

the reader to the widespread significance of images of nature within Renaissance manuscripts by focusing on works from a single collection.

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Gardens of Renaissance Europe and the Islamic Empires: Encounters and Confluences. Mohammad Gharipour, ed.

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Cultural exchange between Europe and the Islamic world in the early modern period has received increasing scholarly attention in recent years, particularly with respect to architecture and the decorative arts. Cross-cultural and comparative studies offer a necessary remedy to the Eurocentric bias that downplayed the role of the East in revolutionary changes that shaped Western Europe during the long Renaissance, which stretched from the fifteenth into the seventeenth century. Gardens and landscapes have not, for the most part, received the same attention as their architectonic and material counterparts—with the notable exception of plants, the core ingredient of the material culture of gardens. Mohammad Gharipour's edited volume takes a brave and critical step toward filling this lacuna in the literature. Framed by a preface, prologue, and epilogue by Gharipour, D. Fairchild Ruggles, and Anatole Tchikine, respectively, this volume offers eight essays that explore the gardens and landscapes of the Ottomans in Turkey, the Safavids in Persia, and the Mughals in India. It is a volume that asks questions, raises possibilities, and suggests connections. With respect to reciprocal exchanges of artistic and intellectual ideas between Europe and the three Islamic empires, definitive conclusions are few. Instead, the authors lay the groundwork for a new generation of scholarship in landscape studies that remains to be realized.

As both Fairchild Ruggles and Tchikine note in their essays, which act as powerful bookends to the volume, the most concrete evidence for cross-cultural exchange lies in the areas of botany and horticulture. Tracing the movement of seeds, botanical specimens, and people—gardeners and specialists in particular—yields fruitful evidence of cross-cultural contact and, often, cultural fusion. This is nowhere clearer than in Laurent Paya's essay, "The Art of Garden Design in France: Ottoman Influences at the time of the 'Scandalous Alliance.'" Paya describes the gradual displacement of Italian gardeners in France—whose gardens Neapolitans had tended in the fifteenth century—by Moorish Ottoman gardeners. During the reign of Francis I, furthermore, French naturalists such as Pierre Belon traveled to the Levant. Aristocratic patrons, even those who never set foot outside of France, were schooled in the texts of antiquity, such as Theophrastus, which awakened them to the wonders of exotic plants and trees. That princely patrons in the sixteenth century were eager to import and acclimatize rare

plants and other natural wonders to European soil is a critical theme of the entire volume. Whether in France or elsewhere in Europe, such as Venice or Portugal, addressed in compelling essays by Christopher Pastore and Cristina Castel-Branco, prerequisites for cross-cultural exchange include patrons, designers, and climates that are receptive. The right conditions contribute to the production of new garden culture, often generated from an intermingling of the ancient (Romano-Byzantine or Persian), the Eastern, and the Western. It is important to note that *exchange* means just that—a reciprocal transmission of culture. Both Gharipour, in “The Gardens of Safavid Isfahan and Renaissance Italy: A New Urban Landscape?” and Ebba Koch, in “Carved Pools, Rock-Cut Elephants, Inscriptions, and Tree Columns: Mughal Landscape Art as Imperial Expression and its Analogies to the Renaissance Garden,” point to the possible role Italian garden concepts played in Safavid and Mughal landscapes, though in each case, as in other essays in this volume, the authors underscore the notion of analogy over direct influence.

Gharipour’s volume is replete with tantalizing tidbits, such as the role of Turkish slaves at the Villa d’Este, Tivoli, in the era of Ippolito d’Este. We know about the role of pressed labor at Pratolino in the sixteenth century from the work of Suzanne Butters. However, Simone Kaiser, in her essay “Staging the Civilizing Element in the Gardens of Rome and Istanbul,” has used a local Tiburtine history to unearth new information about a garden whose soil scholars may have wrongly believed was thoroughly sifted. That said, many of the essays in this volume would have benefited from deeper reading in the literature of the Italian garden and landscape—including, but not limited to, the work of Laurie Olin on the *vigna* at the Villa Madama, Francis Gage on the search for fresh air, and Raffaella Fabretti Gianetto on the gardens and landscapes of the Medici villas in Tuscany. For this reason, I employed the word *brave* at the outset of this review. There are few who are brave enough to forge radically new pathways. For this, the authors represented in Gharipour’s volume should be amply commended.

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Emblems and the Natural World. Karl A. E. Enenkel and Paul J. Smith, eds. *Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture* 50. Leiden: Brill, 2017. xxxiv + 666 pp. \$253.

The signs of spring are all around me as I write this review. After what felt like an interminable winter, the tulips have begun to emerge, and the first robin has appeared. Since we read the changing of the seasons by signs, it is hardly surprising that emblems, a genre that blends the visual, textual, and symbolic so tightly, would draw their