



CROSSROADS AFRICA: AFRICAN ENGAGEMENT IN THE MAKING OF EARLY MODERNITY

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ORGANIZED BY INGRID GREENFIELD (I Tatti)
AND CARLO TAVIANI (I Tatti / DHI-Rom)

Focusing on a set of related geographies—West Africa, its Atlantic archipelagos, Ethiopia, and the Italian peninsula— *Crossroads Africa* is a two-day conference that brings together art historians and curators, archaeologists, and historians of political institutions, economics, and the slave trade, interested in crossing historiographical and geographical frontiers to explore how Africans played active roles in shaping global histories (c. 1300-1700) and creating transnational spaces that continue to inform the circulation of people, goods, and ideas today. The conference builds on an exploratory seminar organized by Suzanne Blier (Harvard University), Alina Payne (I Tatti), and Gerhard Wolf (KHI-Florenz) at I Tatti in January 2017, which sought to address the deep and broad relationship between Africa and its continental neighbors, Europe and Asia, from the medieval through the early modern periods.

Crossroads Africa is part of an initiative intended to stimulate and support increased scholarship on cultural exchange with and within the African continent during the early globalization of trade relationships by creating and promoting opportunities for institutional and collegial cross-disciplinary collaboration, particularly between scholars working in African regions and those in European and American institutions.

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IMAGES:


Henricus Martellus, World Map, c. 1490.
Parchment. Add MS 15760,
British Library, London

Master of the Symbolic Execution,
saltcellar, Sapes (formerly Sapi), Sierra Leone,
15th-16th c. Ivory.
Museo Preistorico e Etnografico 'L. Pigorini,' Rome

Watercolor by Bernardino d'Asti, c. 1750
Biblioteca Civica Centrale, Turin

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 **I TATTI**
THE HARVARD UNIVERSITY CENTER
FOR ITALIAN RENAISSANCE STUDIES



CROSSROADS AFRICA: African Engagement *in the* Making of Early Modernity

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

May 20-21 / 2019

I TATTI

Monday, May 20

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME / INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- 9:30 *Coffee*
- 10:00 **ALINA PAYNE** (I Tatti / Harvard University)
INGRID GREENFIELD (I Tatti)
CARLO TAVIANI (I Tatti / DHI-Rom)
Welcome and Introduction

SESSION 1: AFRICAN KINGSHIP

CHAIR: ALINA PAYNE
(I Tatti / Harvard University)

- 10:30 **VERENA KREBS**
(Ruhr-Universität Bochum)
Exotic Others: Flemish Panel Paintings, *Madre della Consolazione* Icons, and Limoges Painted Enamels at the Late Medieval Ethiopian Royal Court
- 11:00 **ROBERTO ZAUGG** (Universität Bern)
The Riches of Olokun: Routes of Red Coral from the Central Mediterranean to Atlantic Africa
- 11:30 *Coffee*
- 11:45 **HERMAN L. BENNETT** (Cuny Graduate Center)
Prelude to *The Prince*: African Sovereign Power in the Fifteenth Century
- 12:15 *Discussion*
- 13:00 *Buffet Lunch*

SESSION 2: MATERIALS IN CONVERSATION

CHAIR: GERHARD WOLF (KHI-Florenz)

- 14:30 **ABIDEMI BABATUNDE BABALOLA**
(Cambridge University)
“Pacheco’s Bead!”: Glass Beads, Atlantic Trade, and Local Agency in the Bight of Benin



- 15:00 **GERARD CHOUIN**
(College of William & Mary)
Glass Beads and Copper Alloys in the Gulf of Guinea, 14th-17th c.: Networks, Innovation, and Change in Early Atlantic Africa
- 15:30 *Discussion*
- 16:00 *Tea*

SESSION 3: TRANSLATIONS, TRANSFORMATIONS, ADAPTATIONS

CHAIR: KATE LOWE
(Queen Mary University of London)

- 16:15 **SARAH GUÉRIN** (University of Pennsylvania)
Medieval Ivory, Material Translations
- 16:45 **KRISTEN WINDMULLER-LUNA** (Brooklyn Museum & Princeton University Art Museum)
The Robes of the Virgin Mary: Global Textile Networks in Ethiopian Christian Painting
- 17:15 *Discussion*

Tuesday, May 21

- 09:45 *Tour of the I Tatti Gardens (for conference speakers & chairs)*

SESSION 4: ON THE SLAVE TRADE AND BEYOND: ATLANTIC AFRICA AND ITALIAN CONTACTS

CHAIR: FRANCESCO GUIDI BRUSCOLI
(Università degli Studi di Firenze)

- 10:30 **ANTÓNIO CORREIA E SILVA**
(Universidade de Cabo Verde)
From Continental Africa to the Cape Verde Islands: Enslavement and Creolization as Sociological Processes
- 11:00 *Coffee*

- 11:15 **DAVID WHEAT** (Michigan State University)
A Genoese-Iberian Slaving Voyage to São Tomé and the Spanish Caribbean, 1526-1527
- 11:45 **CÉCILE FROMONT**
(Yale University)
Material Encounters in Early Modern Atlantic Africa

12:15 *Discussion*

13:00 *Lunch*

SESSION 5: NODES AND CORRIDORS IN THE CIRCULATION OF AFRICAN KNOWLEDGE

CHAIR: AVINOAM SHALEM
(Columbia University)

- 14:30 **KATHLEEN BICKFORD BERZOCK**
(Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University)
A World in a Fragment: Visualizing Trans-Saharan Exchange through Object-Based Comparisons in the Exhibition *Caravans of Gold*
- 15:00 **VERA-SIMONE SCHULZ** (KHI-Florenz)
Objects, Ornaments, and Mosques ‘like in Córdoba’ along the Swahili Coast: Transcultural Aesthetics and the Geopoetics of Coastal East Africa
- 15:30 *Tea*
- 15:45 **SHAMIL JEPPIE**
(University of Cape Town)
Ahmad Baba and Timbuktu at a Crossroads
- 16:15 *Discussion*
- 16:45 *Final Roundtable*
(Mediated by Ingrid Greenfield & Carlo Taviani)

