different sources have been studied to understand the meaning of dress in antiquity: from ancient literature, votive reliefs and fragments of textiles to coins, accessories and statues. However, the Pompeian frescoes depicting scenes of daily life have not yet been used for this purpose. This, while the very frescoes often show multiple or groups of people who also vary in status, gender and wealth – something that is less often the case with most of the aforementioned primary sources. It is therefore interesting to

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Batten and Olson: A. J. Batten and K. Olson ed., *Dress in Mediterranean Antiquity* (2021) 1-2.

[4] J. Edmondson and A. Keith ed., *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture* (Toronto 2008) 1-2. Thomas Carlyle wrote about clothing's history in his book *Sartor Resartus* (1833-4).

[5] Ibidem, 4.

[6] Batten et al. ed., *Dress in Mediterranean Antiquity,* 1. All the different chapters discuss specific examples related to the general topic of dress in Mediterranean antiquity. Some examples of research about the relation between dress and gender are: K. Olson, *Roman Woman: Self-Presentation and Society* (London 2008); K. Olson, *Masculinity and dress in Roman antiquity* (New York, NY 2017); J. Radicke, *Roman Women's Dress: literary sources, terminology, and historical development* (Berlin; Boston 2022). Some examples of research about the relation between dress, intercultural contact and identities are: E. Swift, *Regionality in Dress Accessories in the late Roman West* (Montagnac 2000); U. Rothe, *Dress and Cultural Identity in the Rhine-Moselle Region of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 2009).

explore the Pompeian wall paintings, since they allow us to examine the differences between people living within this city. One of the few scholars who has analysed the frescoes from Pompeii to understand the lives of people in town is John R. Clarke. In his book *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* (2003) Clarke discusses several frescoes and what they depict. Yet, his work is predominantly focussed on everyday life and events within the city instead of the visible appearances of its inhabitants. Additionally, when Clarke addresses this topic in his research, it is rather descriptive and does not thoroughly delve into the deeper meanings behind dress and how it led to diversity. Another interesting research is done by art historian Bente Kiilerich. In her article 'The Real and the Ideal in Pompeian Fashion' (2023) she discusses Roman wall paintings in which female clothing is depicted, with special attention to colour and fabric. Thus, Kiilerich solely focuses on women's clothing instead of visible appearance and the society in total.[7]

A study of the Pompeian frescoes through the lens of empire formation, leading to diversity in dress among people, is therefore an interesting lacune which can give fruitful insights into the everyday life of people in Pompeii. Important to keep in mind is that Pompeii was located in the wealthy Bay of Naples: a place where a lot of rich Roman elites had summer residences. Therefore, the so-called daily life scenes may also be extraordinary to some extent, and the conclusions are thus not automatically applicable to other Roman places. Additionally, it is worth to note that the paintings selected for this research depict idealised forms of real life. Yet, by using literature on dress in antiquity that is based on other primary sources as well, we can detect types of dress, their meanings and thus get an impression of how diversity was created by visual appearance in Pompeian society.

In order to gain a nuanced understanding of diversity and dress within the city, three spheres will be central, namely the religious, public and (more private) domestic one.[8] For every sphere a wall painting or set of wall paintings will be analysed which depict that particular sphere. Even though it is complex to make a clear distinction between these spheres as they can sometimes overlap, this framework allows us to better analyse the meanings and reasons of certain dress within a specific context. This is interesting

[7] B. Kiilerich, 'Pompeii from the Real to the Ideal in Pompeian Fashion', *CLARA* 10 (2023) 1-25.

[8] Public and private can be complicated terms to use. In this article, private will point to the idea that a space was 'domestic' (like houses) and not freely accessible to everyone.

because on the one hand, certain settings sometimes expect a particular way of dressing, while on the other hand, some ways of dressing only have meaning within a specific context. The distinction in spheres thus enables the study of diversity on multiple levels: not only in status, wealth and gender, but also the differences between the various settings. Therewith, this article aims to explore the extent to which frescoes can provide an interesting source that can help in gaining a deeper and more nuanced understanding of daily life in Pompeian society. The scope of this research is between the Late Republic and the Early Empire (until 79 CE, when the Vesuvius erupted), since the frescoes date from this period.

Religious sphere

For the religious sphere this article will take a closer look at the wall painting depicting a procession of the goddess Cybele (figure 1). This fresco was painted on the outside wall of what was probably a shop and dates from the first century CE.[9] *The Procession of Cybele* could be found on the right of the entrance.[10] It remains unclear what sort of shop this must have been, but the fact that the owners commissioned a wall painting showing this religious procession suggests that they might have had a connection to Cybele's cult.[11]

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[9] Besides the fresco of the procession of Cybele, some of the other exterior walls of this shop were decorated as well. On the left wall next to the entrance the goddess Venus Pompeiana is depicted. Above the entrance there are four portraits of different gods visible, namely Apollo, Jupiter, Mercury and Diana. The Procession of Cybele could be found on the right of the entrance. The specific location of the shop is Region IX.7.1. J. R. Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans. Visual Representations and Non-elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C. – A.D. 315* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London 2003) 87-94.

[10] These paintings were discovered by Vittoria Spinazzola in 1912. Back then, the paintings were quite well preserved, but over time the quality has decreased. However, since many pictures have been taken of these frescoes, it is still possible to analyse them. Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans,* 87-88; Potts, 'The Art of Piety and Profit at Pompeii', 55-70; S. R. Joshel and L. Hackworth Petersen, *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves* (Cambridge 2014) 90-91.

[11] Nearby the shop's wall painting depicting Venus Pompeiana, *graffito* has been found. The graffito encourages people to vote for someone called Helvius to become an *aedile* (an elected office). This encouragement is supported by felt-workers, *coactiliari*, which led to the interpretation by some scholars that this shop might have been a

Perhaps they were devotees or held a formal position, for example as a priest or priestess. Another interesting thing to note is that this shop was located along an important and busy street within Pompeii: the *Via dell' Abbondanza* (Region IX.7.1). Because this fresco was situated on the outside wall of the shop, it was visible for everyone in the street, making this religious fresco part of the public area.[12]

The subject of this wall painting is the procession of the goddess Cybele, who was also known as Magna Mater. The cult of this goddess of Phrygian origin was brought to Rome around 204 BCE in light of the Second Punic War (218-201 BCE). The Roman state made this decision on the basis of the consultation of the oracular Sibylline books and the oracle of Delphi. It was believed that Cybele would protect the Romans in this war. After her arrival in the city of Rome, Cybele's cult spread throughout Italy over time. However, some of its practices and customs were criticized by the Roman state. Devotees, for example, made a lot of noise with musical instruments and wild dancing during processions. But probably most shocking to the Romans was a practice performed by Cybele's male priests, the *galli*, namely the ritual act of self-castration.[13] Moreover, their clothing also differentiated them from others – at least during the rituals – and was visible to the eye: the male *galli* wore female garments. Therewith, the *galli* were distinguished from the other (uncastrated) men in public as well as male priests of other cults who often wore typical male clothing, like the *toga*. This separation is something that seems similar to female sex workers wearing the male *toga* in public to distinguish them from chaste women in Roman times.[14]

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felter's shop. This is for instance suggested by: Potts, 'The Art of Piety and Profit at Pompeii', 58. In her article, Potts further analyses the connection between the religious frescoes on this shop in relation to daily life and *collegia* in Pompeii.

[12] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 90; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 94.

[13] M. J. Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis. The Myth and the Cult* (London 1977) 38-43, 110; H. W. Obbink, *Cybele, Isis, Mithras. Oosterse godsdiensten in het Romeinse rijk* (Haarlem 1965) 6-7, 21-22; L. E. Roller, 'Cybele', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012); Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 92; D. Montserrat, 'Reading gender in the Roman world' in: J. Huskinson ed., *Experiencing Rome. Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire* (London 2000) 153-182; C. Daniel-Hughes, 'Belief' in: M. Harlow ed., *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in Antiquity* (London; New York; Dublin 2021) 71-78, 85; Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 90.

[14] C. Mowat, 'Don't be a Drag just be a Priest: The Clothing and Identity of the Galli of Cybele in the Roman Republic and Empire', *Gender & History* 33.2 (2021) 296-313:

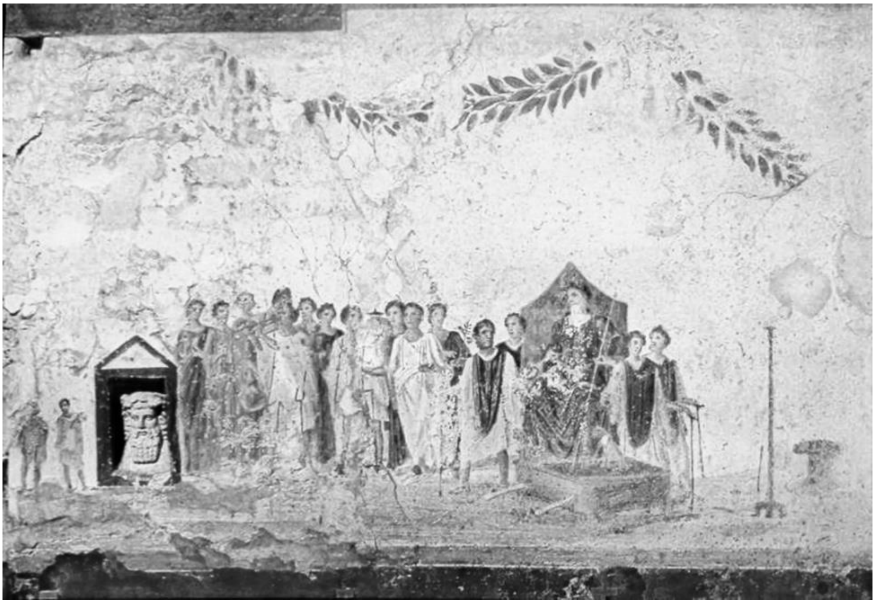

Fig. 1: Procession of Cybele, On the outside wall of a shop, Region IX.7.1, Pompeii. Source: https://ancientrome.ru/art/artworken/img.htm?id=9291

In this wall painting (figure 1) the goddess Cybele is visualised by a wooden statue, at the front of the procession, visible on the right. This effigy was dressed and decorated by the devotees and then paraded throughout the city during the procession. Cybele is seated and wears a white tunic. On top of that she wears a long purple garment, which is draped in a Greek style. Hereby, she is distinguished from others in the scene and the style of her dress might have referred to her oriental origin. Furthermore, she has a crown on her head which depicts the city walls, reflecting her role as protectress.[15]

Besides the wooden statue of Cybele, sixteen people are depicted in this fresco. One of the most important figures is the priest. He stands in the middle, to the left of the man who is wearing red and white garments and has

296; A. K. Strong, *Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World* (Cambridge 2016) 21-22; A. Duncan, 'Infamous Performers: Comic Actors and Female Prostitutes in Rome' in: C. A. Faraone and L. K. McClure eds., *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World* (Madison, WI 2006) 252-273: 269-270. In this chapter Duncan also discusses male actors who wore female clothes when playing roles of women in theatre.

[15] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 89.

the task of carrying Cybele's statue. The priest has his arms open and holds cult objects in both hands.[16] He is most recognizable by the long white garment he is wearing: a *toga*. This is a male clothing item which could only be worn by Roman citizens and was regarded as a status symbol. Additionally, the white colour of the priest's outfit points to his religious importance, since this colour symbolised ritual purity.[17]

Yet, like mentioned previously, the priests of Cybele were known for wearing female clothes. The question then arises why he is dressed in the male *toga*. There are multiple plausible explanations. Firstly, the white *toga* of the priest indicates not only his ritual purity, but also that he is a Roman citizen. Roman citizens could become priests of Cybele's cult since 50 CE, something which was forbidden before that time.[18] If that is the case, this painting dates between 50-79 CE. It is possible that, since Roman citizens became appointed as Cybele's priests, more obscure rituals and customs were changed or 'Romanised' to fit the Roman religious status quo. Then, what is shown here is a form of intercultural contact whereby some cult practices remain intact, and others are changed. Another explanation could be that the person in the white *toga* is in fact not a priest, but a Roman magistrate. When Cybele was ritually brought to Rome around 204 BCE, Phrygian priests accompanied her so her cult would be practiced in the right and original way. This was necessary, since the Roman state aimed to gain Cybele's protection in the Second Punic War.[19] Therefore, probably two ways of worshipping this goddess coexisted before Roman citizens could become her priest in 50 CE. The main cult was led by the Phrygian *galli*. Cybele's feast was an event to venerate her in a Roman way, when not only a procession and games were organised, but also offers were brought to the goddess by a Roman magistrate.[20] When attending a religious event, magistrates often wore a white

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[16] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 91.

[17] K. Olson, 'Dress and Religious Ritual in Roman Antiquity' in: Batten et al. eds., *Dress in Mediterranean Antiquity,* 201-213: 203-204.

[18] In 50 CE, under the reign of emperor Claudius (r. 41-54 CE), Roman citizens were eventually allowed to become a priest of Cybele's cult. H. W. Obbink, *Cybele, Isis, Mithras. Oosterse godsdiensten in het Romeinse rijk* (Haarlem 1965) 26; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans,* 92.

[19] Ibidem.

[20] Obbink, *Cybele, Isis, Mithras,* 26. The feast days with Roman games were called the *ludi Megalenses.*

toga. Thus, it is possible that the man identified as the main priest in this fresco is in fact a Roman magistrate.

But then, what about the *gallus*? Two figures standing behind the man in the white *toga* are identified as priestesses, based on their hair, clothing and the objects they are holding.[21] Since the *gallus* was a man with the appearance of a woman, one of them could be a *gallus*. Perhaps it is the person on the right, behind the man in the white *toga*. This figure is dressed in brightly coloured garments with a red-purple robe in the same colour as Cybele's dress. Furthermore, this figure wears a vegetal crown and is holding a *patera* and a branch.[22] This corresponds with other visual representations we have of *galli*.[23] If the person who is often identified as a priestess is indeed a *gallus*, it is interesting that he is not depicted in the centre, but rather tucked away – the emphasis thus laying on the Roman way of honouring the goddess Cybele.

The two assistants of the man in a white *toga* are both wearing the same outfit. They are depicted on his left and both are dressed in a tunic which ends around their knees. The tunic is white and has two small vertical red-purple stripes on each shoulder which run down to the bottom of the garment. The white tunic with red-purple stripes – also known as *tunica lato clavo* – was an indication of status and associated with the Roman elite.[24] This garment was probably chosen not only because it indicated importance, but the white, as previously mentioned, also referred to ritual purity. It was thus a visible marker of their status and tasks within this procession.

The wooden statue of Cybele stands upon a *ferculum* (visible on the right). A *ferculum* was used to carry, for instance, statues of gods throughout the city during a procession.[25] In the case of Cybele this act was performed

[21] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 91. When Clark describes these two figures, he follows Spinazzola's interpretation that they are priestesses of Cybele.

[22] A *patera* is a bowl used for libations (liquid sacrifices) within religious contexts.

[23] Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis,* 97; Obbink, *Cybele, Isis, Mithras,* 26, 42. An interesting example is a funerary relief of a *gallu*s, found in Lavinium (second century CE), which is now part of the collection of the Capitoline Museums in Rome.

[24] B. Kellum, 'The Spectacle of the Street' in: B. A. Bergmann and C. Kondoleon ed., *The Art of Ancient Spectacle* (Washington D.C. 1999) 283-292, 289; E. D'Ambra, 'Real Estate for Profit. Julia Felix's Property and the Forum Frieze' in: B. Longfellow and M. Swetnam-Burland ed., *Women's Lives, Women's Voices. Roman Material Culture and Female Agency in the Bay of Naples* (Austin, TX 2021) 85-105: 99.

[25] Another interesting fresco which depicts a procession and a *ferculum*, is the wall painting of the Procession of the Carpenters, which was also found in Pompeii (Region VI.7.8 and VI.7.9, the fresco was found on a pilaster between two entrances).

by the four men standing around the statue. All of them wear a white tunic and a dark, red-coloured robe draped from one shoulder to the other.[26] These men had an important task within this festivity whereby they were probably expected to be dressed in a specific way. This is also suggested by the fact that the four men are all wearing the same garments in the same colours. Moreover, not only the white of the tunics points to a religious connection, the red robe on top of them, does this as well. Such double garments were in all probability meaningful within religious rituals.[27]

Cybele's devotees can be found in the middle and at the end to the left of the procession. They are wearing long, brightly coloured garments and make music with instruments, which was an important ritual within her cult.[28] Although most of the male members hold the more formal positions in the Cybele cult, all devotees are women. That quite a lot of women are depicted makes this fresco meaningful, since many of the other wall paintings depicting everyday life are dominated by men. The women wear garments in bright colours, such as yellow-orange, green and deep red-purple. Their clothing is quite long, possibly *stolae*, which might indicate their higher status.[29] However, it is also possible that these were special garments which were only worn during religious events.[30]

On the far left, beside the notch in the wall with a sculpture of the god Dionysus, we see two smaller figures. According to the excavator of the shop, Vittorio Spinazzola (1863-1943), these two were musicians. One is playing the cymbals and the other panpipes, something which is no longer visible due to the state of this fresco. Clarke suggests these two figures could be children, which would explain why they are depicted smaller than the

On this wall painting one can see a procession in action, whereby the ferculum is carried by four people as well.

[26] Olson, 'Dress and Religious Ritual in Roman Antiquity', 203-204; Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 90.

[27] Ibidem, 208-209. The red robe the carriers are wearing might be a *laena*, which also had a religious meaning.

[28] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 90; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans* 91-92; J. Hartnett, 'The Power of Nuisances on the Roman Street' in: R. Laurence and D. J. Newsome ed., *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space* (Oxford 2011) 135-159: 140.

[29] A *stola* is a female garment. It is a longer second tunic which is worn over the first, shorter tunic. The *stola* was worn by *matrons*, wives of Roman citizens.

[30] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves*, 91.

others in the painting.[31] However, another explanation might be that the two are in fact enslaved people. Enslaved people were often depicted smaller than freeborn and citizens, a visible way of showing their lower status.[32] Furthermore, their dress could also point to their enslavement. Even though enslaved people did not have a uniform, the length of clothing is connected to status – longer garments were often worn by the elite. Moreover, when one looks up closely, the right person of the two appears to have a beard. This would at least rule out the possibility that he was a child, whereby the interpretation of him being enslaved seems to be more plausible.

All in all, diversity in dress is shown on multiple levels in the religious fresco depicting the procession of Cybele. Dress is a way to distinguish people: for this particular fresco it signified the distinctions between a variety of roles within the procession. However, the diversity we can study is also limited in this case. Religious processions namely took place through the streets. Even though it was an open and public event, this fresco only shows those who took part in Cybele's cult. Therefore, only the diversity among the cult's participants can be researched and not how the group as a whole differed from other people walking the same streets.[33]

Public sphere

In the large *Praedia* of Julia Felix (Region II.4) an interesting wall painting depicting the public sphere was located. This *praedia* consisted of multiple sections with different purposes, such as shops, baths, rental apartments and a private house.[34] The building was already excavated in the eighteenth century by Roque Joaquín de Alcubierre (1702-1780) and Karl Jakob Weber (1712-1764), whose intentions were to find treasures for the Bourbon royal family. They found some in the room, probably an *atrium* or inner courtyard,

[31] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 92.
[32] B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford 2004) 334; C. Cobb, *Slavery, Gender, Truth, and Power in Luke-Acts and Other Ancient Narratives* (Wingate 2019) 19-20, 97.
[33] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves*, 91; Potts, 'The Art of Piety and Profit at Pompeii', 59.
[34] A *praedia* is a Latin word meaning 'land' or 'estate'. The *Praedia* of Julia Felix is sometimes referred to as 'House of Julia Felix'. However, since this estate was multifunctional and contained more than just a house, the term '*praedia*' is preferred.

which was decorated with a long fresco that continued on the various walls. This wall painting from 62-79 CE shows (idealised) daily life events taking place on the Forum in Pompeii.[35] Some fragments of this fresco were removed from the wall. The ones which were left behind are badly preserved due to the excavation methods of that time. The pieces which were taken from the house are very faded. Fortunately, there are engravings of the fragments of the Forum fresco from the eighteenth century, which enables us to study them.[36] Due to the existence of many fragments, once forming a large fresco, only a selection that most clearly deals with this article's subject matter will be discussed.[37]

Fig. 2: Fragment depicting buyers and sellers. Source: Tomo Terzo, Le Pitture Antiche D'Ercolano Vol. 3 (Naples 1755-92).

[35] M. Beard, *Pompeii. The Life of a Roman Town* (London 2008) 72-73; D'Ambra, 'Real Estate for Profit. Julia Felix's Property and the Forum Frieze', 85-105; P. Wilkinson, *Pompeii. An Archaeological Guide* (London; New York 2017) 204-207; R. Laurence, *Roman Pompeii. Space and Society* (London; New York, NY 2007) 37; Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves*, 92; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 96-98; D'Ambra, 'Women on the Bay of Naples' in: S. L. James and S. Dillon eds. *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Hoboken, NJ 2012) 400-413: 407.

[36] For this research, in addition to the engravings depicted in this article, the original, coloured (but also very faded) fragments were studied. Due to the lack of good, sharp photographs of the original frescoes and the length of this article, only the engravings are shown, as they are more detailed and therefore make the scenes easier to understand.

[37] The fragments that will be discussed are the ones which depict diversity best: people with different status, gender and wealth within one fragment. These are the most interesting for this research, since it enables the study of differences among groups of people within one place: the Forum.

In figure 2 we see an event that nowadays is still common to the public marketplace: the selling and buying of all sorts of goods. Thus, the different roles people had can be distinguished.[38] In antiquity selling goods on the market was considered a non-elite activity.[39] Some of the sellers might even have been enslaved people, who were appointed by their boss as *institor* to sell products on the market.[40] Most of the sellers in this painting, who are often men, wear shorter clothes – tunics – which end around or above the knees. In contrast, the buyers often wear longer garments, possibly *toga*s, indicating their status and wealth: they had the financial means to buy things. Therefore, the length of clothing is also seen as an indication of status. Right of the centre, for example, we see a man wearing a red-purple *toga* who is buying a pan. Some have suggested the small person standing right next to him is his son.[41]

Another interpretation could be that this person is in fact a servant accompanying his master and is, again, depicted smaller in shorter clothes to indicate his lower status. Besides bringing your servant(s) with you, the *toga* was also a way to show off your status as a Roman citizen in public. It was a formal way of dressing and due to the large amount of fabrics not very practical, because the *toga* consisted of a tunic with a second and long fabric wrapped around the body. Therefore, it was mostly worn in more public and formal settings, like political meetings, (religious) ceremonies and business affairs.[42]

[38] Laurence, *Roman Pompeii,* 37; Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves*, 93.

[39] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 97.

[40] S. R. Joshel, *Slavery in the Roman World* (Cambridge 2010) 206. According to Joshel the term *institor* meant a variety of things, among others someone who sells things. An institor could almost be anyone. In legal sources we see traces of free and enslaved persons of all ages and gender who could hold this position. However, Joshel states that it was often enslaved people who were labelled like this in literary sources and law.

[41] Beard, *Pompeii*, 74.

[42] Strong, *Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World*, 22; P. Watson, 'Slavery, Rome', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012); L. Cleland, 'Toga', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012). On other fragments we also see men wearing *toga*s – for instance one wherein all the men are wearing *toga*s and reading texts (probably notices) on the forum. Another one depicts men in *togas* sitting and discussing something (legal business) with a person and a(n) (enslaved) girl. See for this: Laurence, *Roman Pompeii,* 37; Beard, *Pompeii,* 75.

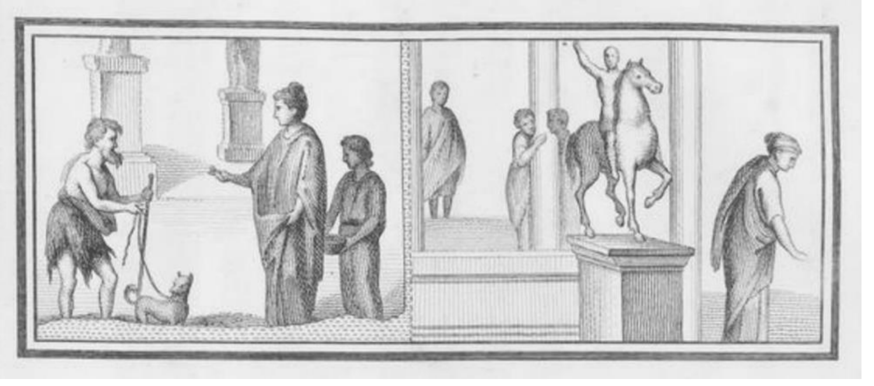

Fig. 3: Fragment depicting a lady and a beggar. Source: Tomo Terzo, Le Pitture Antiche D'Ercolano Vol. 3 (Naples 1755-92).

In this fragment (figure 3) we see a completely different scene. On the left, a lady, next to a child or servant, seems to give something to the man who has a dog along his side. He is standing a bit bent forward, supporting himself with a stick.[43] Furthermore, he wears a rag, leaving one arm and his legs mostly exposed. In contrast to the other men on the fresco fragments, the beggar is the only one with a beard and wilder, uncut hair. All this points to the fact that he is poor and probably a beggar. In contrast to the man, the woman on his right is almost fully dressed in a *stola,* which is a longer second tunic worn over the first, shorter tunic. This garment is very long – it reaches the floor – which suggests the lady was of a higher status. Moreover, *stolae* were worn by *matrons*, wives of Roman citizens.[44] The *stola* symbolised a woman's status of chastity and morality and is often interpreted as the female equivalent of the male *toga*. This visible contrast in appearance between the two thus helps to tell a story, possibly a moral one: one of beneficence. A value closely connected to, and to some extent even expected of, the elite.

[43] Beard, *Pompeii*, 74.

[44] Strong, *Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World,* 21; Cleland, 'Stola', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012).

Fig. 4: Fragment depicting pupils and punishment. Source: Tomo Terzo, Le Pitture Antiche D'Ercolano Vol. 3 (Naples 1755-92).

In figure 4 there are three people seated on the left who are holding tablets in their hands. This indicates that they are pupils, and that the Forum might have been the place where education took place in Pompeii. On the right we see someone who is punished in public.[45] Some historians have suggested that this person was a pupil as well. He misbehaved and was therefore punished in front of the other pupils as a deterrent.[46] However, there is no direct connection visible between the two groups. Thus, another way of interpreting this fragment could be that there is in fact no relation between the two, but that it merely shows what could take place on the Forum. This seems more plausible, since the different fragments were in fact once one painting covering the walls of a room in the *Praedia* of Julia Felix. Thus, this particular fragment, and therewith the scene it depicts, is actually created by the excavators.

[45] Laurence, *Roman Pompeii,* 37.
[46] Beard, *Pompeii*, 76-77; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 97.

Most striking about this particular event is that the one who is punished is almost fully undressed. This was probably a way to make the beating more painful. Additionally, it is a way to distinguish the one who is punished from the others who behaved well, and therewith also to deter others. Since dress, identity and morality were all connected with one another, (temporarily) undressing someone in a public place where everyone wore clothes was also a way to publicly humiliate one and showed one's immorality by taken away the visible embodiment of morality.

Domestic sphere

Frescoes depicting the domestic sphere are often situated within this context as well. A popular theme of these wall paintings are the dinners that took place here. They are mostly located in the luxurious houses of wealthy citizens who had the financial means to commission these paintings and organise such events. Therefore, what is depicted specifically reflects the elite, their wealth, status and the lavish dining parties that were held in these large houses, giving us insight into the life and perspective of the upper class. The first-century CE frescoes found in the large *House of the Triclinium* (Region V.2.4) seem to demonstrate a strong contrast. It depicts the lowest status – the (often enslaved) servants – as well as the highest status: the elite. Herein, the enslaved people are part of showing off the elite's wealth. The servants are namely not tucked away in these frescoes, but rather they are shown in the foreground and in action. Therefore, these wall paintings are very interesting to analyse, since they enable us to examine the various roles of the ones depicted and their difference in status.[47] The three paintings that will be discussed were all found in the dining room, the *triclinium*, wherein every painting decorated a different wall. Together they give an idealised or maybe extravagant insight into what really happened there. It seems to be the case that we are presented with several ways in which a dinner party could proceed, or even different fragments of the same evening.[48]

[47] Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 239; Beard, *Pompeii*, 218; Watson, 'Slavery, Rome', *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012).

[48] For the ease of understanding, I have numbered the three frescoes, each of which decorated a different wall of the triclinium.

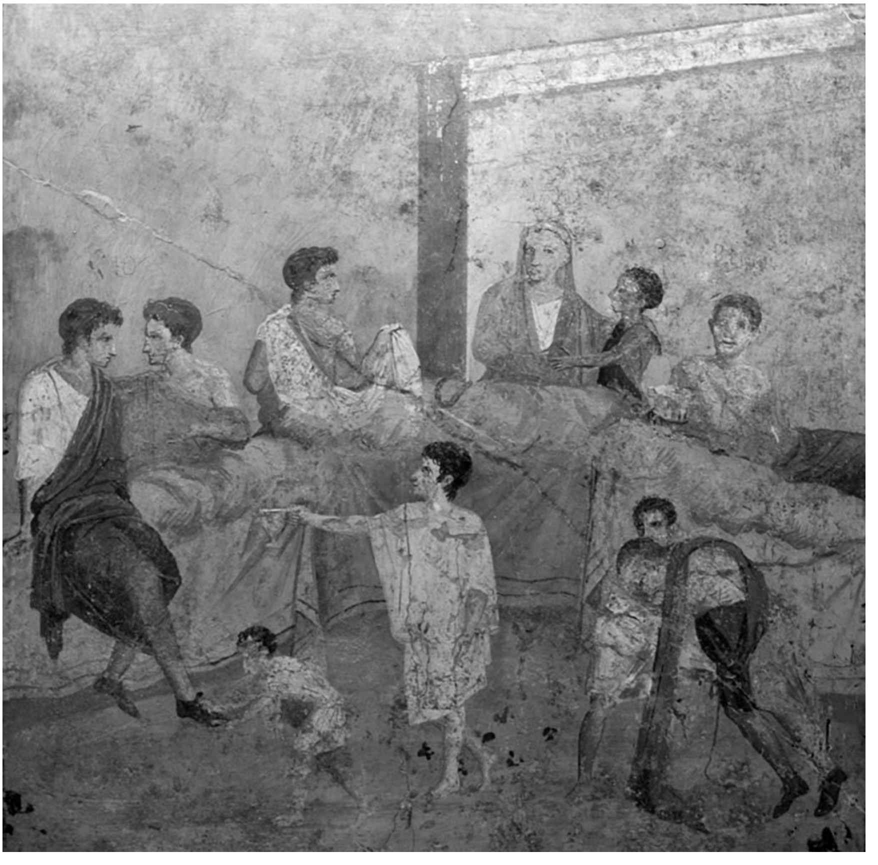

Fig. 5: First fresco, east wall of the triclinium. Frescoes depicting a dining scene. House of the Triclinium, Room 15, Region V.2.4, Pompeii. Source: photo courtesy of Johannes Eber. https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/

In the first wall painting (figure 5) one guest just arrives while others are already lying on the couches. The servants are busy with taking care of the guests. All figures on this wall painting are men, which is not the case for the other two frescoes. In this first fresco four male servants, probably enslaved people, are depicted. Three of them are standing in front of the couches, all wearing short white tunics with vertical red-purple stripes. The one on the left is taking off the shoes of a guest, while the one in the middle offers him a drink. The servant on the right is helping a (drunk) guest who is about to fall over or vomit.[49] The fourth servant can be found on the couches, on the right side, next to the man with a greenish cloak and a white tunic on.[50] This servant is the only one who wears a red-purple tunic. This might indicate that he has a different task than the ones in front of the couches.[51] The three of them are dressed in white tunics with red-purple stripes, just like the guest from whom the shoes are taken off, even though he still wears another red-purple garment on top of it.

This *tunica lato clavo* indicated status and was associated with the elite, a type of garment which was also worn by the assistants in the fresco depicting Cybele's procession. Eve D'Ambra has suggested that people who lacked status or prestige purposely wore this specific garment. Since the red-purple stripes indicated status, people who lacked this would wear this tunic in order to overdress and appear better than their actual status.[52] However, it is more likely that these servants were in fact enslaved. Enslaved people had no specific garment. According to the ancient writer Seneca, the senate once discussed a proposal that enslaved people should wear a uniform to distinguish them from others in society. However, this proposal was rejected: it was feared that such a visible marker would show the numerical strength of the enslaved and could lead to revolts.[53] Because the *paterfamilias* had to provide shelter, food and clothing for his slaves, he was also the one who decided what to wear.[54] The *tunica lato clavo* was thus in all probability chosen by the male head of the household himself. Since this specific garment was associated with the elite, it was possibly expensive as well. Perhaps the *paterfamilias* wanted his servants, who had an important role in receiving and serving the guests, to look well-groomed. But only to a certain extent, since – in contrast to the guests – they only wore a single garment. And if it was

[49] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 28-29; Beard, *Pompeii*, 218-219.
[50] This particular servant looks like the one walking in front of the couches depicted in figure 6.
[51] Joshel et al., *The Material Lives of Roman Slaves,* 28-29. Some historians, like Joshel, have suggested he had sexual duties. The other enslaved servants are active, while he is passive and this could point to the idea of him being marginalized and fulfilling a passive (sexual) role.
[52] D'Ambra, 'Real Estate for Profit. Julia Felix's Property and the Forum Frieze', 99.
[53] Seneca, *De Clementia* 1.24.1, transl. J. W. Basore, *Seneca. Moral Essays, Volume I: De Providentia. De Constantia. De Ira. De Clementia.* (Loeb Classical Library) (Cambridge 1928); M. George, 'Slave Disguise in Ancient Rome' in: J. Gardner and T. Wiedemann ed., *Representing the Body of the Slave* (New York; London 2002) 41-54: 44.
[54] K. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* (Cambridge 1994) 81.

not clear on the basis of clothing, than their lower status was at least emphasized in these wall paintings by depicting them smaller than the ones dining. Another interesting element in this fresco is that the two guests in the front are wearing shoes, while the servants are walking barefoot. Besides the possibility that this was an indication of lower status, it might also refer to the fact that these servants are part of this household, while the ones wearing shoes are guests from outside. Thus, it also shows a difference in dress in the public and domestic sphere.

Fig. 6: Second fresco, north wall of the triclinium. Frescoes depicting a dining scene. House of the Triclinium, Room 15, Region V.2.4, Pompeii. Source: photo courtesy of Johannes Eber. https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/

In this second fresco (figure 6) we see the banqueters reclining on the couches in the dining room, two of them are women. Furthermore, two servants are shown.[55] A male servant stands in front of the couches and is, just like the ones in the first fresco, depicted smaller which points to his lower status. Other comparisons to be made are his short red-purple tunic and the fact that he has bare feet. The other female servant is less visible. She stands on the far left, next to one of the guests, with food or drinks in her hands. Interestingly, we can clearly see the difference between the servants and the ones dining. While the banqueters all have bare chests, the two servants are both dressed. This indicates different roles as well, distinguishing between the people who are enjoying their dinner and the ones who work, providing the food and drinks.[56] While some guests in the first fresco are wearing double garments, in this scene a lot of it has been taken off. Interestingly, this does not appear in frescoes depicting public and religious spheres. In those paintings people are wearing at least some clothes, with the exception for the one who is punished in the Forum scene. This indicates a difference between the public and the, more private, domestic sphere. Nakedness was not, socially or morally, tolerated or acceptable in public. Where less clothes on the streets implicated one's lower status, poverty or immorality, in this scene nudity is an indication of wealth: being part of the elite banqueters. In contrast, having your clothes on is an indication of your lower status and not being part of the ones enjoying the dinner party.

[55] S. Mols and E. Moormann, 'Luxe en decadentie' in: V. Hunink et al. ed., *Luxe & Decadentie. Leven aan de Romeinse goudkust* (Nijmegen 2008) 36-72: 64.
[56] Ibidem. A text has been inscribed on the wall (within this fresco). It states *facitis vobis suaviter - ego canto - est ita valeas*: "Make yourselves comfortable; I am singing; go for it".

Fig. 7: Third fresco, west wall of the triclinium. Frescoes depicting a dining scene. House of the Triclinium, Room 15, Region V.2.4, Pompeii. Source: photo courtesy of Johannes Eber. https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/

Fig. 8: Drawing of the third fresco. Source: https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/

The third fresco (figure 7) depicts entertainment during dinner, probably a fragment depicting the dinner later in the evening. Where all banqueters were awake in the first and second fresco, here one of them has fallen asleep or passed out. Although this fresco is badly damaged, it is with the help of a drawing showing the outlines of the figures still possible to identify some figures. Just like the second fresco, the banqueters have bare chests. A naked female dancer, who might have been an enslaved sex worker, is performing for them. Whereas nudity in the public sphere was seen as immoral, here, in a private sphere, it was tolerated and even seen as entertaining. On her right, we see the fragments of a servant, recognisable by his bare feet and his white and short tunic, probably a *tunica lato clavo*, leaving his legs visible. Right next to him stands a bronze statue which represents a young man with a plate for refreshments.[57] On the left side of the dancer, two small figures are depicted. Just like the other servant, they are wearing short tunics and are depicted small – thus indicating they were servants too.

[57] Beard, *Pompeii*, 218-219.

Conclusion

The frescoes found in Pompeii had not previously been used to analyse dress and diversity in different spheres of urban daily life. Yet, it seems to be an interesting source which leads to meaningful insights in the importance of visible appearance in showing, performing and claiming your role, status, wealth and gender within Roman society. Even though the frescoes might provide an idealised image of everyday life, what was depicted must have corresponded with reality to some extent. All the frescoes tell a story without the use of text. So, the people who saw these wall paintings depicting different spheres had to be able to interpret the scenes on the basis of their own lived experiences. Therefore, these images must have been recognisable, reflecting what people encountered in daily life.

In the wall painting depicting the procession of Cybele, the importance of religious dress in society is demonstrated, which helps to identify the different religious roles of the people within the procession. It shows that certain formal roles required specific garments. Visible appearance in the Forum fragments in the *Praedia* of Julia Felix is important in understanding the differences in status, wealth, gender, beneficence and morality in the public sphere. Lastly, the domestic scenes in the House of the Triclinium give an interesting insight into private elite events, wherein people of the lowest and highest status meet, and aspects which are important and valued in the public sphere, for example to be dressed properly, can differ from the domestic, more private one.

All in all, dress created diversity in all the different spheres and on multiple levels in Roman Pompeii in the Late Republic and Early Empire. Not only could it show someone's gender, wealth or status, but also someone's role or function within a particular sphere. Thus, this suggests a discourse – the idea that there was in fact a conversation going on in Pompeii about differences within the city. Therefore, the wall paintings showing idealised real life scenes can be very interesting, meaningful and fruitful in expanding our knowledge and understanding of dress and diversity on multiple levels in Pompeian society. Pompeian frescoes show, to some extent, a way to 'dress to impress'. But not only status and wealth mattered, other aspects such as your role, morality and gender also had deeper meanings behind one's dress. So, Dress to Impress? Yes, but also, or maybe even more so: Dress to Express!

Deriving Power from a Blessed King. The Representation of King Saint Stephen I of Hungary (975-1038) for the Legitimization of the Dynasties of the Hungarian Angevins and the Hunyadi

Robin Koch

Every year, on the twentieth of August, the Saint Stephen's Crown is paraded through the capitol of Hungary, Budapest. The Crown is connected to the founder of the Hungarian Kingdom, King Saint Stephen I (975-1038), and still holds great significance for its current leaders, even more evident by its keeping place the rest of the year. Instead of being displayed in a museum or kept in some musty, dark depot, the Crown sits atop a velvet cushion in the National Parliament, furthering its status as a national symbol.[1] And up to this day, a tour-guide there will tell you that the Crown belonged to Stephen.[2] However, research has long shown that the Crown is not at all a relic from King Saint Stephen, but was only ascribed to him from the thirteenth century onwards and created no earlier than 1074.[3] Still, the supposed Stephen's Crown functions as a representation of Stephen and as a way of legitimizing the rule of its current keepers.

This article will examine a selection of ways in which the representations of Stephen were used to legitimize rulers to their subjects, specifically under the Hungarian Anjou (1301/1308-1395) and the Hunyadi dynasties (1458-1490). Both had to substantiate their claims to rulership after Stephen's Árpád dynasty died out in the male line in 1301.[4] Its ending led to a war of succession. The new dynasty had to develop tactics to connect

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[2] 'The World of the Habsburgs', https://www.habsburger.net/en/items/crown-st-stephen (Consulted on the 9th of May 2022).

[3] I. Bertényi, *A Magyar korona története* [The Hungarian crown's history] (Budapest 1986) 80-81; É. Kovács and Zs. Lovag, *The Hungarian crown and other regalia* (Budapest 1980) 18-23.

[4] M. Štefánik, 'The Morosinis in Hungary under King Andrew III and the two versions of the death of the Queen of Hungary Tommasina', *Historický časopis* [Historical magazine] 56 (2008) 3-15: 3.

themselves to Stephen, who was not only the first King of Hungary, but also had been canonized on the 20th of August 1083, thereby gaining an aura of sanctity. That sanctity had been transferred upon the Arpadian kings of his line, but now had to be claimed by these successive dynasties.[5] The focus here is on how the Hungarian Anjou's and Hunyadi's utilized representations of Stephen in public spaces for the legitimization of their own (sacral) kingships. This approach has been chosen to gain a better understanding of how these dynasties sent their legitimizing messages to an audience beyond their court. Dynasties that ruled in-between those discussed have been left out, because they did not have to legitimize their rule as extensively or face succession crises after a dynastic break. The Luxembourgian and Habsburg dynasties ruling between the Anjou and Hunyadi gained power through marriages - Sigismund of Luxemburg married Mary of Anjou and Albert of Habsburg married Sigismund's daughter Elizabeth. Meanwhile the Anjou's and Hunyadi's had to fight for their positions. As such, the discussed dynasties had a stronger motivation to legitimize themselves as Stephen's rightful successors with a more elaborate representational program.

To clarify my use of the term representation, it is necessary to give a definition and to discuss the demarcations of its conceptual scope relating to the sources used. I have relied upon the work of Dragoú-Gheorghe Năstăsoiu and Bissera V. Pentcheva to define representation as follows: 'a textual, visual, material or performative pictorial statement by a commissioner about his legitimacy to rule, founded on his predecessors' sacredness, or about the belonging to a certain social category, which states loyalty towards the king and acknowledges his predecessors' sacredness.'[6] To demarcate the extent of all forms of representation this article covers, I will focus only on pictorial representations that could be visually or materially received by a wide

[5] G. Klaniczay, *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban. Magyar dinasztikus szentkultuszok és európai modellek* [The sanctity of rulers in the Middle Ages. Hungarian dynastic saint cults and European models] (Budapest 2000) 12. This work has also appeared in English under the title 'Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses. Dynastic Cults in Medieval Central Europe'; M.C. Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis. Kingship, Sanctity, and Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York 2008) 100-101.

[6] D.G. Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae in Mural Painting of Late-Medieval Hungary* (Budapest 2009) 64; B.V. Pentcheva, 'Performing the Sacred in Byzantium: Image, breath and sound', *Performance Research* 3.19 (2014) 120-128: 120. For the conception of visual representation and audience I have also taken inspiration from: A. van Run, 'Functies en waardering van het beeld' in: M. Stoffers ed., *De middeleeuwse ideeënwereld, 1000-1300* (Hilversum 1994) 342-372: 348-349.

audience, and thus for now neglecting 'performative' statements outside of short discussions regarding symbols and signs related to Stephen by the dynasties. The visual and material sources that served pictorial representation could reach a wider audience than performances and were meant as a 'widespread perception of the holiness of rulership'.[7] For example, the use of the Holy Crown is not further looked at, because it was only used in coronation rituals and therefore not as 'public' as other methods, since the 'lower' classes of medieval Hungarian society were generally left out during the ceremony. The ceremonial performance might only take place once in the lifetime of a ruler - though multiple coronations occurred.[8]

In the past it has already been shown that the two dynasties represented Stephen for their own legitimization. The historians Terézia Kerny, Dragoú-Gheorghe Năstăsoiu and Gábor Klaniczay have all shown this to be the case. Kerny focused exclusively on the corona-angelica-motif, an expression of Stephen's iconography depicting angels holding the Holy Crown. The reuse of the motif proves that the dynasties utilized representation to stress 'continuation of history'.[9] Unfortunately, Kerny does not include source-types that represent Stephen in a different manner from the corona-angelica-motif, such as heraldry. This is contrasted by Năstăsoiu, who covers many source-types in his work. Yet, he centers his work primarily on the 'three holy kings', the *sancti reges Hungariae*: Saint Stephen, Saint Emeric (who during his life never became king, but is still represented as such) and Saint Ladislaus. Saint Emeric (1007-1031) and Saint Ladislaus (r. 1077-1095) will not be included in this article and are only discussed in relation to Saint

[7] J.M. Bak, 'Folklore of the Medieval Kings of Hungary' in: K. Jovanović and S. Miljan ed., *Secular Power and Sacral Authority in Medieval East-Central Europe* (Amsterdam 2018) 17-28: 17-18; E.B. Vitz, N. Freeman Regalado and M. Lawrence, 'Introduction', in Idem ed., *Performing Medieval Narrative* (Cambridge 2005) 1-14: 4.

[8] For a more extensive overview of the forms representation of Stephen could take, the Bachelor's thesis upon which this article is based can be found at: R. Koch, Representation for Dynastic Legitimization. The Representation of King Saint Stephen I of Hungary (975-1038) for the Legitimization of the Dynasties of the Hungarian Angevins and the Hunyadi (Scriptie Geschiedenis, Leiden University, Leiden 2023), https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3631219.

[9] T. Kerny, 'Az angyali koronázás motívuma Szent István ikonográfiájában' [The motif of the coronation by angels in the iconography of Saint Stephen], *Art Hungarica* 31 (2003) 5–30: 8-9.

Stephen as part of the *sancti reges.*[10] Klaniczay's *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban* traces the holiness of Saint Stephen and the use thereof by the Hungarian Angevins. However, he does not explicitly look at representation as a legitimization strategy.[11] This article therefore seeks to broaden the focus upon forms of representation that have not been considered before, through forms like heraldic expression in coins and church ornaments, while also including the pictorial statements previously analyzed by Năstăsoiu.

The selection of the Angevin and Hunyadi dynasties for analysis enabled a comparative study of their representations of Stephen, as each dynasty marked a departure from its predecessor, potentially adopting distinct approaches from their forebears. The Hungarian Angevins, who succeeded the Árpáds and were connected to them in the female line serve as a focal point.[12] King Charles Robert I of Hungary (1288-1342), the first Hungarian king of the House of Anjou, claimed the throne through his Arpadian grandmother. His son Louis the Great (r. 1342-1382) succeeded him.[13] These two monarchs faced significant pressure to legitimize their rule, given their succession of the Árpáds and the presence of multiple claimants to the throne.[14] The structure of this paper will follow a chronological outline, in order to find out if the later dynasty under Matthias 'Corvinus' Hunyadi (r. 1458-1490) - also the only king to come from this dynasty[15] - builds upon the precedence set by the Hungarian Anjou. After introducing the symbols which the dynasties used to connect themselves to Stephen, their expressions in different source-types will be looked at per dynasty. These will include interior church decorations such as frescoes and altarpieces, and the heraldry

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[10] D.Gh. Năstăsoiu, 'Royal Saints, Artistic Patronage, and Self-representation among Hungarian Noblemen', *Herald of the University of Saint Peterburg* 66.3 (Saint Peterburg 2021) 810-827: 814; Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 11-16.

[11] In English: The sanctity of rulers in the Middle Ages. Klaniczay, *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban*, 12.

[12] E. Mályusz, *Zsigmond Király uralma Magyarországon 1387-1437* [The reign of King Sigismund over Hungary 1387-1437] (Budapest 1984) 7.

[13] A. Pór and Gy. Schönherr, *Az Anjouk kora az Anjou ház és örökösei (1301–1439)* [The age of the Anjou. The house of Anjou and its heirs (1301-1439)] (Budapest 1895) 7.

[14] Klaniczay, *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban*, 260.

[15] R. Lupescu, 'The Election and Coronation of King Matthias' in: A. Bakos, B. Basics and P. Farbaky ed., *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court, 1458-1490* (Budapest 2008) 190-196: 191-192.

found on coins and exterior church ornaments.[16] These four material and visual representational types could find a wide audience among churchgoers, city dwellers, and everyday people, thereby not only reaching many people, but especially the lower classes on a near-daily basis, allowing for the internalization of the messages send by the dynasties among their subjects.

Beata stirps

The concept of *beata stirps* (blessed lineage) was used by the Hungarian Angevins as a means of tying themselves to King Saint Stephen I. They were keenly aware of their holy predecessors from both the line of Stephen and their French heritage through the Anjou line, by which they descended from holy ancestors such as Saint Louis of Toulouse (1274-1297) and King Saint Louis IX (r. 1226-1270). These lineages were called the *beata stirps Arpadiana* and the *beata stirps Angevina*. The concept was first introduced by André Vauchez and can be defined as a transfer of the sacredness from holy ancestors to oneself to gain more royal legitimacy in both secular and spiritual spheres. A king could become a saint with a *beata stirps* that was passed on to his successors, if he had been a *miles Christi*, a defender of Christendom, or a *rex iustus*, righteous king.[17]

The *beata stirps* were also publicly represented in visual and material form, and the *beata stirps Arpadiana*'s use increased during Charles Robert's kingship and afterwards with the rise in popularity of the worship of three ancestral royal saints. The two kings of the Arpadian line, besides King Stephen himself, were Emeric and Ladislaus. Emeric was the eldest son of Stephen and had been the crown prince, who had not fully attained kingship

[16] Frescoes had interactions with illuminations found in manuscripts around the court. This shows how rulers replicated the same legitimization strategies and representations for the elite circles in manuscript to a broader audience in other forms of public representation: Van Run, 'Functies en waardering van het beeld', 356.

[17] A. Vauchez, 'Beata stirps'. sainteté et lignage en Occident au XIIIe et XIVe siècles' [Beata stirps. sancity and lineage in the West in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries] in: G Duby and J. Le Goff ed., *Famille et parenté dans l'Occident médiéval* [Family and kinship in the medieval West] (Rome 1977) 397–407: 398-400. Gaposchkin also identifies other legitimizing strategies besides 'saintly lineage', being '[...] *Christian virtue, sacral authority, and royal dignity'*: Gaposchkin, *The Making of Saint Louis. Kingship*, 6-11.

but was nevertheless worshipped as a king after his death.[18] Ladislaus had both Stephen and Emeric canonized in 1085, and later he himself became the third royal male saint of Hungary.[19] Together, the three kings formed the *sancti reges Hungariae*. Although Charles Robert was the first to make use of this topos, his son Louis the Great intensified the worship of the *sancti reges*.[20] Because the focus is on the Arpadian line within the *beata stirps* conceptualization, the use of the term *beata stirps* will refer only to that particular lineage and exclude the *Angevina*. Devotion to the *sancti reges Hungariae* meant their worshippers implicitly acknowledged that the current kings possessed the holy blood they claimed from their ancestors.

This concept was performed in the public sphere and used as a tool to carry over the predecessors' holiness unto the Hungarian Angevin dynasty, exemplified by the public devotion to the *sancti reges* in several speeches.[21] Nobles replicated the *beata stirps* trope and theme in various forms, proving that the representation of Stephen was an effective tool for the legitimization of power. Apparently, the nobles felt the need to confirm to the *beata stirps* practice, thereby affirming the holy lineage of and their loyalty towards the ruling dynasty, although not excluding motivations of simple piety.[22] As such,

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[18] Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 11.

[19] Gy. Kristó and F. Makk, *Az Árpád-ház uralkodói* [Rulers of the house of Árpád] (Budapest 1996) 119.

[20] D.Gh. Năstăsoiu, 'Political Aspects of the Mural Representations of 'Sancti Reges Hungariae' in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Annual of Medieval Studies at CEU* 16 (2010) 93-119: 95-97.

[21] J. Thuróczy, *A Magyarok krónikája* [Chronicle of the Hungarians] (Brno 1488), János Horváth trans. (second edition; Budapest 1980) 229-231. Further examples where the *sancti reges* are mentioned include an *oratio* given by the Dominican Bishop Augustin Gazottus of Zagreb (1260-1323) on 10 October 1307 on the Field of Rakós and a public address given by Cardinal Gentile da Montefiore (c. 1240/1250-1312) in 1309 at a gathering of the Dominicans: Gy. Kristó and F. Makk, *Károly Róbert emlékezete* [In the memory of Charles Robert] (Budapest 1988) 71-72; Tudor Sălăgean, 'Ladislas Kán (1294–1315). The Transylvanian Nobles and the Congregational Regime' in: Idem, *Transylvania in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century* (Leiden 2016) 166-228: 211; Klaniczay, *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban*, 261; Gentile Portino da Montefiore, *Acta legationis cardinalis Gentilis (1307-1311)* [Acts of the legation of Cardinal Gentile], Antal Pór ed. (Budapest 1885) 269.

[22] The re-use of the *sancti reges* as patrons by the nobility could also become a tool in undermining the royal dynasty. The first time the nobility repurposed the holy

the concept of *beata stirps* found expression through the *sancti reges* in frescoes and altarpieces, and through heraldry in coins and church ornamentation. To further substantiate the aristocratic replication of the royal propaganda that took place during the Angevins' rule, resulting in affirmation of the *beata stirps*, an example of a *sancti reges* fresco is discussed below. The overall use of *beata stirps* by the dynasty itself to support a hereditary claim can be regarded as a typical form of 'traditional legitimacy'.[23]

Frescoes: *Sancti Reges Hungariae*

One of the most public forms of visual communication used for expressing the representation of King Saint Stephen during the time of the Angevins were church frescoes. These wall paintings started to include the recently developed topos of the *sancti reges Hungariae*.[24] They did not only reach the elite or clergy; the 'ordinary' churchgoer could consume these spatial expressions of legitimization as well, albeit passively. A more active form of visual communication would seek to force itself upon the viewer, for example by playing a role in the liturgy. The frescoes' passivity however means that the viewer did not need to actively stand still and contemplate the meaning or message of the work. During the reign of Matthias, the church space would come to include artistic representations of the *sancti reges* that had to be actively consumed by the viewer, because these representations took part in the performance of the liturgical rites. Thereby the 'representational space' as

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Arpadian kings against their own king would take place under the new Luxemburgian dynasty, with the anti-Sigismund coalition of 1402-1403. For the Angevine age in Hungary, the *sancti reges* were only employed by the dynasty itself for legitimization or by its subjects in support of the dynasty, not against it: D.Gh. Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda: Iconographic Aspects in the Representation of the sancti reges Hungariae in Church Mural Painting (14th Century – Early-16th Century)* (Budapest 2018) 8, 123-124, 129.

[23] Max Weber, 'Politics as Vocation' in: *Weber's Rationalism and Modern Society (1919)*, T. Waters and D. Waters ed. and trans. (New York 2015) 11.

[24] The topos had already been developed in written culture during the twelfth and thirteenth century and found artistic expression under the reign of Charles Robert's predecessor King Andrew III (r. 1290-1301): Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 42-43, 46-49.

lived through by an attendee was changed.[25] In the Angevin period, the placement of the frescoes within the space of a church was not necessarily predetermined. This contrasts Matthias' altarpieces discussed below, which were always dedicated either to the main altar or the altar of a chapel within the church building. The *sancti reges* frescoes only seemed to have required good perceivability upon entering the church but could otherwise be placed on any wall.[26]

The frescoes combined the three *sancti reges*, which also meant placing together the three different symbolic meanings of the saints who previously held separate cults and meanings. To exemplify this for the Angevins, the Church of Tileagd in current-day Romania captures these together in one fresco dating to around 1380, probably from the reign of Louis the Great.[27] I have chosen to focus on the Tileagd example due to its inclusion of all three *sancti reges* and its ties with the Telegdi family. The Telegdi's had close connections with the royal family and held high ecclesiastical positions. Csanád Telegdi was the archbishop of Esztergom and gave Charles Robert of Anjou's funeral speech in 1342.[28] Due to its patron's high status, the Tileagd fresco shows how the replication of the *sancti reges*-motif was directly implemented by the higher nobility in this visual form, previously propagandized by the Angevins.

[25] Representational space follows the definition of Lefebvre here, meaning that it is the lived space through which symbols are communicated: H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space (1974),* Donald Nicholson-Smith trans. (Oxford, United Kingdom – Cambridge, USA 1991) 38-39.
[26] Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 64-68.
[27] Ibidem, 90. Năstăsoiu also lists other fresco examples from the period of the Angevins of the three *sancti reges*, or a combination of Stephen and Ladislaus, in his Catalogue of Murals. They are numbered as follows: Cat.No. 5, Cat.No. 6, Cat.No.9, Cat.No. 13, Cat.No.14 and Cat.No. 21. From: Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 339-348, 349-351, 366-368, 382-386, 387-389, 440-449.
[28] Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 48-49. The Csanád Telegdi's funeral speech can be found in: Thuróczy, *A Magyarok krónikája*, 229-231.

Fig. 1: The fresco with the *sancti reges Hungariae* from Tileagd as seen from the Calvinist Church (former Catholic Church of St. Stephen of Hungary) interior (on the right), ca. 1380. Fresco. Source: D.Gh. Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda: Iconographic Aspects in the Representation of the sancti reges Hungariae in Church Mural Painting (14th Century – Early-16th Century)* (Budapest 2018), cat. No. 20.1, 437. Reproduced with permission from Dragoú-Gheorghe Năstăsoiu.

On the fresco (see Figure 1), Stephen is depicted in the center as an older, bearded man with a halo, denoting his sanctity.[29] He holds the royal insignia, the scepter and *globus cruciger* (cross-bearing orb), and on the top of his head an unremarkable crown is seen. It is noteworthy that the fresco does not depict him with the Holy Crown, instead opting for a common, simple crown that suffices to show kingship, but not much else. His scepter is in the shape of a mace, thereby signaling royal dignity and Stephen as a *miles Christi*. Ladislaus, to the right, holds an axe, signifying him as defender of the Kingdom and Church, and Emeric to the left holds a lily-shaped scepter, which according to Năstăsoiu indicates Emeric as a chaste saint, in opposition to the more warrior-like other kings of the fresco, though the lily as a symbol

[29] I want to kindly thank Dr. Dragoú-Gheorghe Năstăsoiu for providing the images.

could have further connotations than mere chastity.[30] The spatial placement of the fresco is remarkable too, and highly visible from within the church interior (see Figure 1).

The overall nobility had been critical or skeptical of Charles Robert in the initial phases of his rule. When Charles Robert had established himself as king after the succession crisis, these frescoes of the *sancti reges* became a means of proving one's loyalty to the king and his new dynasty by acknowledging their ancestral saints. The nobility had these frescoes made and thereby further affirmed the Angevins' holy right to the kingship of Hungary, strengthening Charles Robert's position. Furthermore, the frescoes brought the affirming message over to the wider population.[31] Adapting the theme to their own chapels and churches, the Apafi, Bebek and Telegdi families were the foremost commissioners.[32]

Finally, the theme found replication beyond the fresco art commissioned by the nobility and royal family, indicating the successfulness of the frescoes in reaching a wide audience. This can be seen from the students of the Hungarian *natio* at the fifteenth century Viennese university. By this time, the *sancti reges* had become the patron saints of the students, forming a symbol of 'national identity'.[33]

[30] Năstăsoiu, 'Political Aspects of the Mural Representations', 103; Năstăsoiu states the function of the lily shaped scepter of Emeric again in: Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 75. For more on the symbolisms of lilies, see: M. Channen Caldwell, ''Flower of the Lily'. Late-Medieval Religious and Heraldic Symbolism in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Français 146', *Early Music History* 33 (2014) 1-60: 5-9.

[31] G. Klaniczay, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Central Europe: Rivalries and Alliances' in: N. Holger Petersen, A. Mänd, S. Salvadó and T. R. Sands ed., *Symbolic Identity and the Cultural Memory of Saints* (Newcastle upon Tyne 2018) 21-41: 34-35; Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 43, 48.

[32] Năstăsoiu, *Sancti Reges Hungariae*, 68; Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 121-122, 379.

[33] Klaniczay, 'Saints' Cults in Medieval Central Europe', 36.

Coinage: tracing heraldry

To trace heraldry on coinage, it is necessary to first look at the heraldic symbols associated with Stephen from his own time and onwards. The two symbols related to Stephen are the so-called Árpád stripes and the patriarchal cross, which were both replicated by the Angevins on their coinage to represent Stephen. About the Árpád stripes or *Árpádsáv*, which are horizontal lines alternating in red and white or silver (usually four), a historiographical debate exists surrounding the origins of the stripes with two main positions.

The indigenous position holds that the stripes originated from the period of Stephen himself, based on the existence of a denar minted under the rule of Stephen that displays the lance of the king with the text *LANCEA REGIS* (Spear of the Kingdom), and attached to the lance is a banner upon which stripes can be seen.[34] The historian László Baják suggested that these lines must be the Árpád stripes. Although it is not possible to say so conclusively due to the lack of red and white color on the coins and therefore direct comparison, it is highly likely these are the Árpád stripes due to their appearance on a royal coin and their appearance upon a banner, an item usually reserved for heraldic symbolism.[35]

The exotic position represented by Iván Bertényi doubts the indigenous position but in my opinion he does not refute the opposing position sufficiently. He places the origin of the stripes in Spain, comparing the coat of arms of the Arpadian dynasty to those of Aragon and Barcelona from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[36] Either way, the stripes were indisputably in use during and after the reign of King Emeric (r. 1196-1204) – who is not to be confused with Saint Emeric (c. 1007-1031).[37]

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[34] Cs. Tóth, J.G. Kiss and A. Fekete, *From King Saint Stephen to King Imre. Catalogue of Árpádian Coinage I* (Budapest 2018) 63; Cs. Tóth, 'A Kora Árpád-Kori Magyar Pénztörténetről Dióhéjban' [Early Árpádian Coinage in a Nutshell] in: Cs. Tóth, J.G. Kiss and A. Fekete ed., *From King Saint Stephen to King Imre. Catalogue of Árpádian Coinage I* (Budapest 2018) 14-38: 30.

[35] J. Voltz, *How the Árpáds got their Stripes. Changes in the Denotation of the Árpád stripes in the Middle Ages* (Budapest 2020) 20-21.

[36] Voltz, *How the Árpáds got their Stripes*, 23-26; I. Bertényi, 'Les variantes des armoiries du roi Mathias' [The variations of King Matthias' coat of arms] in: A. Bárány and A. Györkös ed., *Matthias and his legacy. Cultural and Political Encounters between East and West* (Debrecen 2009) 63-108: 84-85.

[37] Voltz, *How the Árpáds got their Stripes*, 35, 39.

Fig. 2: Obverse and reverse of a denar minted under Charles Robert I of Hungary. Silver. Source: Re.2.18; Hu.495; Ung. 393; own private collection.

The second heraldic symbol is the patriarchal cross, in the medieval mind linked to Stephen through the hagiographical *Legenda Hartviciana*, wherein it was described that the Pope gave him 'the apostolic cross', in the 'double' cross was of Byzantine origin, introduced into the Hungarian royal coat of arms by king Béla III (r. 1172-1196), who grew up at the Byzantine court.[38] Even though the cross, and the stripes for that matter, might never have been used in the time of King Saint Stephen as part of the coat of arms, the Angevins believed it to be so. Their belief is evidenced by illuminations of Stephen with both symbols from the *Chronica Picta*, a chronicle produced at the request of the royal family.[39]

Besides chronicles, these symbols as part of the royal heraldry found their way unto coins, especially silver coins, also known as denars, *groschen*, or in Hungarian *garas*. In the case of golden florins there seems to have been a delay before the mint changed to accommodate the royal heraldry linked to Stephen.[40] On the denars, the Árpád stripes appeared next to the *fleur-de-lis*, which represented the French Angevin lineage, either quartered or halved

[38] P. Gyula, *A Magyar nemzet története az Árpádházi irályok alatt* [The national Hungarian history under the Árpád kings] (Budapest 1899) 320-321.
[39] Országos Széchényi Könyvtár, Budapest, Hs. 404, Chronicon pictum [Illustrated chronicle], Marci de Kalt, *Chronica de gestis Hungarorum (1358, 1370-1373)* [Chronicle on the deeds of the Hungarian], f. 20r.
[40] L. Travaini, 'Coins and Identity. From Mint to Paradise' in: Rory Naismith ed., *Money and Coinage in the Middle Ages* (Leiden 2019) 320-349: 329-330.

within the coat of arms.[41] The coat of arms featuring the stripes appears quite frequently: almost half of all silver coins minted under Charles Robert depicted this coat of arms, in various forms, on the reverse.[42] On the denars' obverse side, the king was often depicted sitting on his throne with full regalia: crown, scepter and *globus cruciger*. An example of such a denar can be seen in Figure 2, where a shield on the reverse contains the halved coat of arms with the lilies and the stripes, while Charles Robert I of Hungary is seen on the obverse. The crown Charles is wearing is once again not identifiable, thus not corresponding to Stephen's Holy Crown. Neither is the *globus cruciger* on the coin corresponding to the one in use during Charles Robert's reign, which did have the patriarchal cross attached on top. This particular denar may lack references to Stephen in the form of the patriarchal cross, but there are other denars from Charles Robert's reign using the patriarchal cross on the reverse instead of the coat of arms with the stripes, following a practice of mint established by King Béla III (r. 1172-1196).[43]

The Angevins used these silver coins as vehicles of transmission to their claim of *beata stirps*. Not only did the coins make them recognizable to a broad audience as Stephen's successors who reused the Arpadian symbols, the addition of the stripes to the Kingdom's currency also engrained it as a symbol of identity for the *natio*. Lucia Travaini substantiates the claim of currency as a vehicle for representations, which over time would become identifying markers. She has shown that users would internalize the representation, by looking at pilgrims who carried these coins to shrines, because they actualized the presence of the holy ruler depicted thereupon. Coins were 'ideal tokens of identity and personal memory to leave behind'.[44] Coinage disseminated the representation of Stephen in heraldry amongst a public that was as widespread as that of the frescoes presenting the theme of the *sancti reges Hungariae*. In comparison to the frescoes, coins were used more 'actively' since they were handled and carried around, and therefore the

[41] For a coin with a halved coat of arms, see Figure 2. For a quartered example, see: J.G. Frynas, *Medieval Coins of Bohemia, Hungary and Poland* (London 2015) 182.
[42] Ibidem, 180-188.
[43] K. Szelényi and E. Tóth, *A Magyar Szent Korona: királyok és koronázások* [The Hungarian Holy Crown: kings and coronations] (Budapest 2005) 53-58; Frynas, *Medieval Coins of Bohemia, Hungary and Poland*, 183, 185-186, 188. For Béla III's denars see figures H.15.9 and H.15.22 in: Frynas, *Medieval Coins of Bohemia, Hungary and Poland*, 154-155.
[44] Travaini, 'Coins and Identity', 335-336.

material and visual representations of Stephen on them were more effective in legitimizing the issuers of the coins as his successors.

Compensating Beata Stirps

The Hungarian Angevins had - although not directly - descended from king Saint Stephen and utilized their possession of *beata stirps* to legitimize themselves, but King Matthias 'Corvinus' Hunyadi lacked any relationship and therefore the supposedly inherent 'holiness' connected to Stephen. In fact, he was the only medieval Hungarian king not able to utilize any hereditary claims.[45] His family, the Hunyadi, had come from Wallachian stock and were only first mentioned in king Sigismund of Hungary's letters from 1409.[46] Matthias was elected to be king, and besides lack of hereditary claims, the election itself was uncertain. From his election in 1458 to his eventual coronation with the Holy Crown in 1464, Matthias' rule was quite unstable, and so he had to make use of various legitimization strategies.[47]

To compensate for *beata stirps*, fabricated legends surrounding the origins of the Hunyadi were repurposed by Matthias. Among these legends is one by Italian humanist writer Pietro Ransano in his *Epitome rerum Hungaricarum*. Ransano admired János Hunyadi, Matthias' father, and provided the Wallachian with a prestigious Romano-Italian background by having him originate from the Ancient Roman Corvini family.[48] Matthias would use the *Corvinus* name and incorporate the raven-symbol in his coat of arms.

The raven is connotated to another legend surrounding the Hunyadi family, wherein King Sigismund of Hungary (r. 1387-1437) conceived an

[45] Radu Lupescu, 'Matthias Hunyadi. from the Family Origins to the Threshold of Power' in: A. Bakos, B. Basics and P. Farbaky ed., *Matthias Corvinus, the King. Tradition and renewal in the Hungarian Royal Court, 1458-1490* (Budapest 2008) 34-49: 35.
[46] Ibidem, 37-38.
[47] Lupescu, 'The Election and Coronation of King Matthias', 193; T. Pálosfalvi, 'From Belgrade to Vienna. King Matthias and the Ottomans, 1458–1483', in: Idem, *From Nicopolis to Mohács* (Leiden 2018) 188-277: 192; H. Marczali, *Magyarország Törtënete*, Vol. I. (Budapest 1990) 315-316.
[48] A. Boreczky, 'Historiography and Propaganda in the Royal Court of King Matthias. Hungarian Book Culture at the End of the Middle Ages and Beyond', *Radovi Instituta za povijest umjetnosti* 43 (Primljen 2019) 23-35: 24; Lupescu, 'Matthias Hunyadi', 36.

illegitimate child with a noblewoman. After impregnating the woman, he gave her a ring so that the child could be recognized as his when coming off-age. At the birth of the child, a raven stole the ring, but the legitimate husband of the woman managed to retrieve the object. The ring was given to the adult boy, who we then learn is János Hunyadi, and he claimed his place at the side of the king after being sent to court by his mother. The raven, this time with a ring in his beak, can also be traced back on Matthias' coat of arms, as will be seen when discussing an example later on.[49] The story of the raven and the ring was written down by the court historian Antonio Bonfini (1427-1502), who was in direct service to Matthias and in close contact with the king.[50] The fanciful legend was meant to give Matthias' lineage a sense of high-noble birth since he could not make any claims to be the descendant of Sigismund or to be in possession of the *beata stirps Arpadiana* in any way. Lack of *beata stirps* did not prevent Matthias from making extensive use of Stephen's representation, much like the fabrication of the other legends that served his legitimization. He used it from the perspective of Stephen as a saintly and royal patron of Hungary instead of as his direct ancestor, as the Angevins used to do. He seamlessly integrated the ancestral legends of the Hunyadi together with symbols and signs associated with Stephen.

Altarpieces

The altarpiece had been increasing in popularity in churches since the thirteenth century, and therefore had been in use even before the Angevin dynasty of Hungary. Still, it took until the late fifteenth century for the *sancti* representation of the saints gained a liturgical and spatial function, besides a symbolic one. An altarpiece can be defined as 'a panel standing directly upon

[49] L. Nagy, *A holló, a gyürü és a sárkány jegyében. Magyar, Román és Lengyel Corvinusok Drakulától Esterházy Pálig* [In the spirit of the raven, the ring and the dragon: Hungarian, Romanian and Polish Corvins from Dracula to Pál Eszterházy] (Budapest 2014) 21; Bertényi, 'Les variantes des armoiries du roi Mathias', 86.
[50] Teszelszky, *De sacra corona regni Hungariae*, 27; Kovács, *Matthias Corvinus*, 195.

Fig. 3: The *sancti reges Hungariae* in Szepeshely's main altarpiece [Cathedral of St. Martin in Spišská Kapitula] with their coat of arms. Commissioned by King Matthias Hunyadi, ca. 1470-1478. Tempera on wood panel. 138 x 163 cm. Source: reproduced with permission from Archív Spišská Kapitula; special thanks to Doc. Mgr. Monika Bizoňová.

an altar table and 'labeling' the dedication of that altar'.[51] The altar was the focus of any church interior. Not only that, but altarpieces could also be opened and closed on the feast days of the saints they were dedicated to. The periodical opening of the pieces would have made the audience very attentive to the saints and imagery portrayed within, giving a certain dynamic to the altarpiece. This dynamic differs greatly from the frescoes' passive interaction with an audience.[52]

The active use of the altarpiece in liturgy and its spatial placement on top of the altar made it a very potent form of representing the royal saints, especially Stephen, to signal one's own connection to them. The focus here will be on the main altarpiece in St. Martin's Cathedral in Szepeshely, current day Spišská Kapitula, Slovakia, portraying the *sancti reges* (see Figure 3). Its dedication to the main altar exemplifies the use of such an altarpiece with the

[51] B. Williamson, 'Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion', *Speculum* 79:2 (April 2004) 341-406: 341-343, 360.

[52] Ibidem, 364.

sancti reges to reach the public. A deliberate choice had been made to place it where it is most clearly visible in the Cathedral's space for an audience and a focal point within the liturgical ritual. The portrayal of these saints on a central altarpiece such as this one is quite rare, making it even more of a statement by its commissioner to have ordered such a piece.[53]

Regarding the commissioner, the altarpiece was probably made for Matthias between 1470 and 1478. Györgyi Poszler stipulates that besides commissioning the panel, Matthias might have equated himself with Stephen as depicted upon it. Stephen is placed closest to the center; his placement signifies his role as founder and wise ruler of the kingdom but also that of a royal predecessor. In other words, he was to be seen as the predecessor of Matthias himself, maybe not in blood, but definitely in his role as wise ruler.[54] The uniqueness of the main altarpiece derives from its close connection to Matthias and its use on the main altar where it was most visible to an audience.[55]

The saints who are depicted on the main altarpiece include several foreigners such as Saint Oswald (c. 604-642), and the *sancti reges* can be seen with their traditional attributes. Saint Stephen is portrayed as an old man on the right with a scepter and the orb; the young Saint Emeric holds lilies and a sword; and the knightly Saint Ladislaus holds his 'beheading' axe and an orb. All three saints have their coat of arms displayed at their feet, including the Árpád stripes and patriarchal cross. The addition of a coat of arms to the saints' imagery was another late fifteenth century innovation, in my view meant to highlight that these were royal saints to be seen as the predecessors of the current wielder of the same heraldic symbols.[56] That the *sancti reges* were no coincidental inclusion on the altarpiece is perhaps best illustrated by Saint

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[53] Williamson, 'Altarpieces, Liturgy, and Devotion', 362-363.

[54] Gy. Poszler, 'Az Árpád-Házi Szent királyok a Magyar középkor századainban' [The Holy Kings of the house of Árpád in the centuries of the Hungarian Middle Ages] in: A. Jávor, M Árpád, and K. Sinkó ed., *Történelem – Kép. Szemelvények múlt és művészet kapcsolatából* Magyarországon [History - Image. Snippets from the relationship between past and art in Hungary] (Budapest 2000) 170-194: 181-182; Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 101.

[55] The altarpiece is not the only one known to portray the *sancti reges* theme, even the same Cathedral holds another altarpiece with the motif from the altar of the Death of the Virgin Mary. However, this piece was made in 1510, long after Matthias' death: Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, https://www.mfab.hu/artworks/33956/ (Consulted on the 20th of July 2024).

[56] Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 137.

Oswald, who is depicted while receiving a ring from a raven. Although Oswald does not have any other ties to Matthias, the raven – at times with a ring – is one of Oswald's attributes.[57] Here Oswald's raven has been repurposed by Matthias to reference his familial origins and coat of arms.[58] Just as Matthias probably chose to portray Saint Oswald in this manner, so he must have chosen to portray the *sancti reges Hungariae* as patrons of the kingdom and his own divine predecessors, thereby obtaining for himself some of that 'divinity'. An audience's awareness of this message must have been heightened when the main altarpiece in the Cathedral was 'opened' on feast days.

Exterior Church ornaments

Coinage under the Angevins was used as a vehicle to spread their heraldic representations of Stephen, and the practice continued under Matthias.[59] Moreover, Matthias' use of heraldry in public space found a new expression in the form of external church ornamentations. Internal ornamentation had already become an 'active' way of representing, but the external ornamentations too were highly visible. An example is the external stone ornamentation on the bell tower of the current-day Matthias' Church. It held the coat of arms of Matthias, which included the Árpád stripes, the patriarchal cross, and a crow with a ring in a beak referencing the Hunyadi's origins. The stripes and cross were not only used for the royal coat of arms, but under Matthias had become part of the familial Hunyadi coat of arms.[60] Finally, in the coat of arms references to some of the other regions under his rule can be discerned, namely the lion of Bohemia, and the three lions' heads of Dalmatia-Croatia.[61]

[57] Cora Dietl, 'Eigenwillig und trotzig, fromm und bedacht: Der Rabe des Heiligen Oswald' in: M. Kubisiak and J. Firaza eds., *Animal Body* (Leiden 2022) 3-26: 4-6.
[58] Năstăsoiu, *Between Personal Devotion and Political Propaganda*, 100.
[59] For my extended treatise on coinage as a form of Stephen's representation during Matthias' reign, see my BA-thesis.
[60] J. Csoma, *A Magyar heraldika korszakai (1913)* [The eras of Hungarian heraldry] (Máriabesnyö 2022) 36-37.
[61] Matthias' first wife, Catherine of Poděbrady (1449-1464), was the daughter of the king of Bohemia: L. Huszár, 'Mátyás pénzei' [The coinage of Matthias] in: I. Lukinich

The coat of arms was originally painted and placed on the East-side of the Southern bell tower around 1470 when the 'parish Church of the Assumption of Our Lady of Buda' as it was then called, was renovated under Matthias. It is first mentioned in a charter from 1471 as the 'new church of the Blessed Virgin Mary founded in Buda Castle, (…)'.[62] Nowadays, the object has been moved inside of the church building, but its outside placement in the late fifteenth century on the eastside meant that it would have been clearly visible both on the Buda- and Pest-side of the Danube.[63] The date of the ornament being moved inside the Church (1893) is given

ed., *Mátyás király. Emlékkönyv születésének ötszázéves fordulóján I.* [King Matthias. Memorial book on the 500th anniversary of his birth I.] (Budapest 1940) 549–574: 552-553; V. Fraknói, *Hunyadi Mátyás Király, 1440-1490* [King Matthias Hunyadi, 1440-1490] (Budapest 1890) 69-72.

[62] In Latin: *[Prepositi et Canonicorum] noue ecclesie beate Marié virginis in Castro Budensi fundate*, […]. For the charter see: J. Teleki, *Hunyadiak kora Magyarországon* [The age of the Hunyadi in Hungary], Oklevéltár. XI. [Charter Archive. XI.] (Pest, 1855) 447-449; Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár, Budapest, State Archives E, 17227 [formerly Q 311 / 1526 13], https://archives.hungaricana.hu/hu/charters/198023/. G. Buzás, 'A Budapesti Mátyás-templom középkori Mária-kapuja' [The Maria-chapel of the medieval Matthias-church of Budapest], *Archaeologia - Altum Castrum Online. A Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum visegrádi Mátyás Király Múzeumának középkori régészeti online magazinja* [Archaeologia – Old Castle Online. The online magazine of the King Matthias Museum of Medieval Archaeology of the Hungarian National Museum in Visegrád] (Visegrád 2019) 2-23: 2; J. Csemegi, *Adatok a budavári főtemplom középkori építéstörténetéhez* [Details on the medieval building history of the main church in Buda] (Budapest 1941) 120.

[63] Csemegi, *Adatok a budavári főtemplom középkori építéstörténetéhez*, 120; J. Katona, 'Historizmus és szecesszió határán. A Mátyás-templom ornamentális festése' [On the Verge of Historicism and Art Nouveau. The Decorative Wall Painting of the Matthias Church in Buda] in: A Mátyás-templom. *A budavári Nagyboldogasszony-templom évszázadai (1246–2013), Budapesti Történeti Múzeum Vármúzeum és Budavári Nagyboldogasszony-templom, kiállítási katalógus* [The Matthias Church. The Centuries of the Church of Our Lady of Buda in Buda Castle (1246-2013), Budapest History Museum Castle Museum and Church of Our Lady of Buda in Buda Castle, exhibition catalogue] (Budapest 2015) 442–449: 450.

Fig. 4: The original (painted) coat of arms that functioned as an ornament for the bell tower of the Matthias Church in Budapest. Ca. 1470. Stone. Source: reproduced with permission by Noel Salát.

underneath the coat of arms, as can be seen on Figure 4. This can also be seen in the *Liber chronicarum* by Hartmann Schedel from 1493, where the city-scape prominently features the bell-tower of the church.[64]

Conclusions

To trace the representation of King Saint Stephen for the legitimization of the Hungarian Angevins and Hunyadi, using the concept of *beata stirps* has been helpful in identifying expressions of pictorial representation as a form of 'traditional legitimacy'. The Hungarian Angevins made the symbols and signs associated with Stephen a stable point of reference and were often the first 'pioneers' to do so. The *sancti reges Hungariae* saw dissemination in the form of frescoes during their rule and the Árpád stripes were introduced on coins as heraldic symbols, tying the dynasty back to the Arpadians; and although the patriarchal cross had first appeared on coins since King Béla III, under the Anjou dynasty it too became a symbol tying them to Stephen. The Hunyadi under Matthias repurposed the symbols and signs that the Angevins had popularized by using altarpieces for the *sancti reges* that had to be more actively consumed, and by placing external ornamentation with the coat of arms, including the stripes and patriarchal cross, on highly visible church towers.[65] Matthias did this despite lacking in any *beata stirps*, and instead the *sancti reges* became more like 'national' patrons or predecessors of his own kingship.

The Angevins pioneered various forms of representing Stephen through use of the *beata stirps* and *sancti reges*. It had been the first dynasty after the Árpáds that tried to connect itself to Stephen for the legitimization and stabilization of their own rule. Nonetheless, Matthias seems to have been more successful in reaching an even wider audience regarding public representation by form of altarpieces and exterior decoration. In this article,

[64] H. Schedel, M. Wolgemut, W. Pleydenwurff and A. Koberger, *Liber Chronicarum* [Chronicle book] (Neurenberg 1493) 138v-139r. The edition from the Utrecht University Library was used: Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht, Utrecht, inv.nr. 71460578.

[65] Another coat of arms has survived on the St. Martin's Cathedral in Bratislava (not to be confused with the Cathedral in Spišská Kapitula): Csoma, *A Magyar Heraldika Korszakai*, 38.

I have presented a couple examples of representations these dynasties utilized. Even so, there are many more to find and analyze. Not only that, but a gap also exists between the Angevins and Hunyadi in the form of the Hungarian reign by emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg and his heirs, the Habsburgs. An extended overview of the representation of Stephen as utilized by the Luxembourgers and Habsburgs in Hungary might add some new, unexpected forms to the already identified representation that found expression when new dynasties were established without succession crises. For modern historians, applying an analysis of the types of possible representation in contemporary Hungary could give new insights as well.

Zijderoutes voor rietsuiker: De invloed van accijns op de uitvoer van rietsuiker uit Nederlands-Indië tussen 1888 en 1902

Daan van der Mark

Het belang van suiker in de wereldgeschiedenis is niet te ontkennen. In zijn recente werk: *The World of Sugar, How the Sweet Stuff Transformed Our Politics, Health and Environment over 2.000 years* laat Ulbe Bosma zien hoe groot de invloed is geweest van suiker op de wereld zoals wij deze tegenwoordig kennen. In de periode 1700-1800 vervijfvoudigde de suikerconsumptie in Europa. [1] Voor de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië was deze groeiende behoefte van ongekend belang. In de achttiende eeuw was de Nederlandse kolonie achtergebleven in haar suikerproductie, maar door de stijgende vraag verplaatsten de innovaties uit de westelijke koloniën zich naar Nederlands-Indië. [2] In de westelijke koloniën waren de suikerplantages veranderd in grote suikerfabrieken. De productie vond plaats aan de hand van nieuwe installaties, aangedreven door stoommachines en gepaard met drukketels. Deze innovaties in de productie stonden tegenover voornamelijk handarbeid in Nederlands-Indië. [3] Door middel van de overgebrachte innovaties steeg de suikerproductie in Nederlands-Indië tussen 1800 en 1850 van 3.700 naar 102.000 ton. [4] Het product werd hiermee één van de belangrijkste exportproducten van de kolonie. Toen aan het eind van de negentiende eeuw de Grote Depressie een wereldwijde landbouwcrisis inluidde, had dit ook ingrijpende gevolgen voor de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië. [5] Tussen 1873 en 1896 namen veel Europese landen

[1] B. Funnekotter, 'Suiker: de gruwelijke geschiedenis van het zoete goedje', *NRC* (27 & 28 mei 2023) W4/5.
[2] M. Leidelmeijer, *Van suikermolen tot grootbedrijf: technische vernieuwing in de Java suikerindustrie in de negentiende eeuw* (Eindhoven 1997) 18-23.
[3] Ibidem.
[4] U. Bosma en J. Curry-Machado, 'Two Islands, One Commodity: Cuba, Java and the Global Sugar Trade (1790-1930)', *West Indian Guide* 86.3 (2012) 237-262: 238.
[5] B. Forster, 'A Conjunction of Interests: Business, Politics, and Tariffs 1825-1879' in: Mel Watkins en Leo Pantich ed., *The State and Economic Life* (1986) 3-5. Tussen 1873 en 1896 traden er wereldwijd enorme prijsdalingen op van landbouwgoederen. Dit werd met name veroorzaakt door de overspoeling van de markt. Deze ontwikkeling zorgde voor een crisissituatie voor de volledige landbouwsector.

protectionistische maatregelen om de binnenlands geproduceerde bietsuiker tegen deze crisis te beschermen.[6] Door deze maatregelen ontstond er een conflict over de accijns over suiker tussen de koloniale grootmachten Nederland, het Verenigd Koninkrijk en Frankrijk, maar ook de Verenigde Staten mengden zich in dit conflict. Elke staat probeerde de binnenlandse productie te beschermen door hoge in- en uitvoertarieven in te stellen. De heffingssystemen die hiervoor werden gebruikt waren ongunstig ingericht voor de rietsuiker uit Nederlands-Indië. De Europees geproduceerde bietsuiker kon hierdoor een stuk goedkoper ingekocht worden dan de dure rietsuiker uit Nederlands-Indië. Als gevolg hiervan raakte de markt overspoeld met Europees geproduceerde bietsuiker waardoor de prijs van suiker volledig in elkaar stortte. De prijs van suiker bereikte zelfs een dusdanig dieptepunt dat er vanaf 1883 over de 'Suikercrisis' geschreven werd. Het werd zo goed als onmogelijk voor de suikerproducten uit Nederlands-Indië om hun product met winst af te zetten in Europa. De politici in Nederland kwamen voor een uitdaging te staan: zij moesten de binnenlandse productie afwegen tegenover de suikerproductie van de veel grotere kolonie. Dit debat leidde ertoe dat, in tegenstelling tot veel Europese staten, de uitvoerrechten op suiker compleet werden opgeheven door de Nederlandse overheid in 1898.[7]

In de historiografie zijn met name de vergelijkingen tussen de suikerproductie in Nederlands-Indië en de westelijke koloniën in de Amerika's besproken om het belang van suiker in de geschiedenis aan te tonen. De invloed van suikerproductie binnen het cultuurstelsel en de slavernij was hierbij van groot belang. Hier stopte de invloed van suiker echter niet. De tariefwijzigingen uit de negentiende eeuw zijn veelal besproken met betrekking tot de effecten op de bietsuiker. In de historiografie is er echter nog een lacune betreffende de effecten van de tarieven op de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië. In een tijd waarin de integratie van koloniën voornamelijk toenam door groeiend imperialisme, is het opvallend dat de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië besloten een andere positie in te nemen. Zij richtten zich namelijk op markten buiten de koloniale machten.[8] Ook binnen het historische debat rondom *The Great Divergence* speelt suiker een rol. In één van de toonaangevende boeken over de verschillen tussen

[6] B. Forster, 'A Conjunction of Interests', 3-5.
[7] S.A., 'Handelskroniek', *De Economist* 47.1 (1898) 71-80: 79-80.
[8] M. Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme Koloniën en buitenlandse politiek 1870-1902* (Utrecht 1985) 7-8.

Oost en West, *Escaping Poverty*, stelt Peer Vries dat er net als in Europa een consumptiestijging te herkennen was in China. De luxegoederen, die de Chinese elite aanschafte, werden in China geproduceerd. Zo ook de suiker. De elite kocht lokaal in en van import was nauwelijks sprake.[9] Toch ziet men aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw een verschuiving richting de Chinese markt, in een periode waarin *The Great Divergence*, door ingrijpende industrialisatie in Europa, alleen maar groter werd. Het doel van dit artikel is dan ook om te verklaren waarom de rietsuikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië zich aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw begonnen te richten op productie voor de Aziatische markt en dan met name voor China.

Om deze verschuiving te verklaren zal de staat van de suikerproductie in Nederlands-Indië eerst toegelicht worden. Hierop een analyse volgt over de ongelijkheid tegenover de Europese beetsuikerproducenten. Verder zal het effect van accijnswijzigingen op de suikeruitvoer van Nederlands-Indië toegelicht worden aan de hand van de casus van de Verenigde Staten. Hierna volgt een analyse van de verschuiving die binnen de Nederlandse politiek plaatsvond, welke leidde tot de afschaffing van de tarieven op de suiker en zelfs financiële steun voor suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië. Deze ontwikkeling leidde uiteindelijk tot de creatie van de Java-China-Japan lijn door de Nederlandse staat in 1902. Om tot deze conclusie te komen zullen er stukken gebruikt worden uit *De Economist*, het archief van de Nederlandsche Handels Maatschappij (NHM) en met name het *Archief voor de suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië* .[10]

Nederlands-Indië aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw

De bietsuikerindustrie had zich als grote leverancier van ruwe suiker getoond aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw, maar dit betekende zeker niet het einde van de rietsuikerindustrie in Nederlands-Indië. Nederlands-Indië kende een aantal grote exportproducten waarvan suiker, koffie en tabak een

[9] P.H.H. Vries, *Escaping poverty: the origins of modern economic growth* (Göttingen 2013) 232-233.

[10] NL-HaNA, NHM, 2.20.01 inv nr: 5291, 7936, 15247, 15248 en 9210. De stukken van *De Economist* zijn allemaal te vinden in de online catalogus van de Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden. *Het Archief voor de suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië* bestaat uit meerdere bundels die te vinden zijn in de catalogus van de Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden.

belangrijk onderdeel uitmaakten. De koffieproductie had zich bijna volledig gericht op de Nederlandse markt en het was dan ook het doel om de koffie zoveel mogelijk af te zetten binnen Nederland. Dit is terug te zien in de uitvoercijfers, gepubliceerd in *De Economist* van 1891. De totale koffieproductie van Nederlands-Indië bedroeg in 1890 15.642.600 kilogram, in hetzelfde jaar voerde de kolonie 10.664.000 kilogram koffie uit naar Nederland.[11] Het is dus duidelijk dat de koffieproductie in Nederlands-Indië gericht was op de Nederlandse afzetmarkt. Wanneer we de situatie van de tabaksproductie bekijken, vallen er opnieuw zaken op. De tabaksproductie voor uitvoer ziet namelijk een groei aan het einde van diezelfde periode. Haar totale productie ging van 9.610.000 kilogram in 1886 naar 15.886.000 kilogram in 1890. De uitvoer van deze tabak ging volledig naar de Nederlandse afzetmarkt.[12] Deze groei was ook in een andere sector te herkennen. Na de suikercrisis had de rietsuikerindustrie in Nederlands-Indië haar eerdere groei weer opgepakt. In 1890 was zij dan ook nog steeds de grootste sector binnen de kolonie. De suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië hadden hun strategie moeten aanpassen na de overname van hun Europese afzetmarkt door bietsuikerproducenten. De opkomst van deze nieuwe suikersoort bood de rietsuikerproducenten ook nieuwe kansen. Door de fabrieksmatige productie van ruwe suiker, die zich in Europa had ontwikkeld, waren er nieuwe technieken beschikbaar gekomen om te innoveren binnen de rietsuikerproductie.[13] Deze ontwikkeling was eerder ook te herkennen aan de overname van verschillende productietechnieken vanuit de westelijke koloniën. In de jaren negentig van de negentiende eeuw vond er opnieuw een periode van innovatie plaats in Nederlands-Indië. De productie van ruwe suiker in Nederlands-Indië nam in deze tijd meer industriële vormen aan dan voorheen. Eén van de grote redenen waardoor de rietsuikerindustrie in Nederlands-Indië kon blijven bestaan kwam voort uit de introductie van nieuwe technieken relatief die makkelijk verliep. Veel productietechnieken die nodig waren voor deze industriële productie waren

[11] N.P. van den Berg, 'De Handel van Java in 1890 en vorige jaren', *De Economist* 40 (1891) 389-411: 395-397.
[12] Ibidem, 399-400.
[13] G. Roger Knight, 'The sugar industry of colonial Java and its global trajectory', *South East Asia Research* 8.3 (2000) 213-238: 227-228; M. Leidelmeijer, *Van suikermolen tot grootbedrijf: technischevernieuwing in de Java-suikerindustrie in de negentiende eeuw* (Eindhoven 1997) 324-325.

namelijk al geïntroduceerd aan het begin van de negentiende eeuw.[14] In de periode waarin de bietsuikerindustrie was opgekomen, had zich een nieuwe ontwikkeling getoond in Nederlands-Indië.

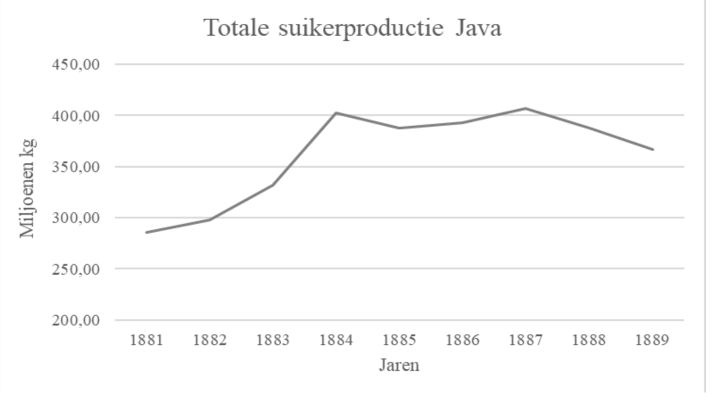

Fig. 1: Totalen van de suikerproductie op Java tussen 1881 en 1889 in miljoenen kilogrammen. Bron: Van den Berg, 'De Handel van Java in 1890 en vorige jaren', 392.

De rietsuikerproducenten hadden dusdanig veel ervaring opgedaan in de afgelopen eeuwen dat de suikerplantages zich ontwikkelden tot werkelijke kenniscentra voor suikerverbouwing.[15] Deze kenniscentra experimenteerden in productietechnieken en daarnaast hadden de rietsuikerproducenten al eerder ontwikkelde technologieën weten op te nemen binnen hun bestaande productieproces. Hierdoor werden nieuwe vacuüminstallaties vanuit de bietsuikerindustrie ook overgenomen in de productieprocessen van de rietsuiker.

Na de suikercrisis in 1883 was er dus toch een toename te zien in de suikerproductie van Nederlands-Indië. De grafiek (figuur 1) laat zien hoe in de jaren 1881 tot 1884 er een sterke stijging plaatsvond in de suikerproductie op Java. De technologische vernieuwingen hadden hun vruchten afgeworpen. De stijgende productie is opvallend en lijkt zelfs tegenstrijdig tegenover wat

[14] Voor de ontwikkeling van het Javaanse rietsuikerbedrijf zie: Leidelmeijer, *Van suikermolen tot grootbedrijf*, 231-257.

[15] Voor de ontwikkeling van het Javaanse rietsuikerbedrijf zie: Leidelmeijer, *Van suikermolen tot grootbedrijf*, 237-242.

er eerder in dit onderzoek naar voren is gekomen. De afzetmarkt in Europa was namelijk overgenomen door de bietsuikerproducenten en de binnenlandse consumptie bedroeg slechts 4.464.000 kilogram.[16] De gestegen productie moest haar afzet dus op een andere locatie vinden.

Nieuwe handelspartners

Nadat de Europese markt nagenoeg verdween voor de suikerproducenten van Nederlands-Indië, was het noodzakelijk om de afzetmarkt elders te vinden. De banden die hiervoor aangehaald konden worden, waren in de eeuwen hiervoor al aangelegd en onderhouden. Met name de relatie met Brits-Indië zou hiervoor van enorm belang zijn, aangezien zij een nieuwe markt voor de rietsuiker uit Nederlands-Indië opende: Azië. De Britse kolonie had namelijk door middel van de opiumhandel een enorme invloed verworven in het vasteland van Azië. Voornamelijk de Chinese markt was een grote afnemer van goederen uit Brits-Indië.[17] In de jaren voor de suikercrisis zag de uitvoer richting Azië nauwelijks aantallen, maar de vraag vanuit het continent nam in het laatste decennium van de negentiende eeuw enorm toe.

De mogelijkheid tot een nieuwe afzetmarkt bleef niet onopgemerkt. In 1890 verscheen het stuk 'Invoer van Javasuiker in China' in *De Economist*. In het stuk werd gesteld dat de suikerproducenten op Java zich snel op deze markt moesten richten.[18] Handel met delen van China betreffende suiker bestond al langer, maar deze besloeg vooral bruinere soorten suiker, omdat deze goedkoper waren. De suiker uit Nederlands-Indië was zeer helder en wit van aard. Dit uitte zich ook in de manier waarop de accijnzen minder gunstig waren voor haar positie tegenover de bietsuiker, aangezien over heldere suiker een hogere accijns werd geheven. Het stuk stelde dat er een nieuwe markt was opgekomen in het noorden van China en dan met name in de stad Shanghai. Er was via de Canton-gilden (in het modern Guangzhou) een ingang, aangezien zij de complete aanvoer van suiker voor het noorden van het land voorzagen.[19] Het stuk was opgesteld door de Consulaat-Generaal te Shanghai en hij adviseerde het volgende: een delegatie vanuit de Nederlands-

[16] Van den Berg, 'De Handel van Java in 1890 en vorige jaren', 392.
[17] Vries, *Escaping poverty*, 232.
[18] S.A., 'Invoer van Javasuiker in China', *De Economist* 40 (1891) 451-452.
[19] S.A., 'Invoer van Javasuiker in China', 451-452.

Indische suikerproducenten moest zich een jaar lang gaan inzetten binnen de kringen van deze gilden. Aan de hand van hun eisen en met name de wensen over de gewilde suiker, zou er een nieuwe toevoer aan suiker op gang kunnen komen. Hiervoor werd er slechts één grote hindernis opgesteld: de aanlevering van de suiker, aangezien de Nederlandse scheepsmaatschappijen zich al in zwaar weer bevonden en geen mislukte projecten konden veroorloven. Het was noodzakelijk om eerst een nieuwe handelingspositie op te stellen en suiker te leveren aan Singapore zodat daarna de weg richting China openlag voor directe scheepvaart.[20] De wensen van de Consulaat-Generaal te Shanghai vonden vrijwel direct gehoor doordat er zich in de jaren negentig van de negentiende eeuw een grote verandering voordeed binnen de uitvoer van suiker vanuit Nederlands-Indië. De totale suikerproductie had haar hogere niveau vanaf 1884 relatief goed vastgehouden en er was dan ook ruimte voor de suikerproducenten om hun suiker uit te voeren naar nieuwe locaties.

Stijgende uitvoercijfers

De uitvoer naar Europa bedroeg in 1889 202.802.000 kilogram, maar nam in 1890 met 36.890.000 kilogram af naar een totaal van 165.912.000 kilogram.[21] Een daling van 18,19 procent, terwijl in dat jaar de totale uitvoer van suiker steeg met 5,01 procent.[22] De uitvoer die verdween richting Europa had haar nieuwe afzetmarkt gevonden in de Aziatische markt. De uitvoer richting deze markt steeg van 1889 tot 1890 namelijk met 37.696.000 kilogram van 67.456.000 naar 105.152.000 kilogram.[23] Het is aannemelijk dat de stijging richting de Aziatische markt voortkwam uit de afzet richting de Europese markt. Deze uitvoer bewoog zich met name richting drie afzetmarkten: China, Singapore en Brits-Indië. Deze hoeveelheden zijn met name tekenend wanneer men kijkt naar de uitvoercijfers van tien jaar eerder. In het jaar 1880 besloeg de uitvoer vanuit Java naar Azië slechts 7.378.000 kilogram, waarvan bijna de helft van dit cijfer richting Perzië besloeg.[24] De stijging tussen 1889 en 1890 was dus gigantisch. De suikerhandelaren moesten een positie

[20] S.A., 'Invoer van Javasuiker in China', 451-452.
[21] Van den Berg, 'De Handel van Java in 1890 en vorige jaren', 393.
[22] Ibidem.
[23] Ibidem.
[24] Ibidem.

verwerven in Singapore om de Chinese markt te kunnen bereiken. Dit was een boodschap die voornamelijk klonk vanuit Heldring. Heldring was een van de grote namen in de scheepsvaart en de belangen van de uitvoerstijging waren groot voor deze sector, doordat het transport van suiker over zee plaatsvond. Samen met andere eigenaren van scheepsvaartbedrijven poogde Heldring om de suikerhandelaren een positie te laten verwerven in Singapore.[25] Een poging daartoe is direct te herkennen in de uitvoerstijging richting Singapore tussen 1889 en 1890. De uitvoer steeg in dit jaar namelijk met 13.144.000 kilogram van 11.532.000 naar 24.676.000 kilogram. Volgens de vermelding in *De Economist* was deze uitvoer ook bestemd voor andere markten in Azië en daarmee werd de handel richting Singapore ook gebruikt als doorgeefluik naar andere bestemmingen in Azië. De pogingen om de Chinese markt te bereiken wierpen in deze eerste jaren ook al direct hun vruchten af aangezien er ook sprake was van een sterke stijging van de suikeruitvoer richting China. Van de totale stijging van 37.696.000 kilogram ging ruim de helft richting de Chinese markt. De uitvoer richting China steeg namelijk van 55.924.000 naar 77.376.000 kilogram.[26] Het aandeel van de Chinese afzetmarkt in de suikeruitvoer van Nederlands-Indië was dus sterk toegenomen aan het einde van de jaren tachtig van de negentiende eeuw.

Het McKinley tarief

Eén van de gebieden waar de suikerproducenten uit Nederlands-Indië nauwelijks voet aan de grond hadden gekregen in de negentiende eeuw was Amerika. De markt, voornamelijk bestaand uit de Verenigde Staten, was al voor lange tijd verzadigd door een van de grootste internationale leveranciers van suiker naast de deur te hebben, namelijk Cuba. Het eiland produceerde al lange tijd suiker en deed dit met name voor de internationale markt.[27] Als gevolg speelde de afzet naar Amerika nauwelijks een rol in de uitvoercijfers van Nederlands-Indië aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw.[28] In tegenstelling tot wat men destijds had verwacht zou de uitvoer van suiker naar

[25] NL-HaNA, NHM, 2.20.01 inv nr. 9210 De Suiker-accijns door B. Heldring uitgesproken op de Vergadering der Vereeniging voor Statistiek Den Haag 19 april 1884, 9.
[26] Ibidem.
[27] Bosma, 'The Sugar Plantation in India and Indonesia', 171-172.
[28] Van den Berg, 'De Handel van Java in 1890 en vorige jaren', 394.

Amerika in het laatste decennium van de negentiende eeuw een grote groei doormaken. Deze groei kwam voort uit accijnswijzigingen waardoor de Nederlandse politici aan het denken werden gezet.

De Verenigde Staten hadden zich relatief moeizaam opgesteld wanneer het aankwam op het optekenen van internationale verdragen over de in- en uitvoerrechten van suiker. Dit was ook te zien bij de onderhandelingen tijdens de suikercongressen. Het is dan ook niet raar dat de Verenigde Staten hier in 1890 een eigen wet met haar eigen bepalingen vooropstelde. De zogenaamde 'Tariff Act of 1890' werd opgesteld in het Amerikaanse parlement onder toeziend oog van de destijdse senator en later president William McKinley. Het McKinley tarief ging vanaf oktober 1890 in en zorgde voor grote veranderingen binnen de import- en exportmarkt van de Verenigde Staten. De wet had voornamelijk als doel om de binnenlandse fabrikanten in verschillende sectoren te beschermen tegen concurrentie vanuit het buitenland.[29] Voor veel goederen betekende de wet dan ook een stijging in de tarieven op het product. Enkele producten kregen daartegenover te maken met een afname in tarieven of zelfs een complete afschaffing van de gestelde tarieven op het product. Een afschaffing van de tarieven had als voornaamste doel om andere landen te dwingen in een afschaffing van dezelfde tarieven. Daarop zou dit ervoor zorgen dat de import van Amerikaanse producten in deze landen zou toenemen.[30] Deze houding toonde zich ook later tijdens de overleggen van het suikercongres in Londen waarbij de Verenigde Staten zich sterk opstelden voor een afschaffing van de rechten op suiker in een situatie waarbij ieder land dit tegelijk zou doen. Het McKinley tarief zorgde ervoor dat de tarieven op suiker verdwenen. Hiermee was het voor producenten uit Nederlands-Indië een stuk interessanter om hun suiker uit te voeren naar de Verenigde Staten.

Vanaf het ingaan van de wet in 1890 ziet men deze interesse dan ook terug in de uitvoercijfers van Nederlands-Indië richting de Verenigde Staten. Voor de komende statistieken zal er gebruik gemaakt worden van een andere bron dan de voorgaande afkomstig uit *De Economist*. Deze statistieken waren veelal opgemaakt door de Handelsvereeniging te Batavia, maar in de stukken van *De Economist* stopt de vermelding van de uitvoercijfers richting Amerika vanaf 1891. Om de betrouwbaarheid van de cijfers te waarborgen en

[29] M.W. Palen, 'Protection, Federation and Union: The Global Impact of the McKinley Tariff upon the British Empire, 1890-94', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 38.3 (2010) 395-418: 397-398.
[30] Palen, 'Protection, Federation and Union', 399-400.

daarnaast foutieve overlap te voorkomen zullen voorts de statistieken gebruikt worden die afkomstig zijn uit het *Archief voor de suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië*. Deze cijfers waren eveneens opgesteld door de Handelsvereeniging in Batavia, maar gaan verder door in de tijd, waardoor zij bruikbaarder zijn. Na de instelling van de McKinley tarieven steeg de uitvoer van suiker uit Nederlands-Indië naar Amerika met 25.225.444 kilogram, namelijk van 58.280.000 naar 83.505.444 kilogram.[31] Deze stijging was volgens de stukken uit *De Economist* te verklaren aan de hand van de nieuwe McKinley tarieven. In de jaren die hierop volgden zou de ingevoerde hoeveelheid fluctueren, maar in 1893 zou een unieke omstandigheid voor een nog sterkere stijging zorgen.

De positie van de Indische suikerproducenten richting de Amerikaanse markt had zich snel verbeterd door de invoering van de McKinley tarieven en de eerder ingezette stijging zou zich dan ook doorzetten in 1892. De uitvoer tussen Nederlands-Indië en Amerika bedroeg toen 99.560.654 kilogram.[32] Deze sterke positie mocht helaas niet aanhouden doordat het eerdergenoemde McKinley tarief enkele wijzigingen te verduren kreeg. De Amerikaanse producenten hadden namelijk geen positieve gevolgen gekend van het tarief, met name met betrekking op de suiker en daarmee was het noodzakelijk in de ogen van de Amerikaanse overheid om nieuwe tarieven in te stellen op de invoer van buitenlands suiker.[33] De manier waarop deze heffing plaatsvond, kwam in de vorm van *Ad valorem* oftewel op basis van de totale hoeveelheid van een bepaald ingevoerd product.[34] Als gevolg ziet men ook een stapsgewijze daling in de uitvoercijfers van Nederlands-Indië naar Amerika. Waar deze tussen 1894 en 1895 nog 138.523.438 kilogram bedroeg, daalde deze in het jaar daarop verder naar 114.141.628 kilogram.[35] Het McKinley tarief had laten zien dat positief beleid richting de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië ervoor zou kunnen zorgen dat de productie en uitvoer kon stijgen. Dit trok de aandacht van de Nederlandse staat die, na het suikercongres van 1888, haar beleid over de Javasuiker veranderde. De hoeveelheid waarmee de uitvoer naar Amerika daalde kwam weer binnen in Europa. De komst van een nieuwe afzetmarkt in de vorm van

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[31] Algemeen Syndicaat van Suikerfabricanten op Java (Soerabaja), *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie* 1893:1 (1893) 120.
[32] Ibidem.
[33] S.A. 'Handelskroniek', *De Economist* 43.2 (1894) 610-619: 610-611.
[34] Ibidem, 614.
[35] Algemeen Syndicaat, *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie* 1894:2 (1896) 789.

Japan zou ervoor zorgen dat de suikerproducten in Nederlands-Indië hun groei echter wel door konden zetten. Hun focus kwam te liggen op de Aziatische markt.

Een doorbraak in China

Gedurende de jaren '90 van de negentiende eeuw werden de motivaties doorgezet om de Chinese markt te betreden. De stijging, die tussen 1880 en 1890 had plaatsgevonden, zette door in de daaropvolgende jaren. Wanneer de cijfers van de Handelsvereeniging in Batavia tussen 1890 en 1893 vergeleken worden vallen een aantal zaken op. De Europese markt was inmiddels verwikkeld geraakt in een debat over de in- en uitvoerrechten, maar hierover volgde geen duidelijke overeenstemming. Vanwege de onstuimigheden op de internationale markt is dan ook een verandering in de bestemmingen te herkennen van Javasuiker. Hierbij valt met name de stijging richting de Chinese afzetmarkt op. Waar deze in 1890 nog 77.376.000 kilogram bedroeg, zou deze in de drie jaren daarop stijgen naar een totale hoogte van 104.588.234 kilogram.[36] Het lijkt dan ook duidelijk dat de doorbraak, die volgens Heldring nodig was voor het levensbehoud van de suikerproducenten van Nederlands-Indië, definitief in gang was gezet. Daarnaast zou in dezelfde periode de uitvoer richting Europa afnemen van 192.048.658 kilogram naar 150.126.118 kilogram.[37] De stijging richting China bleef zich doorzetten in de periode daarna, maar in verband met nieuwe productiemethoden zouden de algehele uitvoercijfers van Nederlands-Indië ook sterk toenemen. Dit was ook gunstig voor de Europese markt, die van 1895 tot 1896 een plotselinge terugkeer ziet als hoogste afnemer van Javasuiker met ruim 297,6 miljoen kilogram.[38] Deze cijfers waren tekenend en daarmee verliet de discussie rondom het belang van de Aziatische markt de pagina's van *De Economist* en verplaatste zich naar de Tweede Kamer. Na het succes in de Verenigde Staten begon zelfs steun te ontstaan voor een verplaatsing richting de Aziatische markt.

Als gevolg van de suikercongressen in de jaren tachtig kwam het onderwerp terecht op de politieke agenda. In de congressen stond de discussie rondom de accijns op suiker centraal. De grootste suiker-

[36] Algemeen Syndicaat, *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie* 1893:1 (1893) 120.
[37] Ibidem.
[38] Ibidem.

producerende landen kwamen samen om hun tarieven en subsidies voor voornamelijk bietsuikerproducenten te bespreken.[39] Dit leidde ertoe dat subsidies voor de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië ook een onderwerp werden van discussie binnen de Nederlandse politiek.[40] Deze subsidies waren in hun eerste dagen een stuk kleiner dan de subsidies die tegelijkertijd op het Europese continent naar de beetsuiker fabrikanten gingen.[41] Toch laten de subsidies zien dat de Nederlandse staat zich actief ging inzetten om de markt van China en mogelijk andere Aziatische landen te betreden. De staat stelde voor dat er een analyse moest volgen in hoeverre particuliere ondernemers in staat waren om zelf een onderneming op te zetten voor een mogelijke scheepslijn tussen China en Java. In 1896 vond dit project plaats en vonden er elf vrachtreizen plaats richting China. De resultaten vielen echter tegen en de reizen zorgden tezamen voor een verlies van 163.000 gulden.[42] De uitvoercijfers richting China liepen in deze tijd dan ook terug van 142.725.054 kilogram in het jaar 1895-96 naar 102.460.704 kilogram in het jaar 1896-97.[43] Het had een logische reden kunnen zijn voor de Nederlandse staat om zich op dit punt terug te trekken uit het project, maar in de ontwikkelingen was er één grote factor die ervoor zorgde dat een eerder struikelblok verdween. Vanaf 1896 werd de handel met een opkomende afzetmarkt namelijk in gang gezet. Vanaf het jaar 1896 tot 1897 was plotseling de vermelding van Japan te herkennen in de uitvoercijfers van de Javasuiker in het *Archief voor de suikerindustrie in Nederlandsch-Indië*.[44] Vanuit deze ontwikkeling oordeelden dan ook de Ministers van Waterstaat, Handel en Nijverheid en van Koloniën dat er subsidies opgesteld moesten worden om het ontstaan van een scheepslijn mogelijk te maken.[45]

In de periode tussen 1896 en 1902 werden de mogelijkheden van een Japanse afzetmarkt duidelijker. De afschepingen vanuit Nederlands-Indië richting Japan namen in deze periode toe van 264.244 kilogram in 1896/97

[39] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij (NHM), nummer toegang 2.20.01, inventarisnummer 5291(Hierna: NL-HaNA, NHM, 2.20.01 inv nr.…) *Algemene vergadering van Indisch genootschap 11 maart 1884*, 87.
[40] M. Mees, 'De Suikerwet', *De Economist* 45.1 (1896) 255-263: 257.
[41] S.A. 'Gesubsidieerde stoomvaartlijn Java, China, Japan. – Rijnvaart 1901. – Duitsche sporwegpolitiek', *De Economist* 51.1 (1902) 327-336: 327-329.
[42] Ibidem, 328.
[43] Algemeen Syndicaat, *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie* 1898:2 (1898) 620.
[44] Ibidem.
[45] S.A. 'Gesubsidieerde stoomvaartlijn Java, China, Japan', 328.

naar 52.183.168 kilogram in 1902.[46] In vergelijking met acht jaar ervoor, waarbij de cijfers richting een Japanse haven überhaupt niet in de afschepingen vanuit Nederlands-Indië voorkwamen, was het aantal van 52.447.412 kilogram een gigantische ontwikkeling. Naast de stijging van de afzet richting Japan, steeg ook de afzet richting de Chinese markt opnieuw in deze periode. Het totaal aan Javasuiker afschepingen richting China bedroeg in het jaar 1901/02 191.553.154 kilogram.[47] De Nederlandse staat begon op dit punt duidelijk overwegingen te maken over waar haar financiën beter besteed konden worden. Anderzijds probeerde zij gedurende het einde van de negentiende eeuw haar binnenlandse suikerindustrie te ondersteunen, maar haar positie tegenover de Europese concurrenten Duitsland en Oostenrijk was verwaarloosbaar. Eerder is al gesteld dat de positie van de Javasuiker binnen de totale suikerindustrie van Nederland dusdanig was, dat haar keuzes eigenlijk voornamelijk met deze industrie in het achterhoofd gemaakt moesten worden. De marginale positie van Nederland in deze tijd blijkt ook duidelijk in de uitvoercijfers van de Javasuiker richting Nederland in 1901/02. In dit jaar bedroeg de uitvoer richting Nederland slechts 1.027.030 kilogram. Het was dan ook nodig dat de Nederlandse staat zich actief ging mengen in de groei van een Aziatische afzetmarkt voor haar Javasuiker.

Deze richting werd daadwerkelijk ingeslagen rond 1902 met het idee van de Java-China-Japan lijn. Vanuit de staat zouden er grote subsidies beschikbaar komen voor de ondernemers die deze lijn zouden gaan bezetten. In de eerste vijf jaren zou deze subsidie 300.000 gulden bedragen per jaar en daarop zou de staat garant staan voor de mogelijke overname van stoomschepen mocht dit nodig zijn.[48] Vanaf 1902 zou de Java-China-Japan lijn jaarlijks dertien reizen gaan maken onder Nederlandse vlag. De tussenstops zouden driemaal in Indië zijn, tweemaal in China en tot slot zouden er twee stops zijn in Japan. De staat zou onderdeel van deze lijn blijven door een deel van de winst te krijgen wanneer deze hoger dan vijf procent over het gegeven kapitaal bedroeg.[49] Vanaf dit moment zou de Nederlandse staat deze lijn actief onderhouden en haar vloot samen met nieuwe locaties uitbreiden. Met de komst van de Java-China-Japan lijn werd het voor de suikerproducenten van Nederlands-Indië veel makkelijker en

[46] Algemeen Syndicaat, *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie* 1898:2 (1898) 620.
[47] Algemeen Syndicaat, *Archief voor de Java-Suikerindustrie*, 1903:2 (1903) 718.
[48] S.A. 'Gesubsidieerde stoomvaartlijn Java, China, Japan', 327.
[49] Ibidem.

zelfs gesubsidieerd om aan Azië te leveren. Gedurende de negentiende eeuw hadden de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië meermaals geprobeerd om hun afzetmarkt in het vasteland Europa terug te krijgen. Met de nieuwe instelling van de Nederlandse overheid was de focus op Europe verplaatst. Het tijdperk waarin de suikerproducenten in Nederlands-Indië met oog voor de Europese markt produceerden was dan ook met zekerheid ten einde.

'The ideal is so beautiful, that all personal feelings fade.' The Russian Revolution through the eyes of female revolutionaries

Ina-Maria Duynhouwer

In March 1881, tsar Alexander II was assassinated by members of the radical revolutionary organization the People's Will. One of the people involved in the planning of this assassination was twenty-nine-year-old Vera Figner (1852-1942). Twenty-five years later, the twenty-one-year-old Socialist Revolutionary Maria Spiridonova (1884-1941) assassinated Tambov district official Luzhenovsky. Both women, at a young age, decided to forsake their privileges and family spheres, and instead devoted themselves to the revolutionary movement. They were women in an autocratic, patriarchal, and orthodox religious society who defied many social norms. They sought for themselves a role outside of the family sphere, they opposed the sacred role of the Romanovs, and turned to the traditionally male realms of politics, revolution, and violence in an attempt to turn around not only their own lives, but also those of the rest of the Russian population. They were remarkable women in remarkable times.

It is not surprising that Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova have received much attention from historians who are interested in female participation in the Russian revolution. In the historiography, Figner and Spiridonova are often studied separately, or, when they are both mentioned, they are typified as women belonging to different generations of revolutionaries.[1] The unintentional result of such approaches is that there is

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[1] For studies in which they are studied separately, see for example: L.A. Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner: Surviving the Russian Revolution* (Bloomington, IN 2014), S.N. Acker, Maria Spiridonova and the struggle for the social revolution (PhD-Dissertation History, The State University of New Jersey 1999) and S. Boniece,'The Spiridonova Case, 1906: Terror, Myth, and Martyrdom', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 4.3 (2003) 571-606. For studies in which they are typified as women belonging to different generations, see for example: A. Hillyar and J. McDermid, *Revolutionary Women in Russia, 1870-1917. A study in collective biography*

little attention for the fact that, despite the age gap of thirty years, these women shared several similarities. They came from similar backgrounds, chose to distance themselves from these backgrounds to become revolutionaries, embraced violent methods in the process, and they were, at least initially, hailed as revolutionary heroes in the wake of the 1917 revolution.

By taking the commonalities between Figner and Spiridonova as a starting point, this article explores their lives in a slightly different way than historians have traditionally done, namely through a side-by-side approach. The aim is not only to underline the similarities between them, but also to highlight how the 1917 revolution grew to mean different things for them. To do so, the guiding questions of this article are how Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova contributed to the making of the revolution, and how they experienced it once it came. Was the revolution, that they fought and sacrificed so much for, what they hoped it would be? Or were they disappointed by it?

Apart from secondary literature, this article draws on several translated primary sources to answer these questions. For Vera Figner, the first source is her memoir, *Nacht over Rusland*, which offers valuable insights into how her aristocratic background and activities as a revolutionary shaped her and her views on the revolution.[2] Secondly, this article uses fragments from her writings and her trial statement of 1884, as recorded in the book *Five Sisters: Women against the Tsar* by Barbara Engel and Clifford Rosenthal.[3] For Maria Spiridonova, the first source is the biographical book *Maria Spiridonova in strijd met Tsaar en Sowjet* written by fellow revolutionary Isaac Steinberg, in which he uses fragments of Spiridonova's letters, writings, speeches and trial statements from the years 1906-1935.[4] The second source is the article 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"' by Alexander Rabinowitch, which includes

(Manchester 2000) and A. Knight, 'Female Terrorists in the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party', *The Russian Review* 38.2 (1979) 139-159.

[2] V. Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, G.J Weruméus Buning-Ensink transl. (Amsterdam 1930).

[3] B. Engel and C. Rosenthal, *Five Sisters: Women against the Tsar* (Ithaca, NY 2013).

[4] I. Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonowa in strijd met Tsaar en Sowjet*, Titia Jelgersma transl. (Arnhem 1936). Steinberg, like Spiridonova after 1917, was a Left Socialist Revolutionary and acted as People's Commissar of Justice in the first Bolshevik government.

fragments of Spiridonova's writings from November 1937.[5] This text, written whilst she was imprisoned, provides insight into her experiences as a revolutionary, and they shed light on the lasting strength of her personal and political ideals.

The main concern with these sources is that they are not in the language in which they were originally written. This means that some of the original meaning, nuance and subtleties might have literally gotten lost in translation. Another concern that relates specifically to the work of Steinberg is that it is not always clear from his text which exact documents he uses. It is to be expected that his personal archives, that include a specific section on Maria Spiridonova, might be able to provide some clarification on this.[6] However, as this collection is not digitized and can only be accessed in the Center for Jewish History in New York, this could not be verified. Despite these shortcomings, which are recognized, these sources were nevertheless used. This is simply because they form the best option for the scholar who is not proficient in Russian and cannot read or easily access the originals.

Daughters, wives, mothers, revolutionaries?
Women in nineteenth-century Russia

In nineteenth-century Russia, women were primarily defined as daughters, wives, and mothers. Family and custom law required unconditional obedience of children to parents, and wives to husbands. In practice this meant that men were granted the rights to chastise defiant children and wives. The subjection of women to the authority of the male head of the family was further reinforced by the religious doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church. It should be recognized, however, that religion also helped to consolidate and strengthen women. The Church praised qualities such as humility and the capacity for suffering and self-sacrifice. Women were considered to carry moral authority if they embodied such qualities. Russian women could thus

[5] A. Rabinowitch and M. Spiridonova, 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"', The Russian Review 54:4 (1995) 424-446.

[6] 'Papers of Isaac Nachman Steinberg (1888-1957)'. https://archives.cjh.org/agents/people/119036, accessed 25 October 2024.

derive significant satisfaction and strength from striving to live according to these noble precepts.[7]

In the first half of the nineteenth century, there were little to no options for women who sought for themselves a role outside the family sphere. And even when during the second half of the nineteenth century alternatives did become available to them, traditional expectations proved to be deeply engrained in society and remained unaltered for a long time. Stepping outside of the roles carved out for them by society required considerable courage. The family sphere, although by some perceived as confining, also provided women with protection and support.[8]

Despite these difficulties and challenges, there were women who tried to move outside of the family sphere to gain more autonomy over their own lives. One of the most significant ways they sought to achieve this was by pursuing an education. Interestingly, women often justified their desire for knowledge not by pointing out what good it would bring *them*, but what good it would bring *society*. They continued to perceive themselves as moral beings with a special capacity for self-sacrifice. In a way, they arguably substituted the duty to the family sphere with the duty to society.[9]

Dozens of women who pursued not only education, but also legitimate professional training, went to Zurich, where, unlike in Russia, women were already admitted to university. It was in this different and essentially freer environment that these women encountered and familiarized themselves with Western European movements and thought. For many of them, these were the first steps on the revolutionary path.[10] The populist revolutionary movement that emerged in the 1870s, most notably the organization Land and Liberty, would become a home to many of these professionally educated women. It was not just a place where they could meet like-minded people, but it also served as an emotional substitute for the family ties that they had generally given up.[11] Old habits proved hard to break, however, as these

[7] B. Engel, *Mothers and Daughters. Women of the Intelligentsia in nineteenth-century Russia* (Cambridge 1983) 3-19.
[8] Ibidem.
[9] Ibidem.
[10] Engel, *Mothers and Daughters*, 105-155; Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 62-77; Hillyar et al., *Revolutionary Women in Russia, 1870-1917*, 2-61 and R. Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860-1930* (Princeton, NJ 1991) 126-154.
[11] Ibidem.

revolutionary women continued to emphasize qualities as dutifulness and self-sacrifice. In that sense they carried a gendered, moral dimension into the radical revolutionary movement.

From aristocratic girls to revolutionary spirits.
The formative years of Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova

The life of Vera Figner forms perhaps the most telling illustration of the just outlined trajectory. Born in 1852 in Kazan, she grew up in a traditional and patriarchal noble family. Although she largely abandoned the doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church as she grew up, she continued to hold on to the moral lessons and values it had taught her.[12] Inspired by the success story of Nadazhda Suslova, Russia's first female doctor, motivated by a desire to 'accomplish something good' and possibly also to be perceived as more than just a 'pretty doll', Figner grew determined to follow a similar path.[13] In 1872, against her parents' wishes, she travelled to Switzerland, accompanied by her husband and her sister to study medicine at the University of Zurich.[14]

In Zurich, Figner came into contact with revolutionary organizations, most notably the Fritsche Circle, which was a radical study group composed of thirteen women. This led her to question consequently her own beliefs and thoughts.[15] What stands out most in her description of this period is her honesty about her personal struggles, specifically her reluctance and hesitation to embrace revolutionary thought and to apply it to her own life. Being from noble birth, she realized that being a revolutionary would mean

[12] Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 26-27.
[13] For the first citation, see: Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 25 (translated). The second citation comes from her description of her childhood, in which she mentions how, as a fashionable girl, she was often praised for her appearance and her pretty face, yet that this adulation was quite limiting as most people perceived this to be her only noteworthy asset. See: Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 22-23. The citation can be found on page 23 (translated).
[14] Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 1-30; Writings of Vera Figner, as cited in: Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 6.
[15] See for example: Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 31; 'From my first days in Zurich, I had been confronted by a whole series of questions, the existence of which I had never even suspected and which began to shake the views I had acquired – unconsciously in childhood, actively after I left school (…) and the "foundation" that I had built up by the age of nineteen began to be undermined from all sides.' (translated).

for her to give up her position, privileges, and way of life. Yet deep down she did not want to. Thus, when most of the Fritsche group decided to quit their studies and return to Russia, Figner was one of the two women who decided to stay behind:

> It tormented me that *I couldn't bring myself to do it*, too, that I didn't want to become a worker. (…) *A worker's life was horrible, inconceivable to me! The very idea made my blood run cold.*[16] (italics added)

Months passed, but in the autumn of 1875, she was visited by a fellow revolutionary who urged her to return to Russia.[17] Once again, she had to rethink what she wanted her life to look like and what it meant for her to be a revolutionary. Only a few months away from obtaining her doctor's diploma, she was hesitant to drop out of the program. At the same time, she felt that she could not 'give preference to *my pride, my vanity, and –alas!- my ambition*'[18] (italics added) over the needs of her revolutionary friends. And so, at twenty-three years old, estranged from her husband, she decided to break off her studies, and returned to Russia to devote herself to the revolution.[19]

Born in 1884 as the daughter of a minor noble, Maria Spiridonova grew up with the comforts and privileges of a well-to-do-family. The image that is created of Spiridonova in the biographical work by Sherron Nay Acker depicts a lively, fun-loving, yet also a considerably rebellious young girl.[20] Whereas Figner vividly describes her journey that led her to become a revolutionary, Spiridonova never entrusted this story to paper. The details of her radicalization are therefore unknown. What is clear, however, is that she was already politically active before she had left the local women's gymnasium and that, from the moment she joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party, she was zealously committed to the cause and developed into a powerful public speaker. One of her former peers from the gymnasium recalled how

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[16] Writings of Vera Figner, as cited in: Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 27.
[17] At this point, her female friends from the Fritsche circle had become part of the Moscow Organization. The man who visited Vera Figner was Mark Natanson. He told her that the Moscow Organization had fallen apart, and that her friends from the Fritsche circle had been arrested and that they needed her help. Upon her arrival in Russia, Figner found however that there was nothing she could do to help her friends. She decided not to return to Switzerland, but to remain in Russia.
[18] Writings of Vera Figner, as cited in: Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 34.
[19] Ibidem, 35.
[20] Acker, Maria Spiridonova, 54-57.

Spiridonova strived to live her life completely in accordance with her ideals and moral convictions, rejecting comfort and opting for simplicity. One of the most significant ways she implemented this was through her choice of clothing. She wore the same, plain brown dress for one and a half years and continued to wear sober clothing throughout her life.[21]

In significant ways, clothing constructs and conveys information about one's social identity. Throughout history clothing has carried the power to differentiate between gender and groups, based, for example, on ethnicity, social class, or profession. It can tell a story about who one is and who one is not, yet it can also be a means to display who one aspires to be. Female revolutionaries in late nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Russia opted for an anti-spectacular and renunciatory display in their clothing. By turning away from frivolous female fineries, they aimed to construct and validate their identities as revolutionaries. Spiridonova's choice to dress plainly came from her wish to live in accordance with her ideals. Through clothing she unified word and deed, and as such, she managed to strengthen her moral authority as a devoted revolutionary.[22]

To conclude this part, the similarities in the formative years of Figner and Spiridonova seem primarily related to the specific social context that they grew up in. The age gap between them was apparently not so substantial that it meant that they grew up within significantly different environments. Instead, it could be argued that the differences between them seem primarily related to their personalities. When Figner travelled to Zurich to pursue an education, she did not necessarily do this to rebel against traditional society. Rather, she did this because she wanted to make herself useful and because she wanted to help others, thus reflecting the moral aspirations that many women at the time cherished.

This also helps explain why it took her some time to embrace revolutionary thought and its implications for her own life. She enjoyed the privileges that came with her social class, such as luxurious clothing, and she was hesitant to give it all up. Spiridonova, on the contrary, was already very spirited and rebellious from a young age. It can be concluded that, at least in this respect, Spiridonova did not experience the same personal struggle that Figner did. Once she familiarized herself with revolutionary thought, she

[21] Ibidem, 54-62.
[22] L. Patyk, 'Dressed to Kill and Die: Russian Revolutionary Terrorism, Gender, and Dress', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 58.2 (2010) 192-209.

passionately devoted herself to it and gave up her wealth and privileges in a heartbeat.

From revolutionary spirits to revolutionary acts.
The radical years of Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova

Upon her return to Russia, Vera Figner became a member of the populist revolutionary organization Land and Liberty, and, after a few years, joined the Executive Committee of the more radical faction the People's Will. In the two years that followed, she helped to plan and prepare the assassination of the tsar. After a few failed attempts, the group succeeded in March 1881. Figner went into hiding, but was betrayed by a fellow revolutionary named Sergey Degayev and arrested in February 1883.[23] Although she was initially sentenced to death, her sentence was reduced to life imprisonment.

'If the death sentence would have been executed', she wrote in her memoir, 'I would have died calmly, *I was prepared to die*'[24] (italics added). In fact, during her imprisonment in Shlisselburg Fortress, she wondered whether dying for the revolutionary movement would have been preferable to being 'doomed to be locked in a cell for eternity (…) *Dying in prison… of old age, would that not be worse?*' (italics added).[25] She would never find out, however, because her sentence was further reduced to twenty years imprisonment. Between her release from Shlisselburg in 1904 and the 1917 revolution, she spent much time abroad in other countries, eventually returning to Russia and settling in Sint Petersburg in 1915.[26]

Historian Lynne Ann Hartnett draws attention to a fascinating paradox in the life of Figner that becomes particularly visible during her imprisonment. When Figner returned to Russia in 1875, she had argued that 'social concerns had gained ascendance over personal ones *for good*' (italics added).[27] Throughout her life, however, she remained very much conscious of her

[23] Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 42-58.
[24] Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 177 [translated].
[25] Ibidem, 271 [translated].
[26] After her imprisonment she was sentenced to exile, yet 1906 she received permission to travel to Europe. Even from a distance she remained a dedicated revolutionary, exemplified by the many public appearances and speeches she made there. See: Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner*, 179-204.
[27] Writings of Vera Figner, as cited in: Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 35.

noble background. What is more, the customs and privileges that she had grown up with proved hard to abandon. As such, she felt entitled to complain that one of the wardens in Shlisselburg Fortress spoke to her 'in a way that *respectable people* do not even use with *servants*' (italics added).[28] She also never lost her taste for the social and material niceties that her social status traditionally afforded her.[29]

In January 1906, Spiridonova assassinated Tambov district official Luzhenovsky. This action was part of the broader local Socialist Revolutionary Party's response against the repression and violence that representatives of the government used against the peasants in the area. She was arrested on the spot and brought to the local police station. She was interrogated and suffered from physical and sexual abuse, which she commented on extensively in a letter to her friends and comrades. According to Steinberg, she wrote that her abusers 'displayed a talent for torture that Ivan the Terrible would have envied them for.'[30] The letter was published in the liberal newspaper *Rus* and provoked widespread outrage amongst the Russian population. It turned her into a revolutionary heroine.[31]

In this letter she also mentioned that on the day of the assassination she was 'dressed up as a schoolgirl, blushing, cheerful and calm', and that as such she 'aroused no suspicion.[32] For female revolutionaries who participated in armed struggle, there were not just ideological but also practical aspects to consider when it came to dressing themselves. Their clothing had to allow for physical mobility and the concealment of weapons, yet, perhaps most importantly, also served to elude suspicion. For Spiridonova, who was a mere 147 centimetres in height, dressing up as a schoolgirl proved a successful disguise.[33]

Once captured, she expected to be sentenced to death and accepted her fate. The letters and court testimony, as included by Steinberg, express her willingness to die for the revolutionary cause.[34] In fact, when her death

[28] As cited in Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner*, 157.
[29] Ibidem, 157-158.
[30] Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 24-28. Citation can be found on page 25 [translated].
[31] Rabinowitch, 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"', 425.
[32] Letter of Maria Spiridonova, as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 24 (translated).
[33] Acker, Maria Spiridonova, 59.
[34] Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 24-49. The letter that is included on page 44 states: 'I dream that I am being hanged. I long for it strongly, and I would not know what to

sentence got reduced to life imprisonment due to unrest among the population, she was outright disappointed:

> My death seemed so significant to me from a societal point of view, and I expected it with such certainty, that *the withdrawal of the verdict and its alteration to life imprisonment have badly affected me*: I do not feel good… Let me put it like this: it is hard for me! *I hate the autocracy so much that I do not desire their favours*.[35] (italics added)

Despite her disapproval, she received their 'favour' and was transferred to a women's prison in Siberia, where she remained until she was released in the wake of the 1917 revolution.[36]

Figner's and Spiridonova's turns to violence might seem remarkable given that these women continuously emphasized their moral outlook on life. It is important to understand, however, that for them there was nothing unethical or immoral about the choices they made. Figner's 1884 trial statement - in which she explained that for her, violence was essentially the last resort - sheds ample light on this.[37] Once she had joined the People's Will, she felt 'a moral obligation'[38] to not only accept violence in theory, but also to participate directly in the violent acts that the organization would undertake. She felt this obligation because she 'had always demanded that a person - myself as well as others - be consistent', to 'harmonize word and deed'.[39] Even though some people might have regarded her deeds as 'bloodthirsty' and 'terrible and incomprehensible', she argued that they 'were prompted by motives that, to me in any event, have *an honorable basis*.'[40] (italics added).

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do when the autocracy would pardon me. I do not want their pardon… I consider my death so significant from a societal point of view that I would conceive of grace as revenge, as a new scorn' [translated].

[35] Letter from Maria Spiridonova, as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 49.

[36] Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*; Acker, Maria Spiridonova, 86-87; S. Boniece, 'The Shesterka of 1905-06: Terrorist Heroines of Revolutionary Russia', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 58.2 (2010) 172-191: 172-173.

[37] Vera Figner's 1884 trial statement, as cited in: Engel et al., *Five Sisters*, 43. In it, she says: 'If any group in our society had shown me a path other than violence, perhaps I would have followed it; at the very least, I would have tried it out.'

[38] Ibidem.

[39] Ibidem.

[40] Ibidem.

From her point of view, these actions in no way discredited her. This is because her morality did not find expression in her rejection of violence, but precisely in her embracement of it. This is why she considered the betrayal of Degayev, which gave her and fellow revolutionaries a 'moral shock' and made her feel 'as though she had fallen from her highest ideals in the filthiest mud', to be more immoral than her own participation in the assassination of the tsar.[41] Killing the enemy could be morally justified, but the betrayal of a revolutionary friend was utterly reprehensible.

Historian Amy Knight argues that the generation of radical female revolutionaries to which Figner belonged differed fundamentally from the generation of Spiridonova. Her main argument is that the latter generation was not necessarily motivated by rational political concerns. Rather, their emotional investment and their will to heroic martyrdom prevented them from separating personal motives from political and social goals. She argues that for some women, and specifically includes Spiridonova as an example, their willingness to die originated from a feeling that they had to expiate their deeds by sacrificing their own lives. 'Though they rationally accepted the idea that the revolutionary cause justified such killing', she states, 'they could not live with their feelings of guilt', because they were unable 'to reconcile terror with personal morality'[42].

As far as can be ascertained from the selected primary sources, however, Spiridonova never exhibited any feelings of guilt following the assassination of Luzhenovsky. Her willingness to die afterwards seems to be first and foremost because she believed it would aid the revolutionary movement, not because she questioned the morality of her own actions. In an open letter she wrote to the Bolsheviks in 1918, she outlined on which grounds she believed violent actions could be approved of. If violence was used as a means to wake up and emancipate the masses, and if the revolutionary displayed self-sacrificing qualities, it was morally justified.[43] In her 'Last Testament' written in 1937, she furthermore highlighted that it was permissible to kill, 'but only when there are no other means at hand to defend the revolution.'[44] This reflects her 1906 trial statement, in which she

[41] For the citations, see Figner, *Nacht over Rusland*, 160 and 162 ([translated]).
[42] Knight, 'Female Terrorists', 151.
[43] 'Open Letter to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party', as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 238.
[44] Rabinowitch, 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"', 444.

emphasized that Luzhenovsky was assassinated because 'he was an oppressor of the people, and he could *only* be restrained through death' (italics added).[45]

Like Figner, Spiridonova suggested that violence was justified, provided it was motivated by a desire to aid the revolution and only if no other option was available. They believed their own actions contained both elements, and therefore felt comfortable to emphasize the morality of their actions throughout their lives. As such, they exhibited no guilt or remorse. There might have been women within the Socialist Revolutionary Party who struggled with their use of violence, but Spiridonova does not seem to have been among them.[46]

In sum, although they had used violence to different degrees (Figner helped plan and prepare an assassination, Spiridonova assassinated someone herself), they both accepted the consequences of their actions and would have willingly given their lives for the revolutionary cause. In fact, suffering hardships and their self-renunciation made their moral aspirations shine even brighter. Dying for the revolutionary cause would have meant to die for something bigger than themselves, to die an honourable death. As such they did not fear it. In 1906, Spiridonova wrote: 'Do you not know that I belong to those, who laugh at the cross? I will laugh in prison. Because one suffers for an ideal, and the ideal is so beautiful, that all personal feelings fade.'[47]

Revolutionary heroes?
The post-1917 years of Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova

When the February revolution of 1917 shocked Russia and the rest of the world, Figner was already in her sixties. Despite her age, these promising times prompted her to once again lent herself and her voice to the

[45] Maria Spiridonova's 1906 trial statement, as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 39.

[46] Although Spiridonova herself was able to justify her use of violence, many conservative Russians did judge her for it. See for example: N. Petrusenko, 'A Female Agent of Political Violence in Pre-revolutionary Russia: Gendered Representations of Maria Spiridonova', *Kaleidoscope: Journal of History of Culture, Science and Medicine* 5.9 (2014) 232-249: 236-238.

[47] Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 292 ([translated]). In the book, the literal phrasing is as follows: 'Weet gij niet,dat ik behoor tot degenen, die lachen aan het kruis?' This reiterates how she embodied her status as revolutionary martyr.

revolutionary cause. She gave many speeches and was hailed and treated by the crowds as 'revolutionary nobility'.[48] As the revolutionary bliss wore off in the months after the revolution and national unity and optimism faded away, deep societal differences and internal conflicts within the revolutionary movement increasingly came to the fore.

For Figner, who was politically active yet never chose to definitively affiliate herself with one party, this complicated political landscape overwhelmed and estranged her from the revolution as it unfolded in 1917. Although Figner would never fully support the Bolsheviks, she refrained from directly opposing them. Her biographer Hartnett argues that she kept quiet as a means of self-preservation, which, given her age, seems a credible argument to make. In the end, she accepted and reconciled with the inevitability of the Bolshevik victory and chose to work within the system rather than to actively challenge it.[49]

When Spiridonova was released from prison in the wake of the February Revolution, she took a different path than Figner and placed herself at the fore of the political arena. When internal conflicts caused the Socialist Revolutionary Party to split, she joined the leftist faction, the Left SR, and immediately assumed a leadership role. In this she distinguished herself from other revolutionary women at that time, not only among those in Russia, but among those in Europe as well.[50]

When the Provisional Government reinstated the death penalty, which it had previously abolished, Spiridonova was furious. She commented on it extensively in an article she published, in which she argued that 'a democracy that resorts to such degrading methods, forges its own shackles' and blamed the Provisional Government for the 'moral decay of the revolution'.[51] To her, upholding the moral character of the revolution was vital. This also becomes clear on the first Left SR's party congress in November 1917 in which Spiridonova made the following speech:

> Friends! *We are not a young party, our glorious predecessors worked already in the 60's and 70's.* As we have such a long history, we want to remind ourselves on which principle the party is build. *It was the principle of the*

[48] Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner*, 206.
[49] Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner*, 205-261; Haruki, 'Vera Figner', 44-45.
[50] Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 173-183.
[51] Article written by Maria Spiridonova, as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 178 ([translated]).

> *highest morality.* (…) Friends, particularly in this time of fierce conflict we, social-revolutionaries, should clear the atmosphere, resurrect the idealism from the reserves that *the holy warriors of the past* have left behind for us. (italics added)

She not only emphasized the importance of morality, but also legitimized the existence of the Left SRs by claiming that their party was the natural successor of the revolutionary movement to which Vera Figner belonged.

The Left SRs criticism of the Provisional Government made Spiridonova applaud the October Revolution and led the Left SR and the Bolsheviks to work together. However, over time substantial differences between the two parties came to the fore and tensions grew. They led to an outburst on the Fifth Soviet Congress in July 1918 during which Spiridonova directly accused the Bolsheviks of betraying the revolution, whilst, according to Steinberg, 'she continuously slammed on the table with a small, silver revolver.'[52] The Left SR had organized for the assassination of the German count Von Mirbach to take place during the congress, hoping it would cause, among other things, the Germans to nullify the Treaty of Brest Litovsk. Their attempt failed miserably. The Bolsheviks used the assassination as an opportunity to get rid of the Left SRs and reframed it as proof of a Left SR conspiracy against Soviet Power. Spiridonova and her colleagues were arrested by the Bolsheviks. It was a turning point for Spiridonova. There was no longer a place for her in the increasingly oppressive political system.[53]

Conclusion

In conclusion, Vera Figner and Maria Spiridonova responded differently to the 1917-revolution. The ways in which they chose to do so illustrate that they indeed belonged to different generations of revolutionaries. Overwhelmed by the situation, Figner chose not to challenge, but to work within the Bolshevik system. Spiridonova, however, was not intimidated by the chaotic political situation. If anything, the fact that she assumed a leadership role so quickly and zealously suggests that she thrived in it. Although Figner and Spiridonova both grew to disagree with the revolution as it unfolded in 1917 and 1918, they continued to believe in the revolution

[52] Ibidem, 214 ([translated]).
[53] Rabinowitch, 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"', 427.

as such. 'This system is wrong', a disillusioned Spiridonova argued in December 1918, 'but socialism is true and attainable.'[54] And thus, they continued to work to turn their revolutionary dreams into reality, albeit in different ways. The consequences of these choices are perhaps best illustrated by their deaths. In September 1941, Maria Spiridonova, together with 156 other prisoners, was executed by the Soviet government in the Medvedev Woods.[55] Nine months later, Vera Figner died in Moscow as an esteemed old revolutionary, with half a page of the communist party newspaper *Pravda* dedicated to her.[56]

It is precisely the side-by-side approach used in this article that sheds light on a fascinating aspect that comes into play when talking about the lives of these female revolutionaries. The choices they made not only reflect their social backgrounds, the specific historical contexts they found themselves in and the distinct generations of revolutionaries to which they belonged. Their choices also reflect their unique personalities. Vera Figner was very careful and cautious before she chose to devote her life to the revolution and seems to have been just as cautious in her decision making when she found herself disagreeing with its course after 1917. Her personality also shines through in the fact that she was never able to fully distance herself from her social background and the material things and privileges it afforded her. Maria Spiridonova, on the other hand, was already from a young age far more rebellious and fierier. Her devotion to the revolutionary cause was intense and unconditional, reflected in both her willingness to kill as in her choice to oppose the Bolsheviks.

Although historians like Knight have rightfully highlighted the importance of the different historical contexts these women found themselves in as well as the age gap between them, this article proposes that their unique personalities also played an important role in the choices they made. This article thus reiterates that, if historians want to understand the making of the 1917 revolution, it is vital that they not only study the significant political events surrounding it. Analysing the intricacies that made up the lives of individual revolutionaries is just as important.

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[54] Speech of Maria Spiridonova from 1918, as found in: Steinberg, *Maria Spiridonova*, 242 [translated].

[55] Rabinowitch, 'Maria Spiridonova's "Last Testament"', 445.

[56] Hartnett, *The Defiant Life of Vera Figner*, 258.

Narrativism, critical fabulation, and the ethics of history writing

Maud Rijks

Introduction

Until the winter of 2023, visitors to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) could peruse a collection gallery titled 'Critical Fabulations', an exhibit which displayed 'artifacts, archives, and testimonies…in works that respond to the legacy of colonialism and its hold in the present.'[1] The visitor could encounter early twentieth-century photography, contemporary art, and video footage with the aim of responding to the 'afterlife' of slavery and colonialism in the present day. The gallery's title was borrowed from cultural historian Saidiya Hartman's groundbreaking essay 'Venus in Two Acts.' *Critical fabulation*, she argues, is a method by which the historian engages in the speculative, reckons with injustices inherited from the past, and essentially subverts hierarchies embedded in narrative structures and discourse more broadly. In so doing, telling 'an impossible story,' that of enslaved peoples, is made possible.[2]

I argue that Hartman's method can be situated among the works of foundational historical theorists of narrativism, deepening and expanding the notion that narrative imposes meaning through the outlined method of critical fabulation.[3] Since Hartman's introduction of it, the method's use has been effectively demonstrated in Tiya Miles' *All That She Carried: A Journey of Ashley's Sack* (2021). Miles skillfully reconstructs the story of three generations of Black women whose voices have been erased through the oppressive forces of history-writing, enslavement, and colonial structures. Besides situating Hartman amongst the corpus of important works on narrativism, and scrutinizing the use of critical fabulation in practice, a familiar ethical discussion on representation in coping with archival inequalities will form the concluding section of this essay. Historical

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[1]MoMa,'214: Critical Fabulations'. https://www.moma.org/calendar/galleries/5378, accessed December 5, 2023.

[2] S. Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts', *Small Axe* 26 (2008) 1-14: 10.

[3] A. C. Danto, *Narration and Knowledge. With a new Introduction by Lydia Geohr and a new conclusion by Frank Ankersmit*. (New York, NY 2007); L. Goldstein, *Historical Knowing* (Austin, TX 1976); L. O. Mink, *Historical Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY and London 1987).

theorists of the Holocaust have grappled with the difficulty of representing a historical event that is 'by definition' unrepresentable.[4] I argue that Hartman's theory, put in dialogue with these theorists, answers some of the challenges (while also raising new questions) coming out of this ethical discussion. Ultimately, power involved in the shaping of history-writing, and the moral duty of the historian to re-imagine history by engaging with the present, will be reflected on.

Narrativism in historical theory

The early works of narrative constructivism in history introduced narrative as a cognitive instrument, arguing that historians, and humans in general, tell stories in order to comprehend the world around us.[5] Situated within the analytic philosophy of history, Louis Mink rejects positivist accounts of history that consider the historical account to be, or at least strive towards, a detached and falsifiable portrayal of the past. He argues that historical accounts are constructed narratives or stories, and that ultimately history teaches us how stories answer questions.[6] According to Mink, the mode of comprehension used to understand historical knowledge is a configurational one, meaning humans see 'elements in a single and concrete complex of relationships.'[7] The structuralist basis of this theory is clear; humans make sense of the world and comprehend history through structures, in this case narratives. Rather than narrative simply being a method of communication, constructing and following a narrative is directly related to how humans perceive events. The novelty of viewing the essence of history-writing as telling stories reverberates today; Mink's contemporary Hayden White is still central to this discussion on narrative.

[4] A. Margalit, *The Ethics of Memory* (Cambridge and London 2002); S. Friedländer ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation* (Cambridge and London 1992); M. L. Morgan and B. Pollock, eds., *The Philosopher as Witness: Fackenheim and Responses to the Holocaust* (Albany, NY 2008).
[5] L. O. Mink, 'History and Fiction as Modes of Comprehension', *New Literary History* 1.3 (1970) 541-588: 549.
[6] Ibidem, 558.
[7] Ibidem, 551.

White sees narrative as 'a metacode, a human universal', underlying how humans connect with each other, both within and across cultures.[8] This extends to the realm of history; White argues that historical texts are fundamentally pieces of written prose, all constructed to conform to particular *types*. Histories are constructed along 'modes of interpretation': emplotment, explanation, ideological, and tropological.[9] These conventions, stemming from the institutionalization of the historical discipline in the nineteenth century, result in familiar patterns of historical narratives. Such typologies, disruptive as they were to the state of the discipline, are still engaged with today. David Scott, for example, draws upon White's modes of emplotment to suggest that anticolonial histories have largely been constructed within the form of Romance, subsequently calling for Tragedy as a more useful narrative frame.[10]

The innovation of this theory led to the groundbreaking yet difficult conclusion, especially for proponents of positivism, that there is no 'neutral' way to write history. Historians, whether consciously or not, always construct their histories within these modes. The theory also implies that there is no objective judgement on which constellation of rhetorical forms is more effective or true. White's theory of interpretation leaves us with an assertion, that narrative imposes meaning, and a question: can we reach historical truth?

White's underlying thesis, that historians always engage in the imaginative and poetic in how they construe relationships between people, places, and things, remains worthwhile. He grapples with historiographical problem of finding a 'true story' out of the chaos of 'historical records.'[11] The ethical implications of this question of 'truth' will be returned to. First, it is necessary to linger on the process of narrativizing 'facts' into 'history', and the power dynamics at play in this process. The prefigured nature of White's typologies may also leave the historian with a sense of restriction and the perhaps rebellious question: can these conventions of historical narrative be stretched and disrupted in favor of the scholar writing histories

[8] H. White, 'The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality', *Critical Inquiry* 7.1 (1980) 5-27: 6.
[9] H. White, 'Interpretation in History', *New Literary History* 4.2 (1973) 281-314: 309.
[10] D. Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC 2004) 7.
[11] White, 'The Value of Narrativity', 8.

of the marginalized? The work of Saidiya Hartman can help to answer these questions.

Critical Fabulation

Saidiya Hartman, a writer, activist, and pioneer of African American history and the afterlife of slavery, sees her work 'as bridging theory and narrative.'[12] Placing her work within the context of narrativist historical theory, therefore, may seem redundant. However, her concept of critical fabulation pushes the boundaries of how intertwined history and fiction can be. In 'Venus in Two Acts,' she simultaneously embraces and laments the historian of slavery's struggle of writing a history of those who have been violently silenced by the archive. She copes with this by calling for a convergence of 'the intimacy of history with the scandal and excess of literature.'[13] Using unusual, disruptive literary forms, Hartman explores a new approach to history. It is an approach that ultimately seeks to subvert the hierarchies embedded in conventional history-writing.

Dealing with silences in the archive is nothing new. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's famous question, 'can the subaltern speak?' and the resultant firm answer of 'no' triggered a wave of historiographical discussions confronting the difficulty of unearthing stories of historical actors not found in the archive.[14] Hartman directly draws from subaltern studies, grappling with the notion that the aim of the subaltern historian, excavating an archive for stories of oppressed peoples, is ultimately doomed. Her blunt statement that 'dead girls are unable to speak' echoes Spivak in this way.[15] Power and violence are inherent to the archive. State documentation, official legers, preserved journals of powerful men: these are what historians must sift through when looking for the 'other'. The

[12] T. Siemsen, 'On working with archives', *The Creative Independent,* https://thecreativeindependent.com/people/saidiya-hartman-on-working-with-archives/, geraadpleegd December 5, 2023.

[13] Hartman, 'Venus', 1.

[14] S. Shetty and E. J. Bellamy, 'Postcolonialism's Archive Fever', review of *Archive Fever* by J. Derrida; *Of Grammatology* by J. Derrida and G. Chakravorty Spivak; *Can the Subaltern Speak?* by G. C. Spivak, C. Nelson and L. Grossberg, *Diacritics* 30.1 (Spring 2000) 25-48.

[15] Hartman, 'Venus', 13.

archive is finite, no matter how many times a crumbling page is re-read. Hartman offers critical fabulation as a way to make it infinite.

Critical fabulation is a method composed of two parts. The first involves 'invoking a series of speculative arguments that exploited the capacities of the subjunctive – the what might have been.''[16] Speculation in history seems, of course, risky. Hartman convincingly argues, however, that the method is a necessary part of engaging with the worst injustices done to those silenced by the archives. What, after all, is the alternative? Ignoring their existence? Hartman refuses this recourse, vying for a narrative that explores 'what might have been' in order to take power away from the realities of the present. Through literary subversion, the process of narration gains an extra dimension, contributing to a goal of 'toppl[ing] the hierarchy of discourse.'[17] This hierarchy refers to the structures of narrative applied to history that perpetuate the oppression of some and the privileging of others. By disassembling these structures and re-thinking the building blocks of narrative, historians must challenge 'the production of disposable lives' that has been engrained in the historical discipline.[18] Hartman exposes the power held by the historian and their narrative choices. Historians must take responsibility in their duty to historical actors, especially those that have been marginalized, and thus silenced by the discipline.

The second aspect of Hartman's method is the historian's 'figural or affective relation to the past,' one that reaches with emotion and empathy through history, forming a bridge between past and present that is non-linear and non-causal.[19] This disregard for linearity or causality contests history's traditional approaches to narrative. Not only does this free the historian from previously prescribed structures, it writes the scholar into the history they compose. An 'affective relation' means it is no longer a unidirectional relationship; the historian is implicated, charged with a burden. Again, the implied power, and consequent moral duty, of the historian is centralized.

Central, too, is the notion of narrative restraint, another aspect of critical fabulation that defies the instinct of historians to 'fill in the gaps and

[16] S. Hartman, 'The Dead Book Revisited', *History of the Present* 6.2 (Fall 2016) 208-215: 210.

[17] Hartman, 'Venus', 12.

[18] Ibidem, 11.

[19] Ibidem, 210.

provide closure.'[20] Closure, in this sense, is different to the employment of the imaginative described above, although finding balance within the delicate tension between the two remains a daunting task for the historian. Closure is an impossible task and an ill-advised goal. Just as the historian of the subaltern should not aim to make the subaltern 'speak,' neither should the historian of slavery aim to 'make the dead girl speak.' The historian should 'reckon with loss' and 'respect the limits of what cannot be known,' else risking exploitation or a repetition of the violence already committed to the marginalized.[21]

Crucial to Hartman's theory is the necessary acknowledgment that we have inherited the violent past of our predecessors. Engaging with history from this perspective stems from postcolonial theory; systems of oppression are rooted in the past, and it is the responsibility of the historian to engage with the resultant present injustices. To rephrase Michel-Rolph Trouillout, the past is not history until it is connected to the present.[22] Trouillout, himself a pioneer on the issue of representing slavery and drawn upon by Hartman, writes that 'slavery…is a ghost, both the past and a living presence; and the problem of historical representation is how to represent that ghost, something that is and yet is not.'[23] Hartman confronts this issue of representation directly; its attempt will result in 'inevitable failure.'[24] Yet this does not absolve the historian; in the meantime they must '[recruit] the past for the sake of the living.'[25] This is what Trouillot refers to as the *authenticity* of the present; 'only in that present can we be true or false to the past we choose to acknowledge.'[26]

Critical fabulation builds upon the work of narrativism by seeing historical narrative as more than a pre-existing structure used by the historian to order events in a certain way and tell a specific type of story. Rather, Hartman's vision of narrative liberates the historian, allowing one to cast around through the scarce, almost impossible to find scraps of evidence left of people forgotten by the archives. Where Mink saw history

[20] Hartman, 'Venus', 12.
[21] Ibidem, 4.
[22] M. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA 2015) 143.
[23] Ibidem, 147.
[24] Hartman, 'Venus', 12.
[25] Ibidem, 14.
[26] Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 151.

as teaching us how stories answer questions, Hartman's more complex vision involves historical narrative *asking* questions that we may never have a certain answer to. It also establishes a necessary line from the past to the present, centering the fact that the historian's narrative is grounded in the realities of today. It invites the historian, writing in the context of an unfinished history of dispossession, to narrate the (impossible) story of dispossessed lives.

Practicing fabulation

Having argued that critical fabulation should be considered as both a method and theoretical innovation to enrichen our understanding of narrativism, Tiya Miles' *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack,* exemplifies the effectivity of it in practice. Miles 'critically fabulates' in order to write an innovative, inspired historical narrative. Writing a little more than a decade after Hartman, Miles builds on histories of slavery, materiality, and Black feminism to unearth the history of several generations of Black women in the United States. Starting with just an embroidered sack and the enslaved woman, Rose, who was the sack's first owner, Miles constructs a narrative that explores the history of Rose and her probable descendants (Ashley and Ruth), honoring their love and resourcefulness in a time of trauma and extreme subjugation.[27] In her telling of these stories, she is both persuasive and mindful of the limitations inherent to oral history, memory, and circumstantial evidence.

Miles applies the methods prescribed by Hartman; she embraces the subjunctive as a literary form, takes on an 'affective relation with the past,' and employs 'narrative restraint.' On a broader level of historiographical purpose, Miles' aims connect with those of Hartman; through the material object of the sack, she 'weaves' together past, present, and future in order to deconstruct and re-imagine what we know and assume about Black lives. Throughout, she connects the story of these women and the world they lived in to the present, following Hartman's insistence on intimacy with the past due to its legacy in the present. She celebrates the women of her story by honoring their struggle and the lessons they can teach to present-day challenges. In essence, it is a masterpiece of critical fabulation.

[27] T. Miles, *All That She Carried: The Journey of Ashley's Sack* (New York 2021) 13.

Miles' necessary use of the subjunctive, or 'speculative,' is admitted up front. Her history will be one that cannot be corroborated against evidence in any traditional sense. Rather, she considers it to be more 'evocation…than argumentation and is rather more meditation than monograph.'[28] Miles employs the imaginative, both freely and with caution. The effect of this is a rich history, spun together not in the traditional sense of 'building' a history from an immense pile of documentation, but by employing the extremities of 'what could have been,' to iterate Hartman. This is not to say that *All That She Carried* is not grounded in any further empirical evidence than the sack which begins the story. On the contrary, Miles' excavation of archives, landscapes, and other carriers of evidence is a thorough case of meticulous historical research. Where the archive leaves silences, as it inevitably does in the history of the marginalized, she constructs a narrative that explores these silences while respecting their existence.

The most striking example of this can be found in the chapter 'Searching For Rose,' which, as its title would suggest, is a painstaking search for the sack's first owner in this story, a 'mission of historical rescue.'[29] Beginning with the sack, found at a flea market in the early 2000s, the basic facts that one can extract of Rose can be drawn from the stitching on the material:

> My great grandmother Rose/ mother of Ashley gave her this sack when/ she was sold at age 9 in South Carolina/ it held a tattered dress 3 handfulls of/ pecans a braid of Roses hair. Told her/ It be filled with my Love always/ she never saw her again/ Ashley is my grandmother/ Ruth Middleton 1921.[30]

These words are the only material evidence of the existence of Ruth's ancestors, and form the basis for Miles' historical investigation. Combing through South Carolina plantation records, Miles identifies many Roses, lingering with them and the scraps of evidence revealed of them. Throughout her search, she builds the world in which Rose lived, detailing the political economy of colonial South Carolina, the socio-economic structures of plantation houses, and the daily realities of the lives of the

[28] Miles, *All That She Carried*, 21.
[29] Ibidem, 59.
[30] Ibidem, 2.

enslaved. Delicately, painstakingly, she builds a potential narrative for Rose within and beyond this history, one infused with repetitions of 'probably,' 'maybe,' and 'perhaps.' Yet by the end of the chapter, we feel as if we know Rose, or at least a core element of her existence that we can understand, despite the thin historical thread connecting us to her: By employing the speculative to tell the story of Rose, Miles powerfully refuses to resign her to historical anonymity.

Miles' care and empathy towards her historical agents is exhibited throughout the book, demonstrating to the fullest extent what Hartman prescribes as a 'figural or affective relation' between historian and historical actor. First and foremost, Miles brings 'love' to the center of her history: the love that her characters have for each other, the love that runs through Black feminist history, and, importantly, the love that Miles herself feels and responds to. Miles does not shy from the emotional. It empowers her history. Her vulnerability towards the harrowing, traumatic events endured by her historical actors, and her willingness to expose both herself and the reader to the deeply emotional, work to strengthen her already highly sophisticated narrative form. Without this, it would not be possible to write such a history, let alone grasp the 'figural' relation between present and past asked for by Hartman.

Miles grounds this affective relation in the materiality of the embroidered sack, a tangible item that has been created by and passed on between endless sets of hands. From the unknown maker of the sack to its current resting place at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), she stresses the importance of 'things' as a 'threaded loop' bringing together the past, present, and future in her historical narrative.[31] Miles introduces her own material history in the first pages of her history, telling a story of a quilt sewn by her grandmother's aunt, passed along generations in her family and now owned by her. She additionally explores the many identities retained by the sack given by Rose to her daughter: that of a gift, a means of survival, a canvas to be sewed upon, and finally an archive of all these meanings carefully collected. She then connects these two tangible things, the quilt and the sack, to the broader history of textile and cloth, something that 'has traditionally been the craft of women across cultures.'[32] By emphasizing a circular relationship between herself, the women of her story, and the

[31] Miles, *All That She Carried*, 19.
[32] Ibidem, 233.

materials they all interact with, Miles successfully employs and plays with narrative in order to do justice to the legacy left behind by Rose, Ashley, and Ruth, placing them at the center of a long history of survival and womanhood.

Where Hartman instructs not to 'fill the gaps', Miles refuses to 'close the stitches', rather inviting the receptor of her narrative 'to embrace the spaces between the stitches.'[33] She does not aim to recount a history with a firm resolution or familiar mode of emplotment. Rather, Miles asks as many questions as she suggests speculative answers. This exercise of restraint, a necessary counterweight to the speculative, is applied throughout *All That She Carried* but is most concentrated in her chapter titled 'The Bright Unspooling,' which lingers on a lost generation in the lineage of Rose, Ashley, and Ruth. Namely, Ruth's mother. In roughly the period between the 1850s and 1920s, Miles loses the trail she has so painstakingly followed, and admits defeat in the sense that she accepts the futility of ever bringing to light the history of this missing character.[34] Silences like these are felt, accepted, and mourned. They are an integral part of telling the impossible story.[35]

By employing the stipulated conditions of critical fabulation, Miles subverts the hierarchies of history presented by the traditional archive, making space for alternative, counter-histories. She centers the resourcefulness of Black women and girls, their ability to persevere and claim existence in the direst of circumstances.[36] By re-imagining their history in a way that does not commit repeated violence to them, she stretches the limits of narrative to honor Hartman's call of understanding history as our present, relating to issues including 'the federal mistreatment of migrant children, the cultural neglect of African American heirlooms, the political betrayal of democratic principles, the economic cleavage of rich from poor, and the global shadow of an existential threat.'[37] Miles' monograph acts as a compelling example of the method of critical fabulation in practice. It commits itself, in Trouillot's language, to authenticity. It skillfully employs imagination, and it addresses present injustices by re-writing pasts.

[33] Miles, *All That She Carried*, 24.
[34] Ibidem, 228.
[35] Hartman, 'Venus,' 11.
[36] Miles, *All That She Carried*, 13.
[37] Ibidem, 18.

On the ethics of fabulation

To what extent can critical fabulation provide an answer to the elusiveness of historical 'truth'? Historical theorists of the Holocaust have experience dealing with issues of representation, memory, and handling absences. The theoretical discussion that has emerged on narrativism within this field, having already engaged White, invites us to probe the ethical dimensions and implications of Hartman's theory. Critics of Hartman and White may oppose the potential risk of presenting history as fiction, rather than using fiction to enrichen history. These fears, of course, are well-grounded; they seek to defend the worth and moral task of the discipline of history in general. Yet the sophistication and caution inherent to critical fabulation, when exercised correctly, should quell these fears. Historians writing 'impossible histories' will surely be presented with challenges, but also a plethora of opportunities.

Grappling with the impossibility, if not extreme difficulty, of engaging with the chapters of history burdened with the worst cases of mass violence and death, Avishai Margalit's work on testimony reminds one of Hartman's plight. Margalit's text on testimony and the moral witness highlight the delicacy of engaging with and representing difficult historical events.[38] It explores the idea that there is more to historical experiences than just 'the facts', thus coinciding with Hartman. Of course, the fundamental differences between these areas of history cannot be reconciled; ethical discussions on memory, in the field of the Holocaust, simply cannot be paralleled with a history of slavery where no living witnesses tell their stories today. Yet historiographical discussions on the Holocaust and its interaction with memory have, like Hartman's work, centralized the question of the responsibility of the historian to 'do justice' to historical subjects.[39]

Saul Friedländer argues that it would only be unacceptable to engage in a theoretical discussion on the extermination of European Jews 'if these abstract issues were not directly related to the way contemporary culture reshapes the images of the past.' The necessity of discussing the theoretical issues at stake do not detract from 'the horror behind the words.'[40] Rather, they are necessary to engage with, the political present being what it is: inextricable from the horrors of the past. Immediately, Hartman's relevance

[38] Margalit, *The Ethics of Memory,* 147-182.

[39] D. LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY and London 1998) 2.

[40] Friedländer ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation,* 1.

is evident. Her insistence that history is written not just in, but about the present, connects on a theoretical level to the above considerations of the event of Holocaust. On slavery and its legacy, she writes that 'our dispossession is ongoing;' the afterlife of centuries of oppression and injustice linger today, and humanity has not come so far as to rid itself of these handed-down hierarchies. [41] It is both the legacy of history's marginalized figures and the future of how society deals with its injustices that are at stake.

The notion of memory has not yet been considered in this essay, yet it should be touched upon here. The idea of 'collective memory' in the field of Holocaust studies signifies a moral discussion on how we relate to the worst chapters of the past. Friedländer writes that 'the main aspect of the interaction between the memory of the Holocaust and its historiography belongs to the moral dimension of the events, that is to the demand for justice and to Nazism as a metaphor of evil.'[42] To Friedländer, history and memory share these moral categories, yet differ in one important aspect: 'the apparent dichotomy between a necessarily 'detached' history of National Socialism and the no less unavoidable presence of a moral dimension in dealing with this epoch *may find its resolution only in the sensitivity and creative intuition of the historian*' (my emphasis).[43] While Friedländer fears the 'dilution' that may come from narrativity, he ultimately instructs historians to 'dare to challenge the complacency and routine already existing in their domain.'[44] The historian's task is to seek 'new concepts that would express, however inadequately, the breakdown of all norms and the dimensions of suffering that traditional historiography cannot easily deal with.'[45] Friedländer's reflections on the case of memory and history point towards the same dilemmas that Hartman grapples with as a historian of slavery. Can the violent silencing of the collective and the individual be honored while simultaneously finding a way to shed light on human suffering and survival in the present?

We return to White here, as he enters Friedländer's discussions on memory and historians' responsibilities in 'Probing the Limits of

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[41] Hartman, 'The Dead Book', 208.
[42] S. Friedländer, 'History, Memory, and the Historian: Dilemmas and Responsibilities', *New German Critique* 80 (Spring-Summer 2000) 3-15: 11.
[43] Ibidem, 12.
[44] Ibidem,13.
[45] Ibidem, 15.

Representation.' White observes that it has become increasingly common to encounter representations of Hitler's Germany in academia and popular media. Previously, this would have been deemed unacceptable, the consensus being that one could not represent the worst of humanity's crimes. He determines the change to stem from the 'type' of narrative conveying the Holocaust, and that there has been an evolution in the types that have been accepted by the discipline and broader public. White's argument that narrative form imposes meaning leads to the (for White's critics) troubling conclusion that *any* narrative risks inauthentically representing the Holocaust. Some critics therefore maintain that it must only be spoken of literally, and not figuratively.[46] White opposes this, defending that every historical event is and can be represented through discourse, composed of 'linguistic entities.'[47] Hence, the 'literal' does not exist. His critics subsequently respond with an exasperated 'how could we make a difference between fiction and history?'[48] Hartman would dispose of this dichotomy entirely, seeing it not as a case of difference but of opportunity and liberation.

Today, as the number of Holocaust survivors lessens, its historians stray further from an ability to excavate new eyewitness accounts, and the ability to recount its events 'literally' (if this was ever possible) becomes ever more problematic. Hartman's method of speculation, restraint, imagination, and importantly, writing about the present reveals new paths. As Miles so effectively demonstrates, perhaps the only way to do justice to history's silenced is to produce a historical narrative that leaves space for questions as well as answers. The precarity of language, the tool by which we communicate narrative, lends itself to this.

Finally, the above discussion warrants a reflection on the responsibility and moral duty of the historian of slavery and Black history, and their consequent involvement as an agent of history. There are concerns that arise from the persona of the historian becoming involved in the discussion, namely that their positionality inevitably does, too. Hartman, positioning herself as connecting with her ancestors, is a direct inheritor of the injustices of slavery. Through critical fabulation she puts herself partially in the shoes of historical actors, imagining their experiences aboard a ship on the Middle Passage, feeling and exploring their emotions as they were

[46] H. White, *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (Baltimore, MD 2020) 44.
[47] Ibidem, 37.
[48] Friedländer, 'Introduction', 8.

silenced by history. Not every historian can write this kind of story. Although all historians have inherited the hierarchies embedded in the discipline, and should seek to question these, those with a more direct connection to the historically oppressed inevitably write from a different perspective to those descending from historic oppressors. Indeed, the method of critical fabulation is firmly rooted in Hartman's own experiences as both an academic and inheritor of this oppression. There is certainly a level of introspection, self-criticism, and scrutiny that should be involved in writing the history of non-white people as a white person, for example. Similar reflections are crucial to make in areas like queer history. One could argue that those who do not inherit these histories in a direct sense should not be writing these histories at all. Perhaps it only serves to contribute to oppressive structures if non-marginalized voices involve themselves in a discussion, speaking for the marginalized and trying to represent experiences which they may never truly understand. Does this mean that only certain historians should write certain histories? Would that be such a bad thing? Following the line of argument that historians are agents, too, scholars engaging with histories of oppression must consider these questions, difficult though they may be.

Conclusion

Revisiting the MoMa gallery, its title's full meaning and potential is now available to us. Our eyes are drawn to colorful, large portraits depicting people from the Black population of Brazil. Despite more than half of the country's population being made up of Black people, the only early photographic material available of them largely objectifies them and their bodies. The artist of these portraits, Dalton Paula, refuses to let these communities be marginalized by history. He seeks to create a new history, a counter-narrative, that acknowledges their existence; based on photographs of current Black communities in Brazil, he envisions their ancestors by depicting them as African royalty, flaking their faces with gold leaf.[49] By connecting past, present, and future, Paula conveys a narrative that is simultaneously hopeful, lamenting, and politically grounded. Taking a step back to perceive the gallery as a whole, we are presented with a new look on

[49] MoMa, 'Dalton Paula: *Liberata*, 2020'. https://www.moma.org/calendar/galleries/5378, accessed December 5, 2023.

history that visually portrays the project of Miles, Hartman, and ultimately White, too; historians must be aware that the structures of writing history are deeply rooted in traditions as old as the discipline itself. Only by engaging with these structures and subverting hierarchies can we work to write histories that do justice to those that have been traditionally marginalized by the discipline.

Coping with our inherited structures of injustice (like slavery, colonialism, and capitalist hierarchies) as well as global threats of the future (like continued political upheaval, genocide, and the climate crisis) requires a re-thinking of the way we tell history. Rather than reducing the method of critical fabulation to a 'one size fits all' approach, I have demonstrated the necessary interdisciplinarity, constant reassessment, and self-reflection needed to do justice to the requirements of history now and in the future. Its theoretical innovation, however, seems too promising not to develop and diffuse further. The afterlife of slavery and colonialism is entangled with other histories: those of environmental destruction, capitalist exploitation, and Western imperialism.[50] This essay has started the discussion between narrativism, critical fabulation, and ethical considerations of history-writing, and it invites historians to reflect on their role as agents along the lines of Hartman, Miles, and White. Additions to this discussion from related fields of history would only work to enrichen it, giving the innovations made by Hartman the attention they deserve. The future of historical theory must engage with its present; it is only then that we can answer the complex questions raised by the future.

[50] T. Bruno, 'Ecological Memory in the Biophysical Afterlife of Slavery', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 113.7 (2023): 1543-1553.

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Mededelingen

Februari 2025
Inmiddels is de redactie begonnen aan het Februarinummer. Dit nummer zal gaan over apocalyptisch denken. Vanuit verschillende invalshoeken en perioden wordt gekeken naar hoe men het einde van de wereld voor zich zag.

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