3.2

GLOBAL IVORIES

Cross-Cultural Appropriations, Dialogues, and (Dis)Connected Art Histories between Europe and South Asia

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Two bearded men stare at us from a finely carved ivory casket. The casket was made in Sri Lanka around 1557 (Figure 3.2.1). Covered in richly textured clothes, each clutching a bagpipe and bending a knee to lift a foot over another, the two figures look both exotic and strangely familiar. Students of art history have seen the pose many times, though with a different finish, and on a different material. The two figures echo, of course, Albrecht Dürer's famous 1514 bagpiper engraving (Figure 3.2.2), a veritable icon of the German Renaissance.[1] The print is widely considered to signal the newly found interest of "Renaissance man" in the realistic rendition of secular, even everyday subjects. But what can the bagpiper be said to mean when it stares at us from a South Asian ivory casket as a "copy" or "adaptation" or "appropriation"? What can it tell us about the societies that produced and consumed such images? Is this still Dürer's bagpiper, or someone else's? What did the image represent in the sixteenth century, and what can it do for us now to further our understanding of the global connections under construction in the sixteenth century? Last, but not least, where does it sit in relation to the politics of global art historical scholarship today?

In this chapter, I will pursue a range of possible responses to such questions, relying for my argumentation on scholarship produced by art historians over the past three decades.[2] Underlying all considerations is the fact that the ivories studied here, like others elsewhere, "resist stable categorization" on multiple fronts.[3] I suggest starting by zooming in on the most basic similarities and differences between the "original" and the "copy", as this matter is not often considered in detail. An ambition of the ivory carver(s) to be truthful to the "original" seems to be confirmed by the painstaking rendering of the bagpiper's fingers and the contrasting surface treatment given to the man's leggings and coat. Simultaneously, a certain willingness to take liberties is revealed by a number of absences: there is no bag hanging from the bagpiper's waist, no buttoned-up slash on the coat's sleeve, and no blowstick for the bagpiper to put his mouth on. There are also additions, most notably to swirls on the man's headgear and, of course, the various figures surrounding the bagpiper, to which we shall return.

We are compelled to ask "why?" on more than one front. Why copy some elements, and why depart from the original on others? Why depart through subtraction, and why depart through addition? Let us address the differences first, by looking at the ivory and

Figure 3.2.1   Sri Lanka ivory carver, front panel of the "Robinson casket", ivory, Sri Lanka, ca. 1557, London, Victoria and Albert Museum. © Victoria & Albert Museum.

Figure 3.2.2   Albrecht Dürer, *The Bagpiper*, engraving, 1514. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

the printed version of the bagpiper figure simultaneously, as the ivory carver himself may indeed have done. There are important discrepancies in the overall shape of the bagpiper, his body being disproportionately wide in comparison with the model, and the left hand coming up to play an instrument that is overall too far up and too far out in relation to the player's center of gravity. Why is this the case? To answer this question, it is important to consider in some detail the practical options that a Lankan ivory carver would have had when working from and with a European print image, or a hand-drawn copy thereof.

The figure on the casket is ca. 7 cm tall as opposed to the ca. 10 cm of the original print, so a reduction occurred at some stage. A potential first step in the transfer of a printed image from paper to ivory might have involved the making of a reduced paper copy to then transpose (trace and engrave) the outlines onto the ivory. But paper was not widely used in Sri Lanka in the mid-sixteenth century. More importantly, one would expect an artist using paper for tracing to have duplicated the exact same shape when creating two symmetric figures in ivory (creating a mirror image effect by simply turning the paper, or an identical second copy, around)—yet the two figures differ. It seems most likely, then, that distortions originated as the image was copied from a paper version onto the ivory surface without tracing. But on what grounds exactly? The notion that perspective and proportion were beyond the abilities or interests of certain Asian artists not trained in these domains is obviously problematic. It may explain some divergences in some instances, but it risks reifying traditions that were in reality dynamic and diverse, and underrating artisans who may have been perfectly capable of experimentation, integration and adaptation at the highest level.

If, as seems likely, the Lankan carver worked the ivory while looking at the original print (perhaps pinned to a wall, laid on the workshop floor, or even held between the carver's own toes, as documented for nineteenth- and twentieth-century workshop practice), the distortions could be down to the constraints placed on line modelling by the material itself. To carve even high-quality ivory such as that brought from East Africa to Sri Lanka in the sixteenth century requires more force and allows for shorter movements than those of an engraver working on a metal plate.[4] The tools being slightly less subtle means that long, elegantly curved, elongated lines become nearly impossible to produce. Instead, a carver might make thicker, shorter lines or strings of little pearl-like spheres.

Mid- and high-relief carving does, of course, also present at least one significant advantage over two-dimensional drawings and prints: it produces, by definition, material volumes, the illusion of which is exactly what many artists working on paper or a metal plate attempt to achieve by deploying patterned lines, dashes and dots. To give volume to the bagpiper's calves, for example, the carver did not need to add a pattern of lines simulating shade because he had already created two round-bossed volumes similar to human legs. In this sense, then, the surface modelling of the bagpipe in the ivory version is intriguing because it seems pictorially unnecessary. Did the carver believe that the bag was made of a furry or otherwise rough material? Was the carver here falling back into a "traditional" Lankan habit of not leaving large surfaces blank, a profusion of carving being considered key to adding value to the object on grounds of the skill and time invested? Or did he attempt to somehow emulate Dürer's line pattern while working in ivory? One could argue that, where Dürer attempted a mimesis, on paper, of a bagpipe's shape and material, the ivory carver pursued a mimesis of Dürer's line drawing—a fascinating prospect.

But if this was the case, then it is also important to note the waviness of the lines in the ivory version, along with the division of the field into two autonomous parts separated from each other by the chanter, which ends up creating an effect of two volumes, instead

of a single, air-filled bag. The pattern of the coat, too, while reproducing the shoulder piece with its fringe in painstaking detail, departs from the model quite overtly. Where Dürer had represented a sharply tailored single-piece attire, the Lankan artist created a drapery effect—possibly closer to the structure of dresses used in Kotte at the time, although there are no other visual sources to confirm this. Was this done consciously, then, to "localize" the figure? Or was it simply the way the carver felt compelled, on grounds of their training, to render the notion of a human's upper body covered in garment? Between these two options, the difference may seem subtle, but if the former were true, this would allow us to think more openly about conscious, deliberate agency, than when assuming the latter.

Further questions arise, of course, from a major difference in the treatment of the space surrounding the bagpiper. Dürer's slender tree, so important for the way the original image creates an aura of quotidian and physical plausibility, is absent from the composition on the casket. Was it considered unnecessary, or even inappropriate? And where Dürer left blank spaces to allow for the human figure and the tree to stand out, the anonymous Sri Lankan carver has introduced a number of animated figures, both human and zoomorphic. No detailed reading of these exists so far. They may be involved in the scene as moving to the bagpiper's tune, or they may be performing a function altogether different. It has been suggested that the bagpiper's posture "recalls" the postures of some deities, including Krishna, in South Asian art, and that the themes of music making and dancing deserve further exploration. Since such themes were already present in religious buildings in Sri Lanka from the twelfth century onward, Dürer's image could have been appropriated by a Lankan carver precisely because the posture and performed action were "recognizable". As Sujatha Meegama, the scholar who has made this point, reveals, her own inspiration to think about the ways that "foreign motifs could resonate with local motifs" in Sri Lankan architecture has come from work on ivory carving in New Spain and West Africa.[5]

Apart from aesthetic qualities, it is also crucial to clarify the political and social functions of the casket. That it ambitioned to impress visually is beyond doubt, as is the fact that its intrinsic material value (based on the price of ivory and the visible amount of skilled labor that has gone into its making) was transferrable between Asia and Europe. This was not, however, merely an object traded for its aesthetic and material value in the context of the widening global commerce of luxuries.[6] It was a diplomatic gift, made to serve as a visual and material supplement to a set of verbal diplomatic communications (letters written in the Lankan capital of Kotte and orations uttered in Lisbon).[7] Whilst we cannot be certain about the date of fabrication of each individual ivory plate, the casket as a whole is thought to have been assembled at the royal workshop of Kotte, the center of Sri Lanka's eponymous southwestern lowland kingdom, early in 1557.[8] It is most likely that the iconographic program of the casket was overseen by courtiers, or even the Sinhalese king himself.

The casket was sent, according to dominant consensus, to the Portuguese royal court at Lisbon in order to celebrate the renewal of an alliance between King Dharmapala of Kotte (r. 1551–97) and King John III of Portugal.[9] The occasion would have been the conversion to Catholicism of Dharmapala, which is known to have occurred around Christmas 1556. The Sinhalese ruler, who took the name *Dom João* in honor of his Portuguese patron, accepted to continue his vassalage to the overlord John III (*Dom João III*) of Portugal, thus renewing an alliance that had begun to take shape since the first visit of the Portuguese to the island in 1506. The key political message of the casket was that, under the banner of the newly embraced Christian faith, the Sinhalese king was entwining his and his realm's destinies with those of the Portuguese monarchy.[10]

The most important and explicit images in this regard were placed on the two short ends or sides of the casket and on the back panel, rather than the front, where the two bagpipers appeared. The side panels were less immediately visible but, offered slightly larger surfaces for single scenes (Figure 3.2.3). On one side, the carver adapted a Tree of Jesse from a print by the German-born Thielmann Kerver, first made in Paris in 1499. Here, too, we could start by examining the similarities and differences in detail, an operation I now leave to the reader to perform in order to move swiftly to other considerations. The bagpiper, we ought to remind ourselves, was duplicated and mirrored on the casket's front panel, creating a sense of visual balance and, because of the inherently festive associations attached to the musical instruments, a welcoming atmosphere for a Portuguese observer. Together, they may have acted as auspicious or guardian figures.[11] The two sidepieces functioned in tandem, too, but at a different level. To begin with, it is physically impossible to see them together simultaneously. In order to compare one and the other, one needs to hold the casket and turn it back and forth or, in a modern museum setting, walk around it.

Add to these challenges the interpretive pitfalls created by Renaissance art history as a discipline long focused on Europe, and this creates a perfect environment for fundamental misunderstandings to occur. The first pitfall is to do with the historical archive and the scholarly apparatus surrounding objects. As pointed out by Sujatha Meegama, the very fact that we know the names of painters, engravers and even some ivory carvers in sixteenth-century Europe creates a stark contrast with most Asian and African settings, were no such information is available. The named, white, male artist from Europe thus shines as an individual in contrast to an army of anonymous global majority craftspeople working in often poorly known workshops elsewhere.

Dürer's and Kerver's compositions are thus original creations of artists we can engage with as individuals, as men of their time, as print entrepreneurs living in specific places, whereas with the "copies" we need to work out the rationality of their makers through

Figure 3.2.3   Tree of Jesse on the "Robinson casket", ca. 1557. © Victoria & Albert Museum.

the images themselves, constantly pushing back against the notion of senseless copying, or indeed some vague "hybridization" detached from artistic or political rationales.[12] Attached to this challenge has been the misleading but widespread notion that much of what the carvers produced on these caskets when *not* "copying" European models was purely ornamental. In fact, this problem can be observed at two levels. The bagpiper and the Tree of Jesse on the casket can themselves be seen as ornament in the sense that their nameless copyist(s) may not have understood the full meaning bestowed upon the originals by their European creators.[13] The chronological compositeness, too, can easily be read by historians of European art as decontextualizing and reassembling images randomly, regardless of their original moment of production (1499 and 1514) in a seemingly unrelated later context (1557). But above all, some older scholarship erred rather spectacularly in assuming that vegetal and animal motives such as vines and creatures sitting on them were devoid of a meaning of their own.

As shown by Meegama, this is simply wrong. Art historians here need to step decidedly beyond the notion that certain images carry a meaning more worthy of scholarly attention than others, especially if the former are predominantly European, and the latter from elsewhere. On one end of the casket, then, the Sri Lankan carver or carvers produced an image directly inspired by Kerver's Tree of Jesse (Figure 3.2.3). On the other (Figure 3.2.4), they produced a finely carved set of auspicious vines known as *Kalpavrksha* or *Kalpalata*. Crucially, the latter was not simply an ornament, a sign that the Lankan side possessed nothing equivalent to the imagery of European art. Where one panel had Jesse, the other had two lions (animals signaling royalty) with a type of head known as *makara* (a symbol of creation). Where the Kerver-inspired image had a tree with branches supporting the various kings of the dynasty connecting David and Jesus, the Lankan counterpart placed vines forming a "wishing tree" that, instead of kings, held up a series of auspicious animals. These animals may have pointed to the previous lives of the Buddha along with the various

Figure 3.2.4   Wishing Tree on "Robinson casket", ca. 1557. © Victoria & Albert Museum.

vehicles of Hindu gods and goddesses. And where the Tree of Jesse culminated in an image of the Virgin from whose womb the new king was born, the auspicious vines lead up to a bird figure. Associations were possibly at play with the old iconography of Brahma seated on a lotus emerging from a reclining Vishnu, which in turn place emphasis on water, an element with rich associations in both Buddhism and Christianity. In sum, where European art historians once saw "random" or merely "decorative" South Asian motives filling the space not occupied by European motives, we can now observe two comparably dense and complex images, and they can be said to have been "in dialogue" with each other.[14]

Together, these images belong both to the European Renaissance and to something else for which there is no widely accepted designation. We may be looking at something like a "South Asian early modernity", but scholars of South Asian art might also quite simply continue using the label "Kotte style", perhaps reloading it in the face of new research as a phenomenon with transcontinental reach. One could then speculate that this "Global Kotte style" and the "Global Renaissance" functioned in the sixteenth century as mutually inspiring, intersecting, interdependent manifestations of shared visual developments. Such nuances matter. In a recent, well-intentioned and overall helpful examination of the "Global Renaissance", three historians have mentioned how, in their view, Catholic missionaries "brought religious images [to other parts of the world] because of their content, but these images provoked interest on account of their style".[15] This now reeks of paternalism lest we add, emphatically, that a preoccupation with style *is* a matter of substance. All forms carry some meaning, and all meanings should matter to historians and historians of art alike.

The quest for meanings inherent to forms formerly dismissed as minor or marginal is a crucial point that can bind art history and political history together in new ways. Form and style matter in politics. To adopt a distant society's artistic conventions, or even just a single element of the other's visual or material world, is not simply a capricious whim of the moment detached from the more serious business of running a state; it is *a part of* the business of running a state, a deeply political gesture with wide-ranging political implications. Nor is the bagpiper figure on a Sri Lankan casket merely because Europeans fancied having it there. It is there because a South Asian power elite that attracted Europeans to its realm deliberately also chose to adopt some European images.[16] For us to recognize the political relevance of matters previously dismissed as merely superficial, ornamental, even meaningless or devoid of a particular rationality is the first step toward rethinking the master narrative of European expansion. The goal here becomes to understand image transfers and the making of a global pool of images as part of multicentric processes, where agency is not just in the hands of one group of people "expanding" across the globe but also of many others "attracting" people, ideas and images into their own societies.

Once the dialogical dimension of the appropriation of images is established, it becomes both legitimate and productive to seek out correspondences and nuances, and to offer complex, not just complicated, readings of the iconographic programs of objects such as the Sri Lankan ivory caskets. Two fields on the rear panel of the "Robinson" casket present the Betrothal of Mary and the Rest on the Flight to Egypt.[17] But why the Betrothal and not, for example, the Annunciation? Was there a more secular implication to the former, making it more digestible to the Lankan side in the context of an alliance-building exercise, and thus more likely to be employed as a visual cue to support a diplomatic message? Perhaps. And why the Flight to Egypt? Might it have signaled how Dharmapala, now calling himself *Dom João*, felt threatened as he moved from one religion to another? Or was Dharmapala, on the contrary, keen to style himself as a man protecting the beginnings of Catholicism

in the island, where it could not thrive without his favor? Again, what does the prominent display of auspicious vines and animals tell us about the Lankan desire to establish correspondences between the destinies of two distinct religious worlds? Why not combine the vines with human royal figures to create a more evident visual and conceptual bridge between cultures? Was there a deliberate choice not to do so? Did a carver not feel properly skilled to deviate so far from his habitual artistic praxis? Why?

These questions may bring us back to the bagpiper, too. Would this figure have carried a specific message (say, the vassal king being like an instrument in the hands of his overlord), or might the figure simply have signaled Lankan openness to European culture, at the level of what cultural analysts call the "third order myth"—an image representing music making, but also the image and the music making together representing a certain predisposition to dialogue, a certain cosmopolitan quality of Lankan society. But then again, it seems crucial to think about the bagpiper embedded in the larger scene he is part of, sharing space with animals and mythical creatures pointing to a Lankan imaginary, the details of which scholars still fail to grasp in this case. Did the figures together signal the possibility of the two cultures playing, almost literally, to each other's tune? Or should the composition be read more hierarchically, with an oversized European man producing sound that pervades the world of smaller beings around him. How can we even know whether the other human figures were meant to represent Lankan or Portuguese people?

All these questions can be asked with regard to the society that produced the casket, and then asked again with Portugal and other parts of Europe in mind, because of course these caskets traveled and, having traversed the oceans, then stayed in the West to this day. It is important at this stage not to stop and celebrate early modern connectivity prematurely. There appears a strong tension when engaging with an object like the 1557 casket between interpretations that emphasize the ability of Asians and Europeans to understand each other, as opposed to those that focus on differences and misunderstandings. All interpretations of this object need, naturally, to be grounded as firmly in historical contextualization as in iconography, and the historical context is not always as positive and enticing as the images it produced. As Ananda Cohen-Aponte has pointed out, art-historical terms like the "Global Renaissance" may "succeed in breaking free of anachronistic boundary-policing of artistic practices", but simultaneously "gloss over the distinct economic, cultural, and above all, colonial conditions under which the Renaissance's global products manifested themselves". Whilst this comment targets specifically the study of art produced in colonial Latin America, it is relevant even for Asian contexts that are less overtly "colonial".[18]

Contextualization, in its turn—the practice of reading an object with the help of the specific political and social conditions in which it was made or moved—poses challenges because there is often no single, uncontroversial interpretation of those conditions. In the case that has been the focus of this chapter, historians have often lacked subtlety, either emphasizing the relatively peaceful, commercial tenets of Portuguese activities in Sri Lanka or reading interactions as an outright "clash of civilizations". The Portuguese were, it is true, comparatively reluctant interlopers for some time. In the decades that followed their arrived on the island in 1506, it was the power elites of Kotte that pulled the Portuguese into local warfare and political struggles. They reached out to the Portuguese diplomatically, offering material goods—cinnamon, precious stones, elephants, cash and, increasingly, ivories—to elicit military services. They did not mind appearing as vassals paying tribute to a distant overlord as long as the latter committed to supporting them militarily in a highly competitive local and regional political environment. Up to 1594, when the first

Captain-General of the Conquest of Ceylon arrived in Colombo, Sri Lanka was more "Native Ground" than "Middle Ground" or "Colonial Ground".[19] It is better compared with parts of North America and West Africa not conquered by Europeans until the eighteenth or nineteenth century than with colonial Mexico or Peru.

The art produced in such contexts may be better described as pre-colonial or proto-colonial rather than colonial. One interesting implication of "proto-colonial", not a widely used term, is that agency can be explicitly located on the indigenous side of interactions, but without losing sight of the overall direction of travel (Europeans aggressively traveling the world, while few Asian, Africans and Americans made it to Europe, and never in a concerted effort to dominate). For example, on a Lankan ivory casket sent to Lisbon in 1541 and today in Munich, we can see a coronation ceremony as imagined by the Lankan elite, and that historians believe actually to have taken place at the Portuguese royal court in 1542. The Portuguese monarch John III placed a Lankan crown on the head of a Lankan prince, a remarkable gesture in that it was not part of courtly ceremonial in Portugal itself, where kings were acclaimed.[20] Such a scene suggests that the Lankan elite had political influence in its exchanges with the Lisbon court. But how sustainable was such a projection of power?

With the advent of "connected history" at the end of the 1990s, and an explicit critique of the notion of cultural incommensurability from the early 2000s, a new sense emerged among early modernists that the courtly elites of Europe and Asia, and to some extent also Africa and America, had the ability to engage proactively in veritable dialogues.[21] It is in this framework that many art historians and curators have re-framed early modern materials especially in public-facing contexts, sometimes overstretching the notions of cosmopolitanism, commensurability, communication and connectivity. We need to remind ourselves, then, that exchanges such as those surrounding the Sri Lankan ivory caskets occurred within a hierarchically ordered world. King Buvanekabahu VII, even at the height of his authority, was still asking John III for a renewal of his vassalage. The Sinhalese monarch sent the "coronation casket" and obtained positive responses to some of the written requests made by his ambassador, but many propositions were ignored. Bhuvanekabahu VII remained a Buddhist and even styled himself as an emperor in the *cakravartin* tradition, but pressure on him to adapt to the exigencies of being a vassal to a Catholic overlord mounted.

After he was killed by a Portuguese soldier in 1551, purportedly in a hunting accident, his successor Dharmapala ended up taking baptism in 1557—as celebrated on the "Robinson" casket. During the crisis of 1551, the holiest place of Theravada Buddhism, the Temple of the Buddha's Tooth at Kotte, was sacked by the Portuguese. An inventory of stolen objects was made, only to fall into oblivion in a Lisbon archive.[22] The temple itself was destroyed, as were many other religious buildings on the island during the second half of the sixteenth century. To the Sri Lankan public today, the episodes invoked by high-end ivory caskets—all but one of which remain in western collections—is bittersweet. There is pride in the artistic achievements and global projection of Lankan ivory carving workshops, but also trauma and a deep sense of material and moral loss. The absent ivories have been made to speak to and for the ruined temples of the island.[23]

Such facts do not suggest that the playing field was entirely level, or that we today are in a position to discursively produce a level playing field for the purposes of celebrating early global connections.[24] The fact that the casket was transferred into a Catholic society that saw itself as standing hierarchically above the society that produced it puts pressure on readings of the casket's iconography as signaling dialogue. This should urge scholars

to keep querying the vocabulary they use (including words such as "encounter", "connection", "dialogue" and "hybridization"). Whilst a positive message regarding the possibility of societies communicating across the continents is doubtless of value, the politics attached to an overemphasis on connectivity can be problematic. They may contribute to de-politicized narratives about the past, which often serve the interests of groups unwilling to support nuanced, critical academic work. The Global Renaissance is at its best as a concept when it includes the possibility of exploring the origins of global power hierarchies.

It is possible to argue, today, for the development of an explicitly critical and controversial "(dis)connective" method in history and art history.[25] Such an approach engages with the legacies of the past by seeking out the contradictory forces shaping them from the moment they were made up to the present in which we speak. Ivory caskets such as the ones here analyzed can signal both communication and miscommunication. They highlight the simultaneity and the often inextricable intertwinement of forces of integration and disintegration, of convergence and divergence, of creation and destruction. In this sense, these objects necessarily remind us of the contradictions of our own condition. Early modernists do not work in a political vacuum. When it comes to "global" objects such as the Sri Lankan caskets currently in western collections, the stakes are particularly high and the potential for productive, critical engagements particularly strong.

Notes

1 See Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, revised edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

2 Above all, Amin Jaffer and Melanie Anne Schwabe, "A Group of Sixteenth-Century Ivory Caskets from Ceylon", *Apollo* 445 (1999): 3–14; Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and Johannes Beltz, *Elfenbeine aus Ceylon: Luxusgüter für Katharina von Habsburg (1507–1578)* (Zurich: Museum Rietberg, 2010); Sujatha Arundhati Meegama, "The Local and the Global: The Multiple Visual Worlds of Sixteenth-Century Sri Lanka", in *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History*, ed. Alan Strathern and Zoltán Biedermann (London: UCL Press, 2017), 113–40. See also Robert S. Nelson, "Appropriation," *Critical Terms for Art History*, 2nd ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

3 See Stephanie Porras, "Locating Hispano-Philippine Ivories," *Colonial Latin American Review*, 29, no. 2 (2020): 282.

4 On ivory art in general, see *Terrible Beauty. Elephant—Human—Ivory*, ed. by Alberto Saviello et al. (Oxford: Blackwell and Hirmer, 2021).

5 Sujatha Arundhati Meegama, "Albrecht Dürer in Sri Lanka: A 16th-Century Ivory-Carver's Encounter with a European Print", in *Sri Lanka. Connected Art Histories*, ed. S. A. Meegama (Mumbai: Marg, 2017), 85–89 (78–93). Also see Angelica J. Afanador-Pujol, "The Tree of Jesse and the 'Relación de Michoacan': Mimicry in Colonial Mexico", *The Art Bulletin* 92, no. 4 (December 2010): 293–307; Kate Lowe, "Made in Africa: West African Luxury Goods for Lisbon's Markets," in *The Global City: On the Streets of Renaissance Lisbon*, ed. Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and K. J. P. Lowe (London: Paul Holberton, 2015), 163–77.

6 See for example Giorgio Riello and Anne Gerritsen, eds., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the First Global Age* (London: Routledge, 2015).

7 Zoltán Biedermann, "Diplomatic Ivories: Sri Lankan Caskets and the Portuguese-Asian Exchange in the Sixteenth Century", in *Global Gifts. The Material Culture of Diplomacy in Early Modern Eurasia*, eds. Z. Biedermann, Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 88–118.

8 Jaffer and Schwabe, "A Group of Sixteenth-Century Ivory Caskets".

9 This is plausible, though not consensual; see Annemarie Jordan and Hugo Miguel Crespo, *The "Pangolin Fan". An Imperial Ivory Fan from Ceylon* (Buenos Aires: Jaime Eguiguren, 2022). Meegama, "The Local and the Global", 130, is also critical.

10 Biedermann, "Diplomatic Ivories".

11 Meegama, "Albrecht Dürer in Sri Lanka".

12 On the deeper problems of "hybridity", again a term that may yet make a comeback if duly reconstructed, see Carolyn Dean and Dana Leibsohn, "Hybridity and Its Discontents: Considering Visual Culture in Colonial Spanish America", *Colonial Latin American Review* 12, no. 1 (2003): 5–35.

13 Nuno Vassallo e Silva, "'Ingenuity and Excellence': Ivory Art in Ceylon," in *Ivories in the Portuguese Empire*, ed. Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Jean Michel Massing and Nuno Vassallo e Silva (Lisbon: Scribe, 2013), 89–141, in particular p. 99.

14 Meegama, "The Local and the Global", 132–33.

15 Peter Burke, Luke Clossey and Felipe Fernández-Armesto, "The Global Renaissance", *Journal of World History* 28, no. 1 (March 2017): 29 (1–30).

16 Biedermann, "Diplomatic Ivories".

17 Images are available online at https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O18316/the-robinson-casket-casket-unknown/, last accessed July 21, 2022.

18 Ananda Cohen-Aponte, "Decolonizing the Global Renaissance: A View from the Andes", in *The Globalization of Renaissance Art: A Critical Review*, ed. Daniel Savoy (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 71 (67–94).

19 Zoltán Biedermann, *(Dis)connected Empires. Imperial Portugal, Sri Lankan Diplomacy, and the Making of a Habsburg Conquest in Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

20 On the "coronation casket" see Biedermann, "Diplomatic Ivories", 90–98.

21 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia", *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–62 and "Par-delà l'incommensurabilité: pour une histoire connectée des empires aux temps modernes", *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine*, n° 54, 4bis (2007), 34–53.

22 Hugo Miguel Crespo, "The Plundering of the Ceylonese Royal Treasury, 1551–1553: Its Character, Cost, and Dispersal", in *Gems in the Early Modern World: Materials, Knowledge and Global Trade, 1450–1800*, ed. Michael Bycroft (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 35–64.

23 Meegama, "The Local and the Global".

24 Cohen-Aponte, "Decolonizing the Global Renaissance", 71; Zoltán Biedermann, "(Dis)connected History and the Multiple Narratives of Global Early Modernity", *Modern Philology* 119, no. 1 (2021): 13–32.

25 Biedermann, "(Dis)connected History".

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