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**Men at Work:  
The *Tipografia di Terra Santa* (1847-1930)**

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Located in the Christian neighbourhood of the Old City, inside the Saint Saviour Convent, the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land's headquarters, the Franciscan Printing Press (FPP), was created in 1847 during a period marked by the "re-discovery of the Holy Land" by European powers and Christian religious leaders.<sup>1</sup> The year 1847 was also the year that Pius IX reaffirmed the Vatican's direct presence in the region, re-establishing another major Catholic institution in the area<sup>2</sup> – the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, suppressed after the Crusaders' defeat. The FPP's purpose was evangelistic outreach and proselytising.<sup>3</sup> But the opening of the Printing House soon took on a symbolic role even though it was not the first printing house established in the city. Indeed, the Armenians had set up their printing activity in 1833<sup>4</sup> and the Greek-Orthodox patriarchate of Jerusalem – though it had established printing houses in Bessarabia and in Istanbul since the 17<sup>th</sup> century – did so in Jerusalem in 1853.<sup>5</sup> This printing activity was also followed by Jewish printing. However, the Franciscan Printing Press established a new *locus* for intellectual production in different languages. An essential aspect was that the Franciscans were the first to print books in Arabic in Jerusalem. It was conceived as a major place to print religious volumes, schoolbooks for the Catholic missionaries in the region and all sorts of material related to the task assigned to the Franciscans in the Holy Land. A close look at the FPP as a workplace reveals also a microcosm where the city's balances of power are visible – namely between the missionaries and Jerusalem inhabitants.

The FPP was part of the Franciscans' microcosm in the Holy Land. The St Saviour's

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<sup>1</sup> The research for this chapter was made possible by the ERC Open-Jerusalem project and was conducted in close collaboration with Maria Chiara Rioli. For a general history of the presence of the Franciscans in Jerusalem and Palestine see Giuseppe Buffon, *Les Franciscains en Terre Sainte (1869–1889). Religion et politique: une recherche institutionnelle* (Paris: Cerf; Éditions franciscaines, 2005); Paolo Pieraccini, *Cattolici di Terra Santa (1333–2000)* (Florence: Pagnini, 2003); Andrea Giovannelli, *La Santa Sede e la Palestina. La Custodia di Terra Santa tra la fine dell'impero ottomano e la guerra dei sei giorni* (Rome: Studium, 2000). For the global context see Henry Laurens, *La Question de Palestine; vol 1: L'invention de la Terre Sainte (1799-1922)* (Paris: Fayard, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Apostolic Letter *Nulla celebrior*, published on the July 23, 1847. See Paolo Pieraccini, *Il ristabilimento del Patriarcato latino di Gerusalemme e la Custodia di Terra Santa. La dialettica istituzionale al tempo del primo patriarca, mons. Giuseppe Valerga (1847-1872)* (Cairo; Jerusalem: Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies; Franciscan Printing Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Agostino Arce, *Catalogus descriptivus illustratus operum in Typographia Ierosolymorum Franciscali Impressorum, 1847-1880* (Jerusalem: Typis franciscalibus, 1969); Arce, "Centenario de la Imprenta franciscana de Jerusalén 1847–1947," *Tierra Santa* (Nov.–Dec. 1946); Margherita Camorani, "Il primo secolo della tipografia francescana Franciscan Printing Press dal 1846 al 1947," (MA diss., Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, 2013); Claudio Baratto, "La tipografia francescana di S. Salvatore," in *La Custodia di Terra Santa e l'Europa. I rapporti politici e l'attività culturale dei Francescani in Medio Oriente*, ed. Michele Piccirillo (Rome: Il Veltro, 1983), 207–211; Alessandro Mombelli, *La Custodia di Terra Santa* (Jerusalem: Tipografia dei PP. Francescani, 1934), 84–87.

<sup>4</sup> See Arman Khachatryan's chapter in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Agamemnon Tselikas, "I typografia ton Ierosolymon: I typografiki ke ekdotiki drastriotita tou ekei orthodoxou patriarcheion" [Printing in Jerusalem: The printing and editorial activity of the Orthodox patriarchate], *Kathimerini*, Supplement *Epta Imeres* (7 April 1996).

Convent had space for study and devotion, liturgy and faith, and, in keeping with its spiritual dimension, it had a town inside the town Jerusalem. The compound was the site for diverse productions and the workshops were not limited to the highly symbolic and strategic activity of the Printing Press. Upon entering the Convent, one could see a foundry, a woodworking workshop, a textile workshop (men's tailoring) and a shoemaking workshop. Each of these workplaces told its own story, representing the singular relationship between the Convent and the City, with the Custody at once self-sufficient, and, increasingly, complementary to Jerusalem. Each activity addressed a practical and spiritual requirement of the order. But the Custody's activities were also turned towards the city, providing locals with new services. Moreover, the Franciscan workshops opened their doors to workers from outside the convent – a reflection of the direct relationship between the Custody and the environment it was built in. The Printing Press is as one of these microcosms articulated to the different works conducted inside and outside the convent.

Now located in the more peripheral area of Beitphage, the Tipografia still exists, while the archives are kept in the heart of the Convent.<sup>6</sup> The Franciscan archives are invaluable sources of history in the Middle East and beyond – for centuries the institution maintained strong international ties. This chapter is based on some of the papers kept in the archives: mainly, the director's journals, account books for the various activities, workers' salaries, material purchased, order lists and the work carried out.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, some information related to the FPP and its delicate position between Rome, the Franciscan Custody and the Latin Patriarchate, can also be traced in the archives of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide in Vatican City.<sup>8</sup>

### **Family portrait: locating the Tipografia**

The Stamperia is buried deep in the convent's most majestic area: a room with high arched ceilings which still houses Jerusalem's first printing press, imported from Leipzig in Germany, land of excellence when it came to printing and printing technology (see picture).<sup>9</sup> The space obeys a logic of its own: its organization revolves around the printing process, i.e. the various tasks the printing press workers had to perform: composition, inking unit, illustration treatment (photo-engraving), printing, finishing (folding, cutting and sewing sheets, and binding). This is much apparent at first glance: it is a symbiotic universe where trades and experience come together to produce the final product – the printed words.

Initially, the written work produced was heavily tied to the friars' primary activities, i.e. evangelizing, teaching and learning. The first printed texts at the FPP were evangelical texts, prayers, schoolbooks and language textbooks (mostly Italian-Arabic, to allow the

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<sup>6</sup> The author is deeply grateful to the Custody for its hospitality, and would like to give special thanks to Fra Sergey Loktionov and Fra Narcyz Klimas for their continued help and support.

<sup>7</sup> The Franciscan Custody is clearly aware of the importance of this documentary heritage and puts every effort towards ensuring it is preserved. The result of this work is reflected in the monumental inventory, which the archivists continue to update. Andrea Maiarelli, ed., *L'Archivio storico della Custodia di Terra Santa (ASCTS), 1230-1970*, 3 vols. (Milan: Edizioni Terra Santa, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> See in particular [Archivio della Congregazione di Propaganda Fide \(ACPF\)](#), Scritture riferite nei congressi. Terra Santa e Cipro, vol. 24, ff. 59-68, Fra Remigio Buselli to Card. Alessandro Barnabò, 29 May 1866.

<sup>9</sup> On books and printing in another time and place see Roger Chartier, *Inscrivere et effacer. Culture écrite et littérature (XIe–XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Gallimard; Le Seuil, 2005).

monks, whose shared language was Italian, to interact with and influence the world around them). The production of written work would gradually be assigned to workers, whom we can get to know thanks to the documents kept in the Custody. The archives show us a world of men in which there was a clear hierarchy and increasing specialization of skills.

A monk is always in charge of managing the Tipografia (and sometimes of all of the convent's manufacturing units). He enlists the help of two clergymen who serve as foremen who supervise the workspace. These three are generally Europeans. Then come the *lavoranti* (workers) – as they were called in the Italian vocabulary of the convent – either “imported” from further afield for their specific set of skills, or, as we will see later on, trained within the institution itself (often children from the orphanage).

The space in which the Franciscan Printing Press had set up shop quickly became too cramped. In the 1880s, more storage space was needed for books and materials. Premises were set up in what the director called the “old school,” which, according to our research, was adjacent to the Press. The largest room thus became a manufacturing area, and was also open to customers placing orders and paying for products.

It is difficult to establish with any certainty whether or not book distribution and sale were one of the FPP's activities – and to date such an activity if it was. While the bookselling activity – which nowadays operates under the name Franciscan Book Corner on the Jaffa Gate – came about at a later date, all evidence points to the fact that the FPP also functioned as a reseller for books printed elsewhere. Holy Land guidebooks for pilgrims, printed in various languages and distributed directly in Casa Nova, the nearby guesthouse, were among the top sellers. On December 10, 1898, for instance, the register states that a guidebook arrived from Mainz. It had been written by Fra Lavinio and subsequently translated into German to sell to German-speaking pilgrims. The FPP also fulfilled a number of commercial orders for business or social occasions – business cards, cards to send with bouquets, menus for ceremonies and parties<sup>10</sup> as well as seasonal orders such as graduation certificates, Ramadan calendars and almanacs at the end of the year.

The archives clearly indicate that the FPP collaborated with other workshops of the Custody of the Holy Land as well as with other printing houses in the city and abroad belonging to other communities. Various parts, the types for instance, were repaired and sometimes even manufactured at the foundry. One example is September 1879, when the foundry workers asked to receive broken pieces one by one rather than all at once in order to organize and stagger their work. The Franciscan convent – a microcosm unto itself – had its own internal logic dictated by the complementarity of activities and a concerted effort to gradually rationalize the workflow. This rationalization concerned both objects and people throughout the period studied: unfinished products were dispatched to various workshops and workers received training to perform various tasks, thereby becoming specialized in certain areas and building an identity as workers. Among this new hierarchy of workers, people working at the Press were highly ranked.

### **The fin-de-siècle workshop, colonialities of power**

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<sup>10</sup> See Maria Chiara Rioli's chapter in this volume

Let us take a look at the way work was organized in the Tipografia workshop. A few pieces from the archives help us refine our vision of the daily work at the Press. I studied a notebook belonging to the director who took over in 1879<sup>11</sup> and ledgers kept by directors after that. The picture that emerges is that of a small company where social hierarchies and colonial and imperial domination are quite apparent, and reflect power relationships in the city and the country at large. Very strict paternalism towards the workers was typical of work relationships. The workers were “locals” (that, is, they were from Jerusalem or its surroundings and the Bilad al-Sham region). This local status set them firmly apart from the missionaries. They were all men. Nonetheless, even among the workers, a hierarchy of skills, status and age would gradually emerge.

It is time to get to know one of the FPP directors who arrived in the summer of 1879 and remained at the FPP until the following summer. His name is Fra Guido Corbelli da Cortona, “entrato il 22 luglio del 1879” (entered on July 22, 1879), as he wrote on the first page of his notebook.<sup>12</sup> Using a different pen, he added: “fine Agosto 1880” (until August 1880), when Fra Guido was elected Custos of the Holy Land, charge he maintained until 1886.

At the head of the FPP, Fra Guido also dutifully recorded for posterity the names of the directors who preceded him. Thus in August 1879 he added the following comment to the first page of his notebook: “I forgot to mention at the beginning of this book that the director of the Tipografia, until May of this year, was Fra Francesco Salesio Angeli, from Hungary”. This was a way for Fra Guido to put himself on the map, in other words to write himself into a lineage, a continuity. It was both a form of loyalty towards his predecessors and a way of setting his own work apart. It may be seen as a form of self-promotion that would come to characterize his assignation, as we will see. Fra Guido’s accession to the role is (self)-described as the outcome of a series of accidents following the death of the Secretary of the Custody, Fra Barnaba da Terni, “who suffered sunstroke” in Cairo on July 3, 1879. The conditions under which Fra Guido was appointed are noteworthy, as death was widely considered to be one of the possible outcomes of a mission.<sup>13</sup> From this date onwards, the Franciscan documents refer to him as the new *direttore* of the Tipografia, and of the St. Saviour Casa Nova (the “new house” the Franciscans opened for lodging the pilgrims in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century). His was a difficult job, and he made sure, early on, that it was known. He was in charge not just of the Printing Press, but also of other workshops in the Custody: “Falegname” (woodworking); “Fabbroferajo” (iron work); “Calzolajo” (shoemaking); and “Sarto” (tailoring).

His duties involved those of any workshop manager, but he also had spiritual missions such as the weekly spiritual conference he gave to the workers on Wednesdays. The conference was supposed to be held in the “old school,” but in reality it soon moved to the

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<sup>11</sup> Fra Guido, continuous until 1880, resumed in 1897-1898.

<sup>12</sup> [Archivio storico della Custodia di Terra Santa \(ASCTS\)](#), “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima.” Memorie della tipografia, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24.

<sup>13</sup> There is no shortage of reading material and imagery relating to the risks involved in a religious mission – multiple publications have focused on the history of Christian missions alone. Hélène Murre-van den Berg’s annotated bibliography is incomparable to navigate your way around the abundance of documentation: “The Study of Western Missions in the Middle East (1820-1920): an annotated bibliography,” in *The Social Dimension of Christian Missions in the Middle East*, eds. Norbert Friedrich, Uwe Kaminsky, and Rolan Löffler (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010).

Casa Nova's Third Class refectory.<sup>14</sup> The conference was just one of the many aspects of the spiritual tutelage the workers received: workers' attendance to morning mass was checked, as well as their observance of the various religious holidays and their practice of confession (usually at the end of a day's work).

However, it would not make sense to draw too clear a distinction between spiritual and temporal tasks. Fra Guido's journal, together with annotations on payslips (*stipendi*), provide a very clear indication that Christian morals were strongly tied in with work itself. Christian morals focused on key values, which gave work a pivot and redemptive role. In short, the Father-director was a spiritual leader just as much as a workshop leader, and he took his spiritual responsibility very seriously. We know whose souls Fra Guido undertook to elevate, because he consigned their names and the date of their arrival at the Tipografia in a series of notebooks<sup>15</sup>:

Habasc Mikail (1851), Caruz Abdallah (1852), Hallac Samaan (1854), G res Kalil (1859), Lonzo Anton (1860), Curdi Stefan (1869), Tarscia Samaan (1869), Haddad Habib (1870), Arab Bisqual (1871), Lonzo Calman (1873), Gattas Mikail (1874), Nisnas Mikail (1875), Caruz Anton (1879), Salib Manuel (1879), Aooda Anton (1879), Chittane Anton (1879), Stefan Bschiara (1879).

By the account of Fra Paolo Greganti, FPP founder Fra Sebastian Frötschner (1807-1891) was initially sent to train with the best printers in Vienna. He then purchased a printing press with a few types and travelled to the Holy Land where he set about recruiting staff. "He chose an adult who struck him as intelligent, as well as three young people aged between 13 and 15, who had been part of our parish school, and taught them – very patiently – the basics of the art of composition."<sup>16</sup> Fra Guido's successors also kept a list of staff whose first names were spelled according to the various languages spoken in the FPP. Anton could thus become Antonio; Stefan, Estefan or Stefano, etc. The same – changing – rules of usage applied to family names. This list of men shows the progression and the development of the Tipografia, a development which accelerated in the year of Fra Guido's appointment in 1879.

The names of the workers reappear alongside the tasks listed as the workshop. Thus in September 1865:

1. *Storie de' Crociate II. P. Arab. Sign. 9. Antonio Losso, Raffaele ed Abdallah.*
4. *Catechismo Diocesano arabo, II. Ediz., Lign. 1., Albina, Raffaele ed Abdallah.*
5. *Firmante di fanulleria per il consolato d'Austria cop. 200, ½ forma, Carlo, Raffaele ed Abdallah.*
6. *Lettere d'uffizio per il Lloyd in Giaffa cop. 200, ½ forma, Carlo, Raffaele ed Abdallah – per il consolato d'Austria."*

The director was assisted by two representatives of the Franciscan order: Fra Giuseppe Weißman of Baden and Fra Alfonso of Capua, "Terziario" (Terciari). On top of their supervisory work, both had specific finishing and binding duties that required a certain

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<sup>14</sup> ASCTS, "Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima." *Memorie della tipografia*, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24, 27 August 1879.

<sup>15</sup> ASCTS, "Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima", *Memorie della tipografia*, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24, f. 3 (the name is spelled as recalled by the priest).

<sup>16</sup> Fra Paolo Greganti, "Centenario della Tipografia francescana di Gerusalemme (1847-1947)," *La Terra Santa* (1947).

technical know-how. There was another skilled worker in the team, usually recruited from outside of the local breeding grounds: the Arabic proofreader, usually Lebanese (at the time when Fra Guido arrived, “Don Giacomo Auad” [Ya‘qûb ‘Awad], whose name, as many others, had already been “Italianized” and somehow ennobled, held this position). In August 1879, the ledger features one more person: Camillo Albino, in charge of handing out salaries to the workers.<sup>17</sup>

In the years that followed, staff turnover was fairly low. This makes it easier to follow the evolution of workers’ salaries and careers as well as their gradual specialization. Upon leaving the workshop they received a pension, which they would occasionally supplement by coming back to work on a specific order. They also supplemented their salaries by working overtime and were paid for each completed piece. A close reading of the logbook of orders and work carried out reveals that Steven Sabella was a reliable and reputable worker (late 19<sup>th</sup> century) and that Gamil Abdallah was a good pieceworker (around 1915).<sup>18</sup> The most experienced and skilled workers, those who built a career working in the Press, feature frequently in the logbook. They received regular pay rises until they finally retired (e.g. worker S. Sabella in 1942).<sup>19</sup> In the ledger for the 1920s (by that point the printing press had its own ledgers),<sup>20</sup> the workers were listed by type of job – three in total: “compositori,” “legatori,” “stampatori.”<sup>21</sup> Being a good person consisted in fulfilling criteria of competence and leading what the documents usually call a “Christian life.” As a result, one worker might be given a letter of recommendation to help him find work elsewhere, while another would not be granted such a letter because he was suspected of being “of ill repute.”

### **Obeying the rules, managing the workers**

Within the hierarchy of values, it seems that silence took precedence. The FPP’s entire work ethic was built around silence – a commandment that was more reminiscent of religious life than of a traditional working environment, where conversations would likely be heard amidst the ticking of machines.

The other golden rule was less unusual: scrupulous timekeeping. The foreman (that is, the workshop director or an assistant) was the keeper of time. The obsession with silence and concentration was tied in with the imperative not to “waste time” (“perdere tempo”). As the ledger for 1880 shows, punishments were harsh: “*Quest’oggi è stata tolta una terza parte della paga settimanale ai lavoratori Salub, Caruz, Chitane et Bsciara, perché invece di lavorare perdevano tempo a discorrere anche dopo d’essere stati avvisati*” (i.e. Today one third of the weekly pay was kept from the workers Salub, Caruz, Chitane and Bsciara because instead of working they were losing time talking, even after being warned). This focus on timekeeping is unarguably born from morality rather than a mere drive towards efficiency.

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<sup>17</sup> ASCTS, “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima”, Memorie della tipografia, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24, 23 August 1879, p. 9

<sup>18</sup> ASCTS, “Lavoranti a cottimo”, 1922 gen. – 1923 dic.

<sup>19</sup> ASCTS, “Paga settimanale dei lavoratori”, 1936 set. 28 – 1943 dic. 31.

<sup>20</sup> In the previous file, the workers (totaling 84) were divided into 11 different positions: 13 compositori, 7 Stampatori, 7 fonditori, 13 Legatori, 1 Pittore, 14 Falegnami, 2 Mulinari, 5 Sarti, 15 Ferrai, 4 Calzolai, 3 Bottai. ASCTS “Paga settimanale dei lavoratori”, 1915 mar. 6 – 1915 nov.

<sup>21</sup> ASCTS, “Stipendi”, 1921 ago. 29 – 1926 nov. 27.



The objective was to combat sloth – “ozio” in the friars’ Italian – since laziness is a capital sin. Distraction was tracked and punished. The ageing worker Caruz was thus punished in September 1880 for losing his focus and having made too much noise (“fatto baruffo”).<sup>22</sup> One has to keep in mind that this obsession with time is also one of the characteristics of colonial powers and imperial orders. In the case of Jerusalem, the application of a certain order of time is one of the ways to get along, to give a common rhythm to the city, as shown by the Ottoman projects of City clocks as well as by the installation of Church clocks.<sup>23</sup>

There were other serious crimes such as theft (*furti*) and poorly executed work or, more generally, carelessness. On March 27, 1899, Stefano Curdi was issued a warning because his binding was sloppy. From the very first warning he was told that unless the binding was done with more care, he would have to fix it at his own expense. What emerges from a close study of the way that incidents and misdeeds were handled is that they were managed “internally.” The workers were threatened with collective punishment until the culprit turned himself in. Sometimes the culprit would come forwards, failing which another technique was used. A statement from the two friars in charge of supervising the workshop would, for example, be issued. The friars certainly did not need encouragement to play their part as foreman – Fra Giuseppe and Fra Alfonso were prone to complain about workers mocking them.<sup>24</sup>

There was a degree of solidarity between workers. They did not denounce one another and were happy to collectively shoulder responsibility for a wrongdoing such as a damaged machine or wasted paper. (In the beginning of the year 1880, the director’s journal contains an account of such an episode.) In retaliation, the director set up a much tighter surveillance system headed by Fra Guiseppe. Each morning, a list of tasks was drawn up and used to check progress at the end of the day before reporting back to management: “così la sera vedrò il lavoro d’ognuno, e se m’accorgo di pigrizia e negligenza diminuirò la paga giornaliera del lavorante trascurato” (“this way, in the evening I will be able to review what each worker has done and, should I notice any laziness or negligence, I shall reduce the daily pay of the worker in question”). It is difficult to determine whether this system was always used and whether it was effective. However, one thing is certain: over the period we studied (until the late 1920s) any and all breaches of discipline and substandard work were systematically reported in the payroll and resulted in lasting financial sanctions. The closest parallel is perhaps the way the Guild functioned in the Middle Ages,<sup>25</sup> specifically the keeping of a religious register, the compulsory performance of charitable acts and the obligation to give money to the head of the guild for immoral behaviour (drinking, cheating, etc.). At the FPP, there was no practice of

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<sup>22</sup> ASCTS, “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima”, *Memorie della tipografia*, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24, 23 August 1879.

<sup>23</sup> Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015); Giordano Nanni, *The Colonisation of Time: Ritual, Routine and Resistance in the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).

<sup>24</sup> “Si sono lagnati che alcuni lavoranti, particolarmente Chittane, Caruz e Salib, si burlano di loro. Ho chiamato i detti tre lavoranti, e li ho severamente ripresi” (i.e. “They complained that some workers - specifically Chittane, Caruz and Salib - had made a fool of them. I called the aforementioned three workers and gave them a good scolding.”); ASCTS, “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima”, *Memorie della tipografia*, 1879 lug. 22–1899 mag. 24, 23 August 1879.

<sup>25</sup> Jennifer Kermode, ed., *Enterprise and Individuals in Fifteenth-Century England* (Gloucestershire; Wolfboro: Alan Sutton, 1991).



making payments to the saints, but workers accused of immorality saw their salaries slashed until they had made amends for their behavior.

The organization of work revolved around a strict timetable, including Christian time, with mass as the main feature. This aspect of the FPP likens it to a pre-Capitalist universe, predating the standardized hours in factories.<sup>26</sup> But the similarities stop there: the Jerusalem of that period ran on many different clocks. So we might just as easily liken the ecclesiastics' timekeeping – the intense focus on time management, speed and efficiency when performing tasks – to timekeeping in factories. Indeed, orders coming in increasingly set the pace at the workshop. Accordingly, it became more and more frequent for workers to work paid overtime hours in order to finish a specific order.

### **Reciprocal duties and social care**

The payoff in the Franciscans' paternalistic system was the privileges and protection they procured. Let us leave to one side the spiritual protection provided by the Franciscans. It seems the workers did not much care for it, because they preferred to arrive a little later than the 6 o'clock morning mass (the archives contain numerous mentions of this shortcoming). Before the arrival of Fra Guido, working at the Printing Press appears to have been considered a true privilege, in particular compared to other workshops. Did the workers appreciate the respectability, the difficulty or the novelty of their work level? We do not have the answers. We do know, however, that Fra Guido took it upon himself to put an end to these privileges that had previously set the Tipografia workers apart from the others. He put an end to advantages, bonuses, presents for name's day etc. and enlisted the help of his superiors in doing so, frequently asking the Custos himself to support his decisions.

To compensate for all this, there was a system of donations and rewards for overtime work when orders piled in or when a job was being "put to bed" (see the ledgers), as well as for celebrations such as the new year. Until 1879, on their saint's day, workers received 5 to 10 Francs. The new director did away with this advantage on September 29, 1879, purportedly because workers in other workshops did not have the same benefits. The director's decision may well also have been a response to the increase in the workforce and the access to cheaper labor with more deeply-rooted loyalty: that is to say, workers came increasingly from the orphanage.

The orphans were at the heart of the Custody's plan for what one might call self-subsistence. The idea was to offer the children from the orphanage a job in one of the workshops. Thus they would start out as apprentices (see photo) whose roles were to return parts to their proper place, help with composition and generally learn how to perform the various tasks in the workshop. Their pay was relatively low compared to the salaries the workers received. Once trained, they participated fully in the workshop. Training the children from the orphanage was undoubtedly a way to circumvent an issue Fra Guido often commented on in his notebook, i.e. local workers' lack of discipline and their tendency to become distracted – a shortcoming he attributed directly to their life outside of the convent. Indeed, local workers had dependents (their family) and obligations that prevented them from

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<sup>26</sup> Peter Stabel, "Labour Time, Guild Time? Working Hours in the Cloth Industry of Medieval Flanders and Artois (13th-14th Centuries)," *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 11, no. 4 (2014).

having the flexibility the job required.

Some workers received protection from influential members of their family. Fra Guido seems to have wanted to have a free hand in his workshop and took kindly to intervention from the outside. The most notable example of interference is the recruitment of an Arabic proofreader closely linked to the Latin Patriarch (the nephew of the Patriarch's chancellor). The new recruit was soon found to be grossly incompetent.<sup>27</sup> The whole affair became a confrontation between the missionary – who was not a local – and the town's most powerful and notable inhabitants. The proof-reader had been hired on his relative's recommendation and was entrusted unto the director's care by the Custos himself. As such, he immediately received preferential treatment (60 fr/month pay and day lodgings to work at the Custody).<sup>28</sup> In Fra Guido's account of the case the proofreader arrived on 16 August 1879 and the issue lasted several weeks. Fra Guido highlighted both his concern with safeguarding the interests of his institution and his order, and with upholding the rule of work well done and of moral conduct. On August 28, 1879, i.e. barely two weeks after he was recruited, the proofreader was severely admonished and Fra Guido commented that he had “been forced to warn his uncle.”<sup>29</sup> One month later, the director was “at the end of his tether.” In a desperate bid to save his nephew's position, the uncle stepped in and swore he would ensure his protégé did not hand in poorly executed work by personally pitching in with the proofreading. In spite of these concessions and everyone's best efforts, Giuseppe Maria Tannous (the nephew) was only allowed to retain his position in the workshop for the sake of maintaining good relations between the Latin Patriarchate and the Custody. The documentation available – the notebook kept under Fra Guido's management, as under his successors' management – is rife with accounts of the way mistakes or sloppiness at work were handled. Whether it was a damaged machine or poor-quality binding, everything was consigned in the notebook and subsequently deducted from salaries. Warnings added up and could lead to dismissal.

Paternalism took many different forms, including leniency. Thus from September 24-29, 1930, composer Antonio Dopieralo was fired for negligence at work and frequent tardiness. He was hired again a week later “per carità verso i parenti” (“as a charitable act towards the relatives”).<sup>30</sup> He was dismissed permanently in December 1930, for the same reasons as previously.<sup>31</sup> Amid growing rationalization of work, the workers' potential poverty became the only valid reason for coming to their aid. In the journal and in the notebooks, frequent reference is made to “poor workers” who received aid in various forms: including clothing (“un cappotto per un povero lavorante” – “a jacket for a poor worker”), healthcare (medical, mostly), or direct financial aid (mostly advances on their salary to face unexpected

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<sup>27</sup> The difficulty of hiring good proofreaders characterized the history of the FPP since its establishment. Writing to Cardinal Alessandro Barnabò, prefet of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide, on the possible transfer of the FPP under the dependence of the Roman Dicastery, the Patriarch Giuseppe Valerga highlighted how the friars “manchino di persone idonee alla correzione” (“lack of people able to proofread”) (ACPF, Scritture riferite nei congressi. Terra Santa e Cipro, vol. 24, ff. 3-4, 3 January 1866).

<sup>28</sup> ASCTS, “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima”, Memorie della tipografia, 1879 lug. 22 – 1899 mag. 24, 23 August 1879, 16 August 1879, p. 8-9.

<sup>29</sup> “Ho ripreso fortemente il correttore della tipografia (Tannus) perche corregge molto male, e non toglie i spropositi. Ne ho anche avvertito suo zio”, ASCTS, “Brevi notizie sulla tipografia e sui direttori della medesima”, Memorie della tipografia, p. 10.

<sup>30</sup> ASCTS, “Stipendi”, 1926 dic. 4 – 1931 mag. 16. Note in pencil.

<sup>31</sup> ASCTS, “Stipendi”, 1926 dic. 4 – 1931 mag. 16. Note in pencil. “cacciato via condotta non buona sempre in ritardo” (i.e. “fired for negligence in work, always late”).

expenses).

## **Religion of the books**

The Printing Press had pride of place among the workshops in the Custody, primarily because of the importance of what it manufactured. The workshop manufactured schoolbooks that were sent out to the entire network of missionary schools in the region, dictionaries and tools to learn languages and help spread the mission's message, church books and religious books, almanacs, and all of the small publications needed for ritual life.<sup>32</sup> Books also allowed the Custody to play a crucial part in the transmission of texts and languages. As printing developed, the FPP acquired more and more types, and specialized in translation from European languages to Arabic. Along with Beirut's Catholic Printing Press and its Oriental Library, the FPP became the more pragmatic side of the Arab world's *Nahda*. Beyond that, the very foundations of the Order – which considered labor and social work to be aspects of priesthood – hinged on the FPP, which trained workers and gave them regular work for a lifetime, as well as training orphans to become skilled workers. In a context predating labour law, the Tipografia microcosm revealed the hierarchy established by the presence of missionaries in Palestine, as well as the opposition which developed in reaction to it, namely among workers with a longer length of service. In the workshop, this opposition expressed itself through group solidarity (in particular when the friars were trying to identify a wrecker), slowing down the cadence, and minor acts of disobedience (in particular frequent refusals to be silent and slack attendance to spiritual conferences). The skills the workers developed were specialized and rare enough as to render them indispensable, meaning that they could sometimes branch out on their own or even offer their services to competitors, whose numbers were growing since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Occasionally, retired workers were called back to finish an order or work on a difficult task.

An entire slice of life in the city of Jerusalem emerges when one leafs through the FPP's archives at the Custody: not only do we observe the men's working lives and their family ties (or lack thereof), but we also gain access to a great cluster of papers – reading material, cards, labels and blank headed paper destined for its own journey through the city and beyond. The FPP tells us of a glimpse of the history of work and workers in the region, showing how missionary practices joined the evolution of capitalism and managerial practices from old-school paternalism to modern managements of work flow and workforce.

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<sup>32</sup> On almanacs and their relation to order and time see Özgür Türesay, "Le temps des almanachs ottomans: usage des calendriers et temps de l'histoire (1873-1914)," in *Les Ottomans et le temps*, eds. François Georgeon and Frédéric Hitzel (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011).

