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# The Mercantile Effect

*Art and Exchange in the Islamicate World  
during the 17th and 18th Centuries*

Edited by  
Sussan Babaie and Melanie Gibson



## Contents

6	Foreword by Melanie Gibson	
9	Introduction by Sussan Babaie	The Mercantile Effect: On Art and Exchange in the Islamicate World
15	SUET MAY LAM	Fantasies of the East: ‘Shopping’ in Early Modern Eurasia
27	AMY S. LANDAU	The Armenian Artist Minas and Seventeenth-Century Notions of ‘Life-Likeness’
39	WILLIAM KYNAN-WILSON	‘Painted by the Turcks themselves’: Reading Peter Mundy’s Ottoman Costume Album in Context
51	NICOLE KANÇAL-FERRARI	Golden Watches and Precious Textiles: Luxury Goods at the Crimean Khans’ Court and the Northern Black Sea Shore
63	NANCY UM	Aromatics, Stimulants, and their Vessels: The Material Culture and Rites of Merchant Interaction in Eighteenth-Century Mocha
75	FEDERICA GIGANTE	Trading Islamic Artworks in Seventeenth-Century Italy: the Case of the Cospi Museum
87	ANNA BALLIAN	From Genoa to Constantinople: The Silk Industry of Chios
102	CHRISTOS MERANTZAS	Ottoman Textiles Within an Ecclesiastical Context: Cultural Osmoses in Mainland Greece
115	FRANCESCO GUSELLA	Behind the Practice of Partnership: Seventeenth-Century Portuguese Devotional Ivories of West India
124	GÜL KALE	Visual and Embodied Memory of an Ottoman Architect: Travelling on Campaign, Pilgrimage and Trade Routes in the Middle East
141	Contributors	



Figure 1. Palace of Sultan Hasan, Mocha (now destroyed), early nineteenth century. Photograph by Hermann Burchardt, 1909. Published in Eugen Mittwoch, *Aus dem Jemen: Hermann Burchardts Letzte Reise durch Südarabien*, Leipzig 1926, pl. XXII. This building served as the governor's palace in Mocha in the nineteenth century, replacing an earlier structure built during the first Ottoman period.

## Aromatics, Stimulants, and their Vessels: The Material Culture and Rites of Merchant Interaction in Eighteenth-Century Mocha

NANCY UM

Each January ushered in the new trade season at Mocha, Yemen's most important early modern port on the Red Sea coast. When a major ship appeared in the harbour, the governor of the city sent out a boat to ascertain the identity of the new arrivals. He would later welcome selected merchants, both local and foreign, by sending an entourage of musicians and decorated horses to greet them when they disembarked at the jetty. These honoured guests, who were eager to set foot on land after their long sea journeys, were then escorted into the city accompanied by music and the beating of drums, amidst a large crowd of Mocha's inhabitants. Their initial destination was the governor's house, where they were received with a reception of coffee, tobacco, and aromatics (Figure 1). They were then escorted to their residence by a group of locals, whom they rewarded by tossing them coins.<sup>1</sup> These highly visible rites of entry served to launch the trade season in a spectacular manner for the major merchants of Mocha, while also showcasing the generosity of the port's governor.

Yet, these rites were more than rote privileges of the elite; they also served key social purposes, as they were offered only to a small and well-supported sector of high-volume wholesale overseas traders. At the outset, this group was demonstrably differentiated from those maritime travellers and peddlers of lower status and questionable reputation, who were not welcomed to the port city with any public recognition. Some, such as the Baniyan merchants of Diu and Porbandar, were even charged a fee upon entry into Mocha. As such, the ceremonies

of entry and welcome that were staged at the port should not be considered empty exercises of pomp, extravagance, and display. On the contrary, they hinged upon scrutiny and vetting, and played a central role in upholding the rigid order of merchant hierarchy in Mocha.

This set of repetitive and highly visible protocols included only one stage that took place outside the public eye. Inside the walls of the governor's house, new merchants were initiated (and returning merchants were reinitiated) into the domestic norms of commercial interaction in this city, which involved the serving of coffee and tobacco, the burning of incense, and the sprinkling of rosewater. Indeed, as described by observers who traded at the port in the early years of the eighteenth century, all major merchants were received in this manner whenever they visited their counterparts in their homes to discuss the trade, inspect goods, and seal negotiations on a daily basis. By extension, all merchants, including the Europeans, would be expected to stage these ceremonies for those who appeared at their own residences for the same purposes. In fact, when merchants left the port at the end of the trade season, their last stop on land was the governor's house, where they were received for the final time and offered coffee, tobacco, and aromatics, an apt conclusion to their time in the port.

These domestic rites involving the consumption of stimulants and aromatics constitute the subject of this essay, although it is acknowledged that they may seem quite ordinary. For, ceremonies

of social reception such as these were staged frequently in residences across Yemen, but also around the wider Middle East, historically, and to this day.<sup>2</sup> Yet, here, we must look beyond the seemingly generic and timeless quality of these practices because the substances that were consumed in them, and the vessels that were used to deliver them, were derived mainly from the context of the vibrant Indian Ocean trade. Thus, they were particularly meaningful for the merchants of Mocha, who conveyed the bulk of foreign goods into Yemen during the eighteenth century. Such repetitive rites also constituted far more than simple acts of politesse or etiquette.<sup>3</sup> In fact, they were central to the practices of the wholesale trade, serving as crucial processes of commercial initiation and merchant interaction in this western Indian Ocean port.

#### SOURCES

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Relevant sources provide only a partial picture of these activities in Mocha, and from a limited perspective. The most elaborate ceremonies of this type were staged for returning local merchants and the major shipowners from western Indian ports, who dominated Mocha's commercial world and set the standard for elite practices in the city. For instance, the *nakhudha* (ship captain) of the admiral of the Mughal navy, Sidi Yaqut Khan, once even refused to come on shore in Mocha until a more lavish entourage was arranged to bring him into the city.<sup>4</sup> However, those merchants left no records of their trade activity. Even if they had, it is not evident that they would have committed to paper practices that constituted such a routine aspect of merchant life. By contrast, the Dutch, English, and French merchants stationed at the port were devoted to documenting everyday life in Mocha, sometimes mentioning local practices, although often in an abbreviated manner. They also make it clear that they participated in these routines in order to assimilate to the local codes of commercial engagement, even if they did not wholly understand their social meaning.

In addition, Carsten Niebuhr, the German cartographer and

land surveyor who visited Yemen on a mission sponsored by the Danish King Frederick V in 1763, wrote about these domestic ceremonies in detail, based on his own experiences. While he described them as relatively generic to households in the Middle East without stressing their significance to Yemeni merchants in particular, his writings are still extremely useful, particularly when read along with the trade records of the aforementioned European merchants. He tells us that, upon entering a house, one would be seated in the reception room. Then, the guest would be offered a pipe filled with tobacco, some sweets, and a cup of coffee, as well as an embroidered napkin to place over the knees.<sup>5</sup> At the end of the visit, right before departing, a servant would sprinkle drops of rosewater into the guest's hands and disperse the smoke from an incense burner to scent his beard. Niebuhr then elaborated on these rites and even featured an image of some of the objects used in them (Figure 2). His discussions serve as the basis for the following paragraphs, which situate these rites of reception and sociability in the realm of the long-distance trade of Yemen.

#### STIMULANTS AND AROMATICS

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It should be no surprise that coffee was served to guests in Mocha frequently, for this international port has often been associated with this beverage.<sup>6</sup> Yemen was the first place where coffee cultivation was undertaken on a large scale around the year 1570, while under Ottoman rule.<sup>7</sup> Yemen then came to be the key provider to the world's coffee market, which expanded rapidly from that time onward. During the seventeenth century, coffee flowed from Yemen through the Red Sea arena, with the majority of bales destined for Cairo and the wider Mediterranean region. In the early decades of the eighteenth century, after Europeans had also developed a taste for this relatively new and addictive drink, they began to seek alternative sites of cultivation in their colonial territories, such as the islands of Java and Martinique, thus introducing new flows of coffee that completely bypassed Yemen. By 1735, the influx of coffee stemming from these later trajectories curtailed Yemen's near

monopoly on the bean. So the early decades of the eighteenth century mark a transitional moment in coffee's long history, when it was transformed from an African and Arabian product into a global one.

Coffee was a constant feature of ceremonies of reception in Yemeni households. But the coffee that was served in them was not the dark brown beverage derived from the roasted bean, or *bunn*, that we consume today. Before going to market, coffee beans must be removed from both their cherries and husks. In Yemen, the husks, *qishr* in Arabic, were not discarded, but brewed for a drink with the same name.<sup>8</sup> Because *qishr*, as a beverage, was derived from a common waste product of the coffee trade, it had the unique power to evidence the process by which coffee was transformed into a commodity for sale, particularly when offered to a merchant during the context of trade negotiations. European observers, particularly newcomers to Mocha, remarked on the salient impact that this unique drink

had upon arrival, sometimes calling it 'the Sultana's coffee' to differentiate it from the black coffee that they were accustomed to, and much preferred to *qishr*, which was relatively bland in taste.<sup>9</sup>

A cup of hot *qishr* was always paired with a pipe filled with tobacco. It is fitting that the Arabic language uses the word *sharaba*, 'to drink,' for the function of smoking as well, because these two activities were tethered together as social practices. Tobacco was originally a New World product, but had been cultivated in Europe since the sixteenth century. It had arrived as an import to Yemen by the end of that century, brought primarily from the Gulf and India.<sup>10</sup> At first, local observers expressed disapproval of this new and untested substance and the product was occasionally subject to bans, a pattern that mirrors coffee's early history of prohibition.<sup>11</sup> Yet, by the early decades of the eighteenth century, tobacco had become quite popular in Mocha and was readily available for sale in its *suq*.<sup>12</sup>

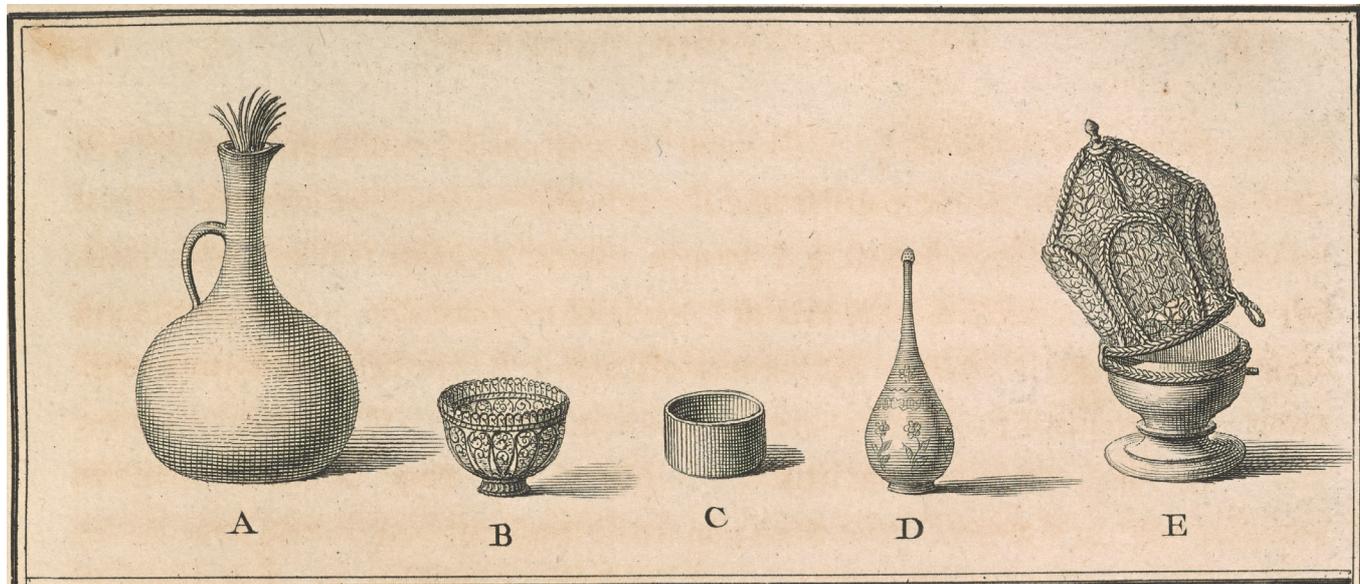


Figure 2. Vessels used to serve and drink coffee, to sprinkle rosewater, and to burn incense, published in Carsten Niebuhr, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, Copenhagen 1772, pl. 1. Courtesy of the John Hay Library, Brown University Library.

Yemeni farmers had begun to cultivate it locally as well. So, while coffee, a local product, was being globalised as a drink, tobacco had already been localised as a substance in the Middle East, both commodities eventually overcoming initial questions about the legality of their consumption. At the same time, both coffee and tobacco plants were finding new agricultural homes, thus pointing to the broad-reaching movements, social upheavals, and long-distance botanical experiments in transculturation that the region's early modern overseas trade ushered in.

According to Niebuhr, coffee and tobacco were always offered in Yemeni homes, but the aromatics were presented less frequently, sometimes offered strategically to suggest that it was time for the guest to leave! By contrast, trade records, particularly those left by the Dutch, never fail to mention rosewater and aloeswood, also commodities of the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean, as requisite offerings at every merchant interaction and not only as social nudges, as Niebuhr implies.<sup>13</sup> Rosewater was distilled primarily in Persia and imported from the Gulf region, but also sometimes from India.<sup>14</sup> By contrast, the incense was aloeswood, *'ud* in Arabic, which was transported from mainland Southeast Asia and carried on westbound ships, including those of the Dutch.<sup>15</sup> Sold in small slivers, *'ud* was extremely costly and for that reason limited in its use to the wealthy. With its woody aroma, *'ud* would have contrasted with the floral notes of the rosewater that it was so commonly paired with. It is important to note that aromatics derived from local resins, such as frankincense and myrrh, which had been avidly sought in Arabia since antiquity, were never mentioned in these rites. It appears that they were bypassed, or perhaps simply overshadowed by, imported ones from the Indian Ocean sphere at this time.

So these ceremonial activities were oriented around the consumption of various Indian Ocean commodities, taken in through the mouth and the nose in liquid and airborne forms. When offered within the competitive atmosphere of Mocha's trading environment, these substances were not conceived of as simple items of consumption and leisure. Rather, merchants,

particularly those who were eager to begin trading upon arrival at the port, would have surely associated them with their commodity identities. *Qishr* pointed to the process by which coffee was made available to foreign merchants, and the prominent presentation of tobacco, rosewater, and aloeswood confirmed the sustained local demand for these imported goods. These marketplace connections would have had a striking impact on those who were seeking to purchase coffee at the port or carrying such items in the cargo holds of their ships, even before they had struck their first negotiation.

#### VESSELS OF DELIVERY AND CONSUMPTION

When offered to the merchant in the domestic setting, *qishr*, tobacco, rosewater, and *'ud* would have been delivered in various types of vessels. Niebuhr's 1772 publication, prepared in Copenhagen upon his return from this extended eastern journey, featured an image of five vessels lined up for display (Figure 2). This image serves as a useful record of material culture in eighteenth-century Yemen, which is poorly represented in museum collections. It also shows clearly that these vessels, like the substances that they contained and delivered, were diverse and had been obtained from various sites in an extended world of trade. These objects must be conceived in relation to their contents, but also to each other.

As described by Niebuhr, coffee, or rather *qishr*, was brewed in a clay pot with a globular base and extended narrow neck. After preparation, stalks were placed in its opening to prevent the coffee grounds from spilling out when poured.<sup>16</sup> This enduring type of pot, pictured and marked with the letter A on Figure 2, was made of unglazed terracotta and is amply evidenced by modern examples (Figure 3).<sup>17</sup> It is notable that Niebuhr singled out a local pot made of a humble material, rather than one of copper, which was used commonly in the Yemeni highlands, but also in cities such as Istanbul and Damascus, at that time.<sup>18</sup>



Figure 3. Coffee pot, pottery, H 20.5 cm, made in Yemen, twentieth century. British Museum, 1980,17.14. © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved.

Figure 4. Coffee cup, partially-glazed earthenware, H 5.3 cm, made in al-Hudayda, Yemen, 1960s. British Museum, As 1965,07.5 © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved. Fragments of similar Haysi coffee cups have been found at Mocha, although they do not match the straight-sided shape of the vessel that appears in Niebuhr's engraving.

The individual instruments used for drinking coffee were more diverse. Niebuhr tells us that 'Arabs of distinction' in Yemen used small cups from China without handles, although he does not provide an image or any further details. This he contrasts with the habits of ordinary people, who used simpler earthenware cups, exemplified in an unadorned cylindrical one (marked letter C on Figure 2) that was likely made in the city of Hays (Figure 4).<sup>19</sup> By making this distinction, he underlines how these rites of welcome were visibly scaled depending on the status of the household. It should be noted that Niebuhr spent a great deal of time in the Red Sea ports of al-Luhayya and Mocha and had travelled extensively around the modest villages of the

Yemeni lowlands, often disguised in local garb. But he had also visited the imam in his palace in the highland capital of Sanaa. So Niebuhr had been exposed to the range of social practices at all levels of Yemeni society and was quite sensitively attuned to both regional and class distinctions.

The use of imported Chinese porcelain cups in Mocha is not surprising, as the Asian porcelain industry undergirded the spread of coffee consumption across the early modern world. Archaeological survey evidence from Mocha provides both confirmation and expansion of Niebuhr's contention. Shards of imported blue and white porcelain cups have been found

in Mocha, with a higher concentration in the intramural area where the major merchants lived. Smaller quantities of imports were found in the modest quarters located outside of the city walls. Yet the survey also turned up other types of coffee cups, including remnants of monochrome brown porcelain wares, sometimes described as *café au lait* in colour.<sup>20</sup> These vessels, with their matte surfaces, were made at Jingdezhen and sometimes in Fujian province, but are usually called ‘Batavian style export porcelain’ because of their association with Dutch East India Company (VOC) networks of transit.<sup>21</sup> Some made it all the way to Europe, appearing in eighteenth-century collection

inventories and paintings. They also found favour in the Gulf during the same period.<sup>22</sup>

Textual sources provide further evidence for the use of brown coffee cups and their saucers among Yemen’s elite, in addition to porcelain wares from Japan.<sup>23</sup> In 1722, VOC merchants purchased two hundred Chinese coffee cups and saucers that they described as ‘brown and blue’ in Mocha.<sup>24</sup> Surely, this was a reference to the brown Batavian wares that were underglaze painted with cobalt within, a type that was recovered in large quantities from the Cà Mau shipwreck found off the Vietnamese



Figure 5. ‘Batavian ware’ cup and saucer, brown-glazed porcelain with cobalt underglaze painting inside, made in China, from the Cà Mau shipwreck (Vietnam), ca. 1723-1735. Collection of Zelnik István, Budapest.

coast and dated 1723–1735 (Figure 5). These cups were then bestowed as part of a larger gift package to Imam al-Mutawakkil Qasim (r. 1718–1727), who was the first of the Qasimi imams to take up residence in the city of Sanaa and maintained close contact with foreign merchants on the coast. This bestowal suggests that Batavian wares were deemed suitable even for the region's most discriminating recipient. The same gift package also included two hundred gilded porcelain coffee cups with their saucers.<sup>25</sup> Thus we can expand upon Niebuhr's unspecified remark about the coffee cups used by the elite of Yemen, which were not only from China, but also Japan, and included classic blue and white types, in addition to monochrome brown and gilded varieties.

The cup was enclosed by a rounded holder, or *zarf*, to protect the fingers of the coffee drinker from the heat of the liquid within. The small sheath, pictured by Niebuhr and marked B on Figure 2, was made of metallic filigree, comparable to a pre-twentieth-century example from nearby Ethiopia (Figure 6). Both sit on a raised foot and are divided into vertical sections filled with spiralling lines. Although Niebuhr gives no clue about where these holders were made, Mocha is a good possibility. There was a robust industry of silver and gold working at that port, spearheaded by Baniyan artisans.<sup>26</sup> The Baniyans, from northwest India, were both Hindu and Jain migrants who resided in Mocha for extended periods. Although most Baniyans were associated directly with trade, as brokers and money exchangers, others were involved in crafts. The Baniyans of Mocha produced silver and gold jewellery and horse fittings of metal, and likely household items as well.<sup>27</sup> As H el ene Desmet-Gr egoire eloquently notes, the *zarf* served as a tactile way to integrate an imported object, namely the porcelain coffee cup, into the local society by physically enveloping it.<sup>28</sup>

As Niebuhr describes, in Yemen, porcelain rosewater droppers clad in silver were used (marked D on Figure 2). An extant example with floral overpainting in pastel colours that was made in China, but exported to Iran, presents a compelling



Figure 6. Coffee cup holder, silver ornamented with silver-gilt filigree, Ethiopia, before 1868. Originally given to Hormuzd Rassam, a British official, by Salama III, head of the Ethiopian church. V&A, 848-1868. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

comparison to the one in Niebuhr's image (Figure 7).<sup>29</sup> In this case, the removable silver spout at the top was likely added after the bottle was shipped from China, either at the destination point in Iran or en route somewhere in Southeast Asia. In the case of Yemen, we can assume, as well, that the silver spouts were added to porcelain droppers in Mocha, perhaps also crafted by Baniyan silversmiths at the port.<sup>30</sup> As with the coffee cups, this pairing of porcelain and silver represents the marriage of two different types of materials and possibly also the linkage of imported and locally produced items.

Once again, company trade records enhance our understanding of the important role that rosewater played in the domestic space of the Mocha house beyond Niebuhr's discussion. Dated 1722, an inventory of the English East India Company indicates that



Figure 7. Rosewater sprinkler, porcelain decorated with polychrome enamel and silver mounts, H 22.3 cm, made in China, with mounts made possibly in Malaysia or Iran, 1735–1750. V&A, 390-1884. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

these merchants kept two rosewater droppers in their factory in Mocha, along with five extra flasks of the perfumed liquid to fill them.<sup>31</sup> In 1712, the VOC merchants of Mocha requested a full case of rosewater from Batavia.<sup>32</sup> These brief records confirm that European merchants felt the need to participate fully in these localised practices of reception, by assuring that they were provisioned with the appropriate accessories, even for future needs.

While the consumption of coffee and the distribution of rosewater hinged upon porcelain paired with silver, the burning of incense depended on a more rustic presentation. Niebuhr's final image, labelled E on Figure 2, may be associated with the two incense burners that he acquired in Yemen, both held in the National Museum of Denmark today (Figure 8).<sup>33</sup> These two burners are comprised of low wooden bases painted red, with plaited hoods fastened by reed bands. Their small inserts, which would have been made of ceramic or metal to contain the hot charcoal and smoking incense slivers, are now lost.<sup>34</sup> Even so, one can easily imagine the object in use, with wisps of smoke wafting through the perforations in the braided panels. These two examples confirm that Niebuhr and his team had direct access to the items that they portrayed and described from Yemen, while also giving a sense of the significant place of local vessels in these rites of reception, which did not rely only upon imported items produced of refined materials.<sup>35</sup>

I have attempted to enliven Niebuhr's relatively sterile published engraving (Figure 2), by filling these vessels, which were essential to rites of merchant initiation and interaction at Mocha, with liquids and smoke. In these practices, foreign wares and imported substances were significant, but persistently paired with local ones. Porcelain and silver appeared prominently along with products in coarse materials, such as earthenware, wood, and reed. It is this aspect of the 'mercantile effect' that needs to be evaluated because the early modern surge in demand for global products always took place on a local level, even if these goods were deeply intertwined within wide-reaching global matrices.

AROMATICS, STIMULANTS, AND THEIR VESSELS: THE MATERIAL CULTURE AND  
RITES OF MERCHANT INTERACTION IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MOCHA



Figure 8. A pair of incense burners, turned and painted wood and plaited rattan, H (left) 24 cm, (right) 25 cm, Yemen, *circa* 1763.  
National Museum of Denmark, FC.4 and FC.5. Courtesy of the National Museum of Denmark. Photograph by John Lee.

Items of reception and sociability were not undifferentiated status symbols or simple commodities; rather they were carefully calibrated for use and display within particular commercial environments. As such, the meanings of objects with far-flung itineraries must be construed on the ground, rather than in broad transregional terms that occlude their specific effects upon the merchants who carried and traded them.

Moreover, costly imported goods should not be cast simply as attractive or exotic items. Around the Indian Ocean rim, merchant status was considerably fragile and always subject to reassessment. So these goods played a central role in forging merchant identities, rather than simply announcing fixed social distinctions. Merchants, particularly foreign ones, presented these outward markers to other merchants to establish or consolidate their reputations in the cosmopolitan port of Mocha, while also closely scrutinising and evaluating the possessions of those whom they traded with, cues that Niebuhr, perhaps unwittingly, perceived with subtlety.

## NOTES

1. These entry ceremonies are discussed in Nancy Um, *Shipped but Not Sold: Material Culture and the Social Protocols of Trade in Yemen's Age of Coffee*, Honolulu 2017, pp. 25–58.
2. For instance, the Yemenite community has continued some of these practices, even in modern-day Israel. Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper, *The Yemenites: Two Thousand Years of Jewish Culture*, Jerusalem 2000, pp. 32–35.
3. In regard to the socially dense and historically specific meaning of rites of sociability and consumption, see Sussan Babaie, *Isfahan and its Palaces: Statecraft, Shi'ism and the Architecture of Conviviality in Early Modern Iran*, Edinburgh 2008, pp. 113–266.
4. Mocha *dagregister*, July 20, 1730, VOC 2252, 201, VOC Records.
5. In the highlands, but not Mocha, leaves of *qat* were also sometimes offered. Carsten Niebuhr, *Description de l'Arabie, faite sur des observations propres et des avis recueillis dans les lieux mêmes*, Amsterdam 1774, pp. 51–52.
6. However, the exclusive relationship between Mocha and coffee has been overemphasised. Contrary to popular understanding, Mocha was never Yemen's main coffee emporium or port. Bayt al-Faqih, an inland town to its north, served as the region's key coffee market and other Red Sea ports also facilitated the shipping of the bean abroad. C.G. Brouwer, 'Al-Mukha as a coffee port in the early decades of the seventeenth century according to Dutch sources', in *Le commerce du café avant l'ère des plantations coloniales: espaces, réseaux, sociétés (XVe–XIXe siècle)*, ed. Michel Tuchscherer, Cairo 2001, pp. 271–295; and Nancy Um, *The Merchant Houses of Mocha: Trade and Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port*, Seattle 2009, pp. 36–47.
7. Michel Tuchscherer, 'Coffee in the Red Sea Area from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century', in *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, 1500–1989*, ed. William Gervase Clarence-Smith et al., Cambridge 2003, p. 52.
8. By the early eighteenth century, *qishr* replaced *bunn* as the local drink of choice in Yemen. According to Niebuhr, Yemenis avoided *bunn* because it warmed the blood. Niebuhr, *Description*, p. 49. *Qishr* had a limited life as an export outside of Yemen. Mutsuo Kawatuoko, 'Coffee Trade in the al-Tur Port, South Sinai', in *Le commerce du café*, p. 54.
9. As an example, see Louis de Grandpré, *A voyage in the Indian Ocean and to Bengal Undertaken in the Year 1790: containing an account of the Sechelles Islands and Trincomale. To which is added, A voyage in the Red Sea; including a description of Mocha*, Boston 1803, pp. 217–219.
10. For tobacco from Calicut, see Mocha *dagregister*, April 30, 1735, VOC 2356, p. 153; and from Basra, see Mocha *dagregister*, January 21, 1727, VOC 9121, p. 120. C.G. Brouwer, 'A Hazardous Item: The International Tobacco Trade of the Red Sea Port of al-Mukha, Reflected in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Records', *Itinerario* 32.2, 2008, p. 43.
11. R.B. Serjeant, 'The Market, Business Life, Occupations, and the Legality and Sale of Stimulants', in *San'a': An Arabian Islamic City*, ed. R.B. Serjeant et al., London 1983, p. 175. For debates about the legality of coffee, see Ralph Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East*, Seattle 1985.
12. Mocha *dagregister*, January 25, 1728, VOC 9122, p. 91 and August 22, 1728, VOC 9123, p. 50.
13. Dinah Jung, *An Ethnography of Fragrance: The Perfumery Arts of 'Adan/Lahj*, Leiden 2011, p. 203. Grandpré also mentions the use of benzoin resin, another Indian Ocean trade product, as an aromatic offering upon arrival in Mocha. Grandpré, *A voyage*, p. 217.
14. Joachim Meyer, *Sensual Delights: Incense Burners and Rosewater Sprinklers from the World of Islam*, Copenhagen 2015, p. 7.

15. It was obtained from the mold that forms in certain evergreen trees, such as the *Aquilaria*. Rendement van alle soorten van Goederen als er sederd primo medio Julij Ao passo bij 't sluijten der negotieboeckjes sijn vercoegt geworden, signed J. v. Steenwijk, J.E. v. Mijlendonk, David Sommans Junior, Mocha, August 27, 1723, VOC 9104, pp. 88–89.
16. Sarah Posey, *Yemeni Pottery*, London 1994, p. 43.
17. Edward J. Keall, 'The Evolution of the First Coffee Cups in Yemen', in *Le commerce du café*, 43, 50.
18. Hélène Desmet-Grégoire, *Les objets du café*, Paris 1989, pp. 58–67.
19. The pottery industry at Hays was developed to provide new utensils for coffee consumption in the late fifteenth century. Keall, 'Evolution'. Green-glazed Haysi wares were found in the Mocha survey of 1993. Claire Hardy-Guilbert and Axelle Rougeulle, 'Archaeological Research into the Islamic Period in Yemen: Preliminary Notes on the French Expedition, 1993', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 25, 1994, p. 40.
20. Hardy-Guilbert and Rougeulle, 'Archaeological Research', p. 40; and Claire Hardy-Guilbert and Axelle Rougeulle, 'Portis islamiques du Yémen: Prospections archéologiques sur les côtes yéménites (1993–1995)', *Archéologie islamique* 7, 1997, pp. 154–156.
21. Baoping Li, "'Batavian Style" Chinese Export Porcelain: Origins, Recent Finds, and Historic Significance', in *The Cà Mau Shipwreck Porcelain (1723–1735)*, vol. 2, ed. Szonja A. Buslig et al., Budapest 2012, pp. 23–30.
22. Timothy Power, 'A First Ceramic Chronology for the Late Islamic Arabian Gulf', *Journal of Islamic Archaeology* 2.1, 2015, p. 19; and John Hansman, *Julfar, An Arabian port: Its Settlement and Far Eastern Ceramic Trade from the 14th to the 18th Centuries*, London 1985, p. 32.
23. Extract der Schenkagien gedaan, August 19, 1719, VOC 1964, p. 197.
24. Waer in 't afgedwongene present aen den jman bestaan heeft en dies beloop, signed J. v. Alderwereld, J. v. Steenwijk, Jacobus Augier, Ge. Duijk, Mocha, August 26, 1722, VOC 9104, p. 73.
25. Christiaan Jörg has suggested that golden wares from Japan were produced for intra-Asian consumption in the late seventeenth century, citing both Mocha and Surat as destination points, and that the European taste for them stemmed from their involvement in those trade networks. Jörg, *Fine and Curious: Japanese Export Porcelain in Dutch Collections*, Amsterdam 2003, p. 93.
26. Although the Jewish community was responsible for producing much fine silverwork in Yemen, particularly in the highlands, this was not the case in eighteenth-century Mocha, where Baniyan silversmiths are mentioned to the exclusion of Jewish ones.
27. Mocha *dagregister*, August 25–31, 1732, VOC 2252, p. 168.
28. Desmet-Grégoire, *Les objets*, p. 76.
29. For other examples, see Meyer, *Sensual Delights*, cats. 28–30, pp. 72–77.
30. In the highlands, Jewish silversmiths completed imported porcelain droppers with locally made fittings upon arrival in Yemen. Muchawsky-Schnapper, *The Yemenites*, p. 49.
31. An inventory of the Dead Stock, Mocha, January 7, 1722, IOR/G/17/1, British Library, pt. 2, pp. 198r-201v.
32. Eijsch van coopmanscz. en schenkagie goederen, 1712, VOC 1843, p. 20.
33. It is likely that Niebuhr sent these two artefacts back to Copenhagen when he was in India, along with other papers and specimens from the expedition. All of his team members had already died by that point and he feared that he would meet the same fate, so he submitted many materials in advance. Lawrence J. Baack, *Undying Curiosity: Carsten Niebuhr and the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia (1761–1767)*, Stuttgart 2014, pp. 204, 302.
34. Meyer, *Sensual Delights*, cat. 11, pp. 38–39.
35. The wood and reed type does not appear in Sterenn Le Mageur's typology of incense burners from the port of al-Shihr, which is the most comprehensive regional study of such objects, but includes only those made of durable materials that would have survived in the archaeological context. Sterenn Le Mageur, 'Typology of incense-burners of the Islamic Period', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 41, 2011, pp. 173–186.