

5. ANTONIO MANUTIUS THE AMAZING

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ABSTRACT:

An unconventional research about a disappeared, intentionally forgotten, author, that was the first to publish @ typographic sign in a book, early inventor of the hypertext, Inquisition trucker, through his unsigned, encrypted works, a thousand times copied, never equaled, staying as mysteries in world's History. The only two original books are conserved in secondary libraries in Europe. They both reveal linguistic and poetic treasures but not only, thought it indicates the exact location of various real treasures, such as the Templar's. Who was Antonio Manutius? Discover how the Venetian prince of edition turns a Zaid Shiite Muslim, caught as a slave on-board writer on Suleiman the Magnificent armada's odyssey on Red & Arabian seas

At school or in editorial ambiances, I never heard of Venetian Manutius family and Aldine, their editorial house. Nevertheless, this Venice family invented around the end of the 15th century many editorial and literary ideas we still use on a daily basis today: editorial committee, italic typography, pocketbook, comic, rules for modern Italian, etc. They also brought back and translated lost Greek philosophy, invented the "Parallel Bible" with Erasmus (in Aramean and Latin), the first European novel (*Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*), which was copied all over Europe, influencing Miguel de Cervantes, Rabelais and Thomas More, among others. Antonio Manutius, a super-gifted child born in the intellectually bubbling Aldine house alongside

professors Erasmus, Vesalius and Luca Paoli, spoke 10 languages, and was a born translator who probably translated many of Cicerone's works published by Aldine. He was the Manutius family' beloved black sheep who was at the vanguard of European publishing: he was the first to publish a table of contents in a book, he invented arobase typographic sign and he can be considered, thanks to his marginalias, as the early precursor of hypertext.

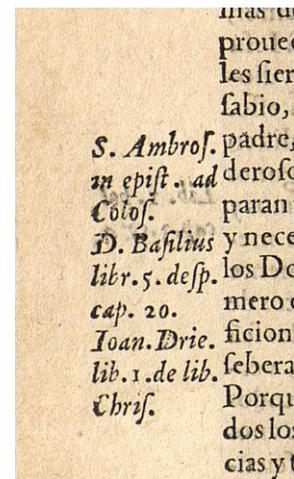
It was when I translated "*Topography and General History of Algiers*" (1612) that I became most aware that the savant references contained in its surprisingly modern marginalias had been published (some, for the first time in History, as Aristotle's *Politikos*)

in Aldine, Venice. The most surprising thing is French (Berbrugger), in their pitiful 1870 French version, plainly suppressed the savant comments leaving only the fakes ones at the beginning, which were meant to ridicule Catholic Inquisition' censors, thereby getting accustomed used to marginalias' inanity. Marginalias are much more than monk's notes in a manuscript, from which they're inspired. At times, cyphered content changes the whole meaning of the text, and even of the whole book, as the ones referring to Hermes Trismegistus (that clearly show "*Topography and General History of Algiers*" can't have been written by a Catholic scholar or lettered priest).

Apparently only one book in the world can be considered as the original one, and it's conserved in *Biblioteca de Catalunya* as a non-commercial proof designated to the co-author, Hassan Pacha Veneziano, king of Algiers, who hand-corrected it (even the repeated letters). But the book stayed in Algiers, until a French army found it when looting and sacking the city in 1830. They translated it into French and sold the original book to a Catalan book collector, thinking their 1870 French version of a 1612 Spanish text would stay the only one publicly available forever.

They were almost helped by Spanish dictator Franco who after the Civil War claimed all Catalan books from Library of Catalonia to join Simancas National Library. The Catalan response had been for 60 years to hide the books in private libraries. This book heroism is unique in world's History. I read the book in the reserve area of the Library of Catalonia in 1997, after they re-opened the library to the public in 1996, 60 years after it had been closed for political reasons.

**ANTONIO MANUTIUS'S
MARGINALIAS IN « TOPOGRAPHY
AND GENERAL HISTORY OF
ALGIERS »**



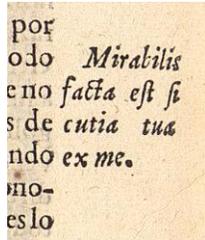
In this masterpiece « *Topography and general History of Algiers* » (1612), there is a special element that attracted my attention from the beginning, an obvious editorial novelty. Marginalias or margin notes, until then, in

sparse writings and biblical texts were used to emphasize points, sometimes accompanied with hand drawings. Pierre de Fermat used them in 1637 claiming in the marginalia it was difficult to demonstrate an algebra problem to fit into the marginalia. Later on, Edgar Allan Poe published in 1849 a reflections book titled Marginalia. But, among other things, Antonio Manutius's margin notes, encrypted and difficult to resolve, were used to hide away texts and authors from the Spanish Inquisition (the book was prepared to be published in Spain), giving a new sense to the text and offering a dense historical background, which was almost undetectable for those unable to decipher those notes- for example Joan. Drie.lib.1 to designate Johannes Driedo, from the Louvain University, Luther's friend and participant to the Trent Council-. Sometimes those notes are also used to reestablish historical truths and even to denounce copying or appropriations. It means Saint Ambrosius of Milan is the author of «*Epistle to Colossians*», chap 12 of New Testament, commonly attributed to Saint Peter, a truth totally contradictory to the Roman Catholic Church official version that completely escaped Inquisition censors. A Catholic scholar told me it was maybe Saint Ambrosius citing Saint Peter. But when he cites authors

that cited other authors, normally Antonio Manutius includes the sign @ (at).

On the top of it, the third main function of those marginalias is to turn *Topography and General History of Algiers* into an endless book that could only be understood by reading all the other classical texts mentioned, the true hypertext's ancestor. The great irony is that the text being possible to read without those marginalia as well as with all those fabulous extensions, that ingenious ploy almost provoked its ruin. So many savant subtilities didn't please French military, when they invaded Algeria in 1830 and stole all the books they could, among them, *Topography and General History of Algiers*. They made a translation with modifications (true censorship), published in 1870 and obliged Algerians to learn that truncated, incomprehensible story, at mandatory level schools. French military authorities could not understand those savant marginalias, so they plainly suppressed them thereby promoting a cut-off History for Argelia. Afterwards, to be sure to be considered as the only reliable version, they sold at an excellent price the original book to a Catalan businessmen and book collectors. Back home, Isidre Bonsomns I Sicart founded the Biblioteca de Catalunya in 1915 (closed during 20th C. because of

dictatorship in Spain) and that's where I read the book in 1997.



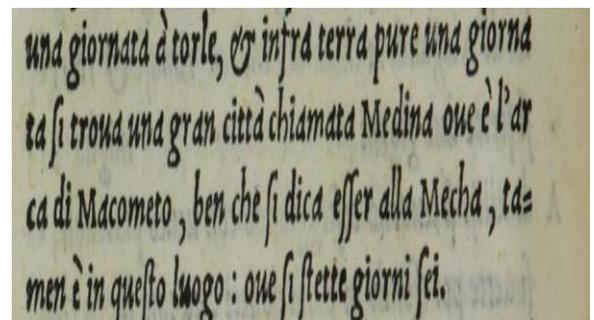
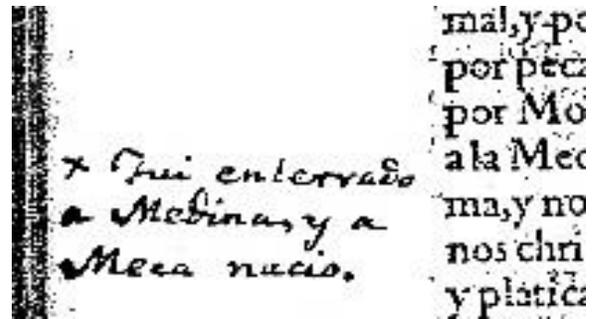
Miguel de Cervantes. That's what he says (in Latin) to his master Hassan Pacha Veneziano aka Antonio Manutius and its library « *Your marvelous knowledge made me admirable* », Barcelona's university lemma. This marginalia refers to the following text: « *It is obvious the main miracle man is ever able to perform, is being a man.* »

Fred Romano 2018

After identifying Hassan Pacha Veneziano through its Algiers library, I wanted to know a bit more about so discreet a genius. Who was Antonio Manutius? Will the books he published give me the key to understand him? I managed to get "*Trip from Venice to Tana, Persia, India and Constantinopli*" from the Library of Florence. Having just translated « *Topography and general History of Algiers* »' last treaty in Marabouts' Dialogue, I realized this final chapter was in fact the real beginning of the book. So, I tried the same technique with "*Trip from Venice to Tana,*

Persia, India and Constantinopli" and that way found a book within a book that does not appear in the table of contents. The beginning of his very long trip around the world: "*Trip from Alexandria to India*" shows how Antonio Manutius is captured as a slave in 1537 November, in Alexandria and used as on-board writer by Suleiman the Magnificent as his armada heads to Diu, India.

A definitive, unique and amazing proof of Antonio Manutius' authorship



In 1539, Antonio Manutius aka Hassan Veneziano, as Suleiman's armada cleans all the pirate ports around Jeddah, noted in "*Trip from Alexandria to India*" the belief Mahoma (Macometo) was buried in Mecca and corrects

that statement, writing "*he's buried in Medina even if he's said to be buried in Mecca*".

In 1612, Antonio Manutius aka Hassan Pacha Veneziano, had left the throne to his son and in "*Topography and General History of Algiers*", printed in Spain, thanks his accomplice the slave Miguel de Cervantes. He sent him to Algiers to correct a first proof, a non-commercial book with the integral text and no taxes page. This is the unique book that finally ended in Barcelona's library of Catalonia. One of the many corrections he did in Spanish was "*he's buried in Medina and was born in Mecca*". This phrase isn't in the printed text but hand-written, which means the Library of Catalonia possesses a world-unique treasure.

I tried through Algerian and Italian sources to find other samples of his handwriting but failed. This coincidence of contents can only be seen as a proof (along with all the other ones).

The publication of "*Viaggi fatti da Vinetia...*" provoked an enormous scandal in Venice; Catholic church forced Aldine Press to publish another book from a friend author, with almost the same title (*Cosi de Turci*) with a totally different content, telling how a brave Balkan Christian resisted Turk's assault, threatening

Antonio Manutius of formal declaration of heresy (what meant the seizure of all the family's goods and belongings). Soon after, he was declared dead by pest in no-pest times by the family. But in fact, he managed to deal diplomatic agreements on spices favorable to Venice as well to Constantinople with South Indian Sultan of Calicut, and detrimental to Portuguese, before being named accountant by Suleiman the Magnificent for the other Italian Algiers King, Uluj Ali, known in Puglia as "Occhiali", that designed him as his legal heir. Turned Hassan Pacha Veneziano, Antonio Manutius will encounter Miguel de Cervantes on the slave market in Algiers and buy him and write with him *Topography and General History of Algiers*.

"Topography and General History of Algiers" and "*Trip from Alexandria to India*" are the only two works in the world to present the word "Abechino" or "Avechino", to mean Abyssinian people, slaves in Yemen and corsairs in Algiers.

"Trip from Alexandria to India" explains the mystery of the seven-mouth's cannon in "*Topography and General History of Algiers*". It was a Persian 16th c. technology, developed by Portuguese with Persian slaves belonging

to Gujarat Sultan in Diu, India. The French translated it as “six-mouth’s cannon” and tried to copy it: the 9-mouths canon of Algiers is still conserved in Musée des Invalides, Paris, presented as war-spoils. In those times, French “invented” the mitrailleuse, a light multi-mouth cannon, which would become later the machine gun. It never really worked, because of secrecy: its inventor, De Reffie, aide-de-camp for Napoléon III, didn’t want the plans to be published, even for soldiers using them on the battlefields.

Fred Romano 2019

It’s now 500 years later time to recognize the many facets of Antonio Manutius, timeless discreet genius, and deeply study these masterworks. I personally consider he was the live model for the wise Duban, in 1001 nights and his works helped me to identify some of the characters of that “Persian” work: the Jewish djinn fisher (El Cicala aka Chacaia aka Scipione Cicala, of Jewish Montenegro mother, aka Mimar Sinan), Ali Baba and Aladin (Bab Aruç and Hayredin, known as Barbarossa brothers), Duban (Antonio Manutius), Sinbad the Baghdad doorman (Suleiman the Magnificent) that all were part of the armada, and Shéherazade (Roxelane) in constant contact by pigeon express. And those

Antonio Manutius’ works not only contain poetic and innovative linguistic treasures but also the exact location of real treasures. It mentioned where a Portuguese boat was drawn charged with the looted Golconda diamonds. It begins and ends on the exact location of the Templar Treasure (looted in Rhodes): you need both citations to get it. Nowadays, this is in Egyptian Military Territory.

Fred Romano 2/9/2019

References:

- *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Aldus Manutius the Elder, Aldine Press, Venice, 1499)
<https://archive.org/details/A336080/page/n5>
- As Wikwand remarks “The text of the book is written in a bizarre [Latinated Italian](#). Without explanation, the text is full of words based on Latin and [Greek roots](#). The book, however, also includes words from the Italian language and illustrations which include [Arabic](#) and [Hebrew](#) words. Moreover, author would invent new forms of language when those available to him were inaccurate. The book also contains some uses of [Egyptian hieroglyphs](#), but they are not

authentic.” (Antonio Manutius, his nephew, would use the same kind of Italian language you need to be polyglot to understand -words in Catalan, Venetian, English, French, Hindi and Arab plus words of its own-)

https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Hypnerotomachia_Poliphili

- Comment est née l'Algérie française (How was born French Algeria), Jean-Louis Marçot in French (<https://books.google.es/books?id=bFn0CwAAQBAJ&pg=PT431&lpg=PT431&dq=intendant+alg%C3%A9rie+berbrugger&source=bl&ots=mPXDiULBfC&sig=Pwfp-f5iUzA-U&hl=es&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiqr5yZ4ITfAhUxqIsKHSBtCZEQ6AEwDXoECAMQAAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false>)
- Topographie et Histoire Générale d'Alger (De Haedo) translated in French in 1870 by Adrien Berbrugger (<http://oran2.free.fr/ORAN%20HISTOIRE%20ET%20DOCUMENTS/HS%20ET%20DOC%20Topographie%20Histoire%20Alger.pdf>)
- Library of Catalunya 's unique exemplar of Topografia e Historia General de Argel (1612) in Spanish: https://books.google.es/books?vid=BNc:1001736483&printsec=frontcover&redir_esc=y#v=snippet&q=Meca&f=false
- La mise en place de l'archéologie officielle au 19^{ème} siècle en Algérie (Official Archeology settlement in 19th Century in Algeria), Monique Dodin-Payre (CNRS) (https://www.academia.edu/19298902/La_mise_en_place_de_larch%C3%A9ologie_officielle_en_Alg%C3%A9rie_XIXe_s._-_d%C3%A9but_du_XXe_s_)
- Topographie et Histoire Générale d'Alger (Cervantes & Hassan Pacha Veneziano), translated in 2015 by Fred Romano (<http://www.facebook.com/topographieethistoiregeneraledalger/>)
- Marabout's Dialogue translated in 2017 by Fred Romano (in French) https://www.amazon.es/dp/B0756YRQ89/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1504106298&sr=1-

[1&keywords=Dialogue+des+Marabo](#)

[uts](#)

- Library of Florence 's unique exemplar of Viaggi fatti da Vinetia alla Tana, in Persa, in India et in Costantinopli (in Italian): <https://archive.org/details/ita-bnc-ald-00000153-001/page/n9>

- Soon to be released on Amazon: the book within the book *Viaggi de Alessandria alla India* telling Suleiman the Magnificent' armada odyssey in Egypt, Arabia and India (1538, published in 1545 in Venetia and after scandal, in Bologna).