

Book Reviews

Doukellis, Panagiotis N. (editor); ***Mediterranean Cartographic Stories: Seventeenth and Eighteenth-century Masterpieces from the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation Collection***. Athens: AdVenture SA. 2019. English text. (175 pages; 53 full color illustrations; 24.75x17 cm.; (9.75x6.75 in.); ISBN 978-618-83044-2-0; hardbound cover; no jacket. AdVenture SA requests US orders be placed through Oak Knoll Books, 310 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720; Phone: 302.328.7232; Fax: 302.328.7274. Order Number 133709. Price \$55.00.

Reviewed by Bert Johnson

The Sylvia Ioannou Foundation has more than 2,000 books and 600 maps of Greece, Cyprus, and the Hellenic world, an outstanding collection of resources from the late fifteenth-century to the present. This book is a product of its 2016 conference held at the University of Cyprus in Nicosia. It contains six papers of the nine papers on three topics. The introduction by editor **Panagiotis N. Doukellis** presents the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century documents that are its focus. Following a brief analysis regarding the knowledge, will, and power of each, he summarizes their characteristics: a richly adorned atlas by Giovanni Battista Cavallini that is “*imperial and poetic*,” an anonymous Ottoman portolan chart that is “*practical and emblematic*,” and an annotated printed map of Cyprus by an unknown French traveler whose remarks are “*critical and modern*.”

The first three papers address an opulent manuscript portolan atlas made in the Medici cartographic workshop in Livorno (Leghorn), Italy, in 1642. **Corradino Astengo** notes that in response to rising levels of maritime depredation from Ottomans and corsairs, Grand Duke Masimo I founded a religious knightly order (*Sacro Militare Ordine Marittimo dei Cavalieri di Santo Stefano Papa e Martire*) to combat the threat. A cartographic workshop was established at the end of the sixteenth century; this atlas is a product of that workshop. Astengo provides background information on Cavallini and on map production of that region and era. The atlas contains a full armorial device, an elaborate compass rose with the names of 32 winds, three portolan charts depicting the Mediterranean, and nine charts of the most important islands in that sea: Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Malta, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Elba, and the Balaerics.

Emmanuelle Vagnon compares it to other works of the same period. She also explores the individual island maps, relating them to the isolarii which had appeared a century earlier. Vagnon observes that “*this is a beautiful artwork but disconnected from modern geographical knowledge in a time when geography and maps were readily available*. So [its] signif-



icance...has to be found elsewhere, in a political message addressed to the grand master of the military order..." It lent obvious gravitas to the order which received it, serving notice that this was a serious undertaking with backing from the highest level.

Sean Roberts' paper “explores the epi-cartographic, or pictorial, elements of Cavallini’s marine atlas.” He provides a useful background to chart-making in the region during this era. He also takes the closest look of these three authors to details of the images that populate the atlas, especially the animals. Some, especially those common in heraldry, have a cookie cutter feel to them. Others, however, are distinct and perhaps linked to references we no longer know. Roberts also takes the closest look at the islands of the atlas, singling out Rhodes and Malta. Rhodes

had long since fallen to the Ottomans (1522) whereas Malta had repelled them (1565). The imagery of the atlas “reinforced a militarized and pious visual rhetoric that connected Fernandino’s Tuscany with both a distant East and a glorious past.” There are eleven full page, high quality color illustrations of this atlas in the back of the book.

The next two papers explore an Ottoman manuscript portolan chart (112x256 cm., 22x44 in.) of the Mediterranean of unknown origin. **Pinar Emiralioglu** notes its exclusively spatial expression of political power was similar to that prevailing in Europe at the time and observes that Ottoman interest was beginning to expand beyond its previous confines. “This particular portolan chart and its presentation of the Mediterranean suggest that the map was part of an extended network of knowledge exchange that became an integral part of the cultural, economic, and political life in the Mediterranean world starting in the second half of the seventeenth-century.”

Her examination of several other cartographic works of this period whose makers are known suggests that this chart, like those, reflect a particularly close relationship between cartographic knowledge and imperial politics of the period. Emiralioglu traces a series of losses and reverses for the Ottoman Empire between 1650 and 1703. She focuses on the Ottoman polymath Katip Celebi as one whose exposure to European maps during diplomatic negotiations led him to shift his approach to that of his adversaries. He translated a Mercator atlas with a Turkish title that emerges as “The Vibrating Rays of Light in the Darkness of the Atlas Minor.” The work of Celebi and his colleagues were the first efforts of Ottoman intellectuals to import cartographic knowledge directly from the West. Emiralioglu places the Ioannou portolan chart in this same vein. She feels it was created between Celebi’s work (1652) and the end of the century.

This is compatible with the article by **Agamemnon Tselikas**. The watermark used in the paper on which it is printed was used between 1662 and 1688. It is on 15 sheets of paper of equal size—three high and five across. It is written in ink and watercolor and contains 842 toponyms of coastal cities, islands, islets, reefs, bays, capes, and river mouths. It was not designed as a nautical chart but a geographic one and is regarded as highly accurate for its day. The style of portraying landforms is reminiscent of that of Piri Reis, but not a copy. There are 48 examples reproduced large enough to study. The unknown mapmaker only commented on about ten places, and those are sometimes odd: “Rome, that is, the Pope.” There is then a 30-page chart of all 842 toponyms. The headings are “original name,” (Turkish in Arabic script) “international name,” and “local name.” They are grouped geographically, e.g., “Spanish-French Coasts,” and “Dalmatian Coast – Croatia – Montenegro – Serbia.” (My first reaction to the chart was “wasted space.” Less than a

day later I had used the chart on two research papers I am writing.) (The Ioannou Foundation has put an interactive version of the mystery portolan on their web site. The URL is <https://www.sylviaioannoufoundation.org/en/36-programmes/275-m0313-chart.html>.)

The final paper, by **Veronica della Dora**, explores the copious marginal notes taken by an unknown French traveler in eighteenth-century Cyprus, written onto a manuscript map copied from Alexander Drummond’s *Travels Through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece and Several Parts of Asia, etc.* (1754). By this time, most Ottoman domains were truly distant lands unvisited by most Europeans travelers; Cyprus was seen as “an impoverished backwater.” Those who ventured that far usually went to Istanbul or Jerusalem. Della Dora argues that this map “speaks a plain rhetoric of truth typical of the Enlightenment” and constitutes “a do-it-yourself traveler’s guide.” The unknown author-traveler made a copy of the map, then heavily annotated (and corrected) it based on personal observation. “Its originality, however, lies less in its attempts at accuracy than in its assemblage-like quality and its materiality.” Della Dora’s essay focuses on the map more as a cultural artifact than a scientific document. She introduces the sources used, then discusses the iconography and annotations, which she feels constitute a very specific way of seeing—not merely Enlightenment but French. Finally, she addresses the physical map and the traveler’s annotations. (Apparently Drummond’s map attracted such use; there are at least two other cases of travelers performed similar annotation.) The focus, then, is on the French traveler’s annotated map, not Drummond’s original. Della Dora notes a surprising absence of “orientalism” in the French author’s remarks. It “transcends its own physical boundaries and illuminates knowledge-making and cartographic authority in eighteenth-century culture.” Most intriguingly, it compels us to think about maps in the literal sense of the word; *mappa, carta, χάρτης*, to focus on the physical object and not merely on representation, not just for what they show but for what they are.”

This is the latest in a series of books originating from conferences of the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation. It maintains the excellent quality set by its predecessors. The books are well edited, well documented, well-illustrated, and printed on heavy, durable paper. Some aspects of this work are quite theoretical; they may be a challenge for the uninitiated (including, at times, this reviewer). That said, there is an abundance of information here that is simply not available elsewhere. This book belongs in any good library dealing with either the history of cartography or that of the Hellenic world.

—**Bert Johnson**’s main map interest is the Mediterranean, especially Greece and the Hellenic world. He is a frequent contributor to this journal.

