

**Study Day**  
Young Researchers  
**1<sup>st</sup> edition**

Supervised by **Guillaume Glorieux**

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**Research**  
at L'ÉCOLE, School  
of Jewelry Arts



**JEWELRY**  
*IN HISTORY*

Supported by **Van Cleef & Arpels**

**October 1<sup>st</sup> 2019**

# Foreward

Founded in 2012 with the support of Van Cleef & Arpels, L'École School of Jewelry Arts has established itself as a place for the dissemination of jewelry culture.

For the past eight years, L'École has continued to introduce the fascinating world of jewelry through three major themes: the history of jewelry, the world of gemstones and savoir-faire. It offers introductory courses, lectures, exhibitions, online videos and publications of books and catalogs to an ever-growing public.

In parallel to these activities, L'École School of Jewelry Arts participates in the building of jewelry knowledge. In this perspective, L'École has opened important fields of research on subjects as diverse as the history of jewelry design from the Renaissance to the present day, the pearl trade between the Middle East and France at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the jewelry of the Comédie-Française, jewelry from the 1960s to the 1980s, and the links between jewelry and literature. The fruit of this research inspires courses, exhibitions and publications.

At the same time, L'École School of Jewelry Arts supports research outside its walls. For example, L'École financed a doctoral thesis devoted to Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689) for three years and has recently created scholarships for students enrolled in Master's research programs and working on subjects related to jewelry, either in art history or gemology.

Finally, on October 1, 2019, L'École School of Jewelry Arts inaugurated its first Study Day. Entitled "Jewelry in History", it brought together

young researchers who dedicate their studies to jewelry, according to a historical approach. The objective of this first conference was not only to highlight the dynamism of Master and PhD research around jewelry topics, but also to link initiatives often dispersed among different universities and institutions. This one day conference offered an opportunity for researchers to meet and dialogue, in the image of L'École, a place for sharing and exchange. These proceedings preserve its memory and make the results accessible.

By inaugurating its first Study Day, L'École School of Jewelry Arts thus continues its commitment to research and fulfills.

Its fundamental mission: to disseminate jewelry culture to the widest possible audience.

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President of L'École School of Jewelry Arts

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# Introduction

## Would Fabrice del Dongo have known such a fate without the diamonds sewn by his mother into his clothes?

Used as a reserve of money - and not as adornment - they allowed the hero of *La Chartreuse de Parme* to join Napoleon's army and to go to Waterloo. After realizing that she could not hold him back, his mother "gave him what little money she had; then she remembered that since the day before she had eight or ten small diamonds worth perhaps ten thousand francs, which the Marquis [her husband] had entrusted to her to take to Milan". The use of precious stones as a monetary reserve and the gift of jewelry to relatives as a token of affection: such uses of diamonds are not unique to early 19<sup>th</sup> century Italy, the spatio-temporal setting chosen by Stendhal for his novel. Here the writer evokes practices that exist through history. By referring to the uses and meanings of jewelry, this literary excerpt introduces the theme of the Study Day that these proceedings reflect: jewelry in history.

Organized by L'École School of Jewelry Arts on October 1, 2019, the Study Day brought together young art history researchers working on jewelry, Master's students, PhD students and PhDs. This day would not have been possible without the support of Nicolas Bos, President and CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels, and Marie Vallanet, President of L'École School of Jewelry Arts. May they be deeply thanked for their support. The presentations that followed reflect a wide variety of subjects and methodological approaches. Proof, if proof were needed, that jewelry is a fruitful object of study and research, very open and intellectually stimulating.

The presentations are organized around three main themes. First, the introduction of figures who have marked the history of jewelry: Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689), a traveler and gem trader between East and West (presentation of Cécile Lugand), Louis-David Duval (1727-1788), whose correspondence from St. Petersburg informs us about the profession of jeweler in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Vincent Chenal), or Pierre Sterlé, whose career raises a whole series of questions about production and the status of a creator and his Maison in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Marion Mouchard).

A second theme focuses on the production and uses of jewelry, from the late Middle Ages to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Morgane Langlois addresses the question of jewelry in a funerary context by studying adornments and jewelry in royal and princely tombs from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Anaëlle Gobinet-Choukroun is interested in stage jewelry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an essential accessory in theater as well as opera, at the frontier of jewelry and costume. The success of *nécessaires* (vanity cases) during the interwar period and their evolution towards the Minaudière at Van Cleef & Arpels are the subject of a study by Alix Ricard. At the same time and in full Art Deco effervescence, jewelry was given an exceptional place at the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, the subject of an essay by Florie Sou. Little-known and rediscovered thanks to research conducted by Léonard Pouy, the pearl trade between the Persian Gulf and France on the threshold of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is studied here through its personalities, merchants and adventurers.

Finally, the third theme is that of jewelry at the crossroads of the arts, from a multidisciplinary perspective, meaning jewelry in its interactions with literature and dance. Jewelry and literature

thus wove very fruitful links in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which Charline Coupeau revisits. Finally, through the example of Van Cleef & Arpels Ballerinas and by looking at their choreographic context, Anne Poydenot de Pontonx studies the creative dialogue between dance and jewelry.

To the diversity of subjects responds a variety of methodological approaches. Three main approaches can hence be identified:

— the monograph, i.e. a study centered on a subject: a historical figure (Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, Duval brothers, Pierre Sterlé), an object (the *nécessaire*) or an event (the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts of 1925). Much remains to be done: many jewelers thus await their author and solid historical research, based on the rediscovery of documents and archival sources.

— the socio-historical approach, which places the jewel in its social context and retraces its history (the jewel in the royal tombs of the Late Middle Ages, the stage jewel in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or the pearl merchants at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Since the dawn of time, jewelry, in one form or another, has accompanied human life and is part of a social play whose drivers are, among others, money, power and seduction.

— the multidisciplinary approach, which considers jewelry at the confluence of the arts. Jewelry is studied in its interactions with literature and dance. This is a very promising path, as jewelry is at the crossroads of the arts and is imbued with the spirit of the times. We should still be interested in the relationship between jewelry and architecture, painting, design, music, sculpture ... subjects still little or not explored at all. The *terra incognita* are still numerous.

This Study Day thus illustrates, through the quality of the presentations, the richness and dynamism of art history research on jewelry. It also gives a measure of what remains to be done. Let us hope, however, that it will inspire new initiatives.

**Guillaume Glorieux**

Professor of the Universities  
Director of Teaching and Scientific Research  
at L'École School of Jewelry Arts

HISTORICAL  
FIGURES



# Cécile Lugand

Art Historian PhD and Professor-Researcher at L'ÉCOLE,  
School of Jewelry Arts

## Jewelry Trading in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689), Traveler and Itinerant merchant

French traveler and merchant, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689) is probably one of the most important figures in the history of jewelry. During six expeditions between Europe and Asia (1631-1668), this man managed to set up trading activity mainly based on exchange of jewelry items. From his fine mastery of complex mechanisms was born a lasting and profitable business with multiple ramifications, an organization that made him one of the major figures of an era characterized by a mutual fascination between two seemingly opposing continents.

Born in 1605, it is probable that nobody had predicted such a destiny for Jean-Baptiste Tavernier. Far from the image of this recently rediscovered portrait (see opposite) depicting a man who is certainly old, but with a certain elegance, it is in Paris, on the Ile de la Cité, that the future traveler grew up. The son of Gabriel Tavernier, an influential Master engraver, the boy was exposed at a very young age to a scholarly world, anchored in the Protestant tradition and revealing the Parisian society of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, an environment seemingly not conducive to adventure and expeditions. In his father's store, many curious people came to admire and purchase maps representing exotic countries, true testimonials of a still relatively unknown world. Jean-Baptiste Tavernier became passionate about these faraway places at a very young age, and he did not fail to note in his travel logs, first published in 1676, that "if education is like a second birth, I can say that I came into the world with the desire to travel". His dreams of the East would nevertheless have to wait since it was, as his apprenticeship contract with a Parisian Master bookseller, Martin Gobert, shows, that Tavernier trained in the books trade as early as 1618 for five years<sup>2</sup>. However, he did not continue in this direction since, at the end of his apprenticeship in 1623, he decided to leave Paris. For the next ten years, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier travelled throughout Europe, then crossed the borders of the Persian Empire for the first time, a key period in his life, a time of pure apprenticeship in its own right.

Back in Paris in 1633, the fascination of the Frenchman was such that he decided to dedicate his life to travel, and to nourish and finance this passion, Tavernier gave his expeditions a central stake, trading, and more particularly that of precious stones and jewelry. Preparing his second journey from 1633 to 1638, he quickly understood that it was essential to subtly and intelligently organize this itinerant activity in which jewelry items occupied a pre-eminent place, a unique trade undoubtedly favored by the emergence of new jewelry trends revealing new tastes, so many reasons explaining the success of the French trader.

### AN ACTIVITY BASED ON METICULOUS PREPARATION

The ways in which Jean-Baptiste Tavernier organized an expedition to Asia were numerous and attest to the meticulous way in which he managed his business. Searching for investors, preparing a shipment, or even personally purchasing goods of which he kept the profits for himself upon his return, the trader paid very particular - and justified - attention to the preliminary steps for any departure, a *sine qua non* condition for the smooth running of a voyage. If the articles he bought were of various types - furniture, goldsmith's objects, linens, clocks and watches - it is clear that jewelry items occupied a large part of this cargo. The origins of these goods were multiple, and it was probably the environment where Tavernier grew up that offered him his first opportunities. The Ile de la Cité neighborhood, where many trades were found, as well as the Parisian fairs where his peers systematically rented stores and stalls, were the means to make a name for himself and to build a dense, eclectic and influential network. Jean-Baptiste also had shares in one of the stands at the Saint-Germain fair from a very young age, just like his brothers and sisters.<sup>3</sup>

To these first items must be added those directly entrusted to him by individuals or professionals. Many jewelers - from France and elsewhere - did not hesitate to mandate him for the sale of batches of diamonds or unmounted pearls and other jewelry. An "*Etat des marchandises mises en mains du Sieur Tavernier marchand avant son départ du voyage de Perse, Indes et autres endroits hors des royaumes*"<sup>4</sup> is revealing, to say the least. Various goods are listed composing his stock bound for the East, goods entrusted by a certain Thomas Cletscher. Amidst these items were listed, among others, "two pear-shaped pearls, good shape and good clarity; a ruby surrounded by diamonds with a flat pearl suspended from it; two small diamonds with three pearls suspended from it; a ruby ring surrounded by small diamonds [...], all for a total sum of 23,950 florins, the currency of Holland". It is then, perhaps of interest to make the link between these described articles and a set of engravings of jewelry designs made a few decades earlier by a certain Thomas

- 1 Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, Paris, Gervais Clouzier, 1676, t. 1, p.7.
- 2 Paris, AN, Minutier central, XXXIII, 245, Apprenticeship contract of Jean Tavernier with Martin Gobert, May 1, 1618. The reference subsequent to the signature of the apprenticeship contract and located in the margin of the original document indicating that the apprenticeship of the young Tavernier was indeed completed in 1623 attests that the young man graduated on that date.
- 3 Paris, AN, Minutier central, VI, 188, Sale by Suzanne Tonnelier to her children of a stand at the Saint-Germain fair, April 30, 1619 (Pub. by M.A. Fleury, Documents du Minutier central concernant les peintres, les sculpteurs et les graveurs au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, (1600-1650), Paris, Archives nationales, 1969, p. 651).
- 4 Paris, AN, Minutier central, VIII, 699, Etat des comptes entre Jean-Baptiste Tavernier et Thomas Cletscher, 14 August 1662.



[FIG. 1] Anonymous Portrait of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier 17<sup>th</sup> century Oil on canvas 72,5 x 57,5 cm Collection of L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts, with the support of Van Cleef & Arpels



[FIG. 2] Thomas Cletscher Drawing of a diamond bracelet First-half 17<sup>th</sup> century Boimans van Beuningen Museum - Rotterdam

[FIG. 3] Hendrik Van Schuylenburgh, The trade center of VOC of Hooghly, Bengal, 1665, Oil on canvas, 203 x 316 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Cletscher, a parallel that may give us a relatively precise idea of some of the items exported by Tavernier in Asia.

Thus, when Jean-Baptiste Tavernier left Paris for several years, his chests contained some works by the most talented Master jewelers, revealing the evolution of jewelry techniques and tastes of the time. Among them were the names of Cletscher, previously mentioned, but also those of Légaré, Du Jardin, or Chardin, regularly mentioned in certain manuscript archives involving the merchant.

If a certain trust seems to have been established relatively quickly between Tavernier and his interlocutors, the real proof was the longevity of his activity, managing such wealth required a great deal of rigor on the part of the person in charge. Rigor and follow-up seem to be constantly respected by Tavernier, who never hesitated to inform his correspondents in Europe. While he was in India in December 1660, the merchant wrote a letter to his brother (who had remained in Paris) in which he informed him about “the box that Mr. Légaré made, the King of Persia bought it, he would also have taken the one that Mr. S. had made if there was no garnet, because he did not care for these stones, and only wanted good and large stones [...]. I also have Mr. G.’s bracelet *table* (setting?), Mr. C.’s pair of earrings [...], apart from that, everything is sold<sup>5</sup>”.

In addition to these numerous - and precious - items, other values had to be calculated in the total amount of this shipment to Asia, and knowledge of their existence is essential to understanding the entire operation of this trade. Much less obvious to describe, since we are dealing with more or less important monetary values, the complexity of the management of such important capital nevertheless testifies to the organizational skills of the French merchant. On October 13, 1663, for example, Claude Gueston lent him the sum of 6,000 livres<sup>6</sup>; a few years later, in 1682, a certain Du Ressors entrusted him with a larger amount, namely 20,000 livres<sup>7</sup>. In addition to mentioning strict loan conditions with all his investors, these contracts signed before Parisian notaries tell us where these sums of money went, and it is not surprising to note that, as a general rule, they were used during the Frenchman’s journey. The challenge for Tavernier was then to multiply commercial operations at each stage of his expedition, buying and then reselling as many times as possible various goods, jewelry and precious stones in particular. For the lender, all the interest of such an operation resided in receiving profits of these numerous sales from Tavernier.

Thus, an expedition in its logistical aspect did not stop at its return, and if the accounts of the merchant with these various protagonists are meticulously settled at each of his departures for Asia thanks to documents scrupulously setting out the conditions of the loan, it would seem that Tavernier could never predict in advance the value of the profits paid out. In the vast majority of cases, these contracts mention that the objects were entrusted at the lenders’ risk, which meant that Tavernier could not guarantee an exact percentage of return on the investments. Whether it was a question of fluctuating travel conditions, the manner in which he would manage to unload these goods, or the various costs related to shipping, Tavernier was aware that “all trips are not equally successful [...] one discovers in one that which is not found in another<sup>8</sup>”, elements that could significantly modify the amount paid to the investor upon his return to France, and that were sometimes subject to litigation between the parties<sup>9</sup>. Generally speaking, however, the merchant’s creditors seemed satisfied, as the percentage of return on investment could sometimes amount to more than 120% of the initial value entrusted to the dealer<sup>10</sup>.

#### THE SPECIFICITIES OF ITINERANT TRADING ACCORDING TO TAVERNIER

If the French merchant did not really invent anything new, as he was only using the ancestral trade routes of the Silk Road, the processes he put in place were interesting and unusual in his time, which was marked by a certain globalization of trade<sup>11</sup>. While commerce with Asia was henceforth governed by the European powers

- 5 Paris, BnF, French manuscripts, 20796, fol. 289, Letter from Golconde, December 20, 1660
- 6 Paris, AN, Minutier central, XC VII, 22, Contrat d’obligation de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier à Claude Gueston, October 30, 1663.
- 7 Paris, AN, Minutier central, LXXIII, 524, Contrat d’obligation de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier à Du Ressors, 10 November 1682.
- 8 Paris, BnF, Z THOISY-377, fols.40-47, Universal complaints about ruins and depredation and interruption of trade.
- 9 Paris, AN, Minutier central, LXXIII, 507, Contract of obligation of Prosper Bauyn and Louis Bécheameil towards Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, May 23, 1677.
- 10 Paris, BnF, Z THOISY-377, *op. cit.*
- 11 G. B. Depping, *Histoire du commerce entre le Levant et l’Europe depuis les Croisades jusqu’à la fondation des colonies d’Amérique*, Paris, Imprimerie royale, 1830, 2 vol. ; S. Chaudhury et M. Morineau (Under the dir.), *Merchants, companies, and trade in Europe, and Asia in the early modern era*, Paris, Maison des sciences de l’Homme, 1999 ; I. Baghdiantz McCabe, *A history of global consumption (1500-1800)*, New York, Routledge, 2015 ; K. Corrigan (Under the dir.), *Asia in Amsterdam the culture of luxury in the golden age*, cat. expo., Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (17 October 2015-17 January 2016), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, 2015.



and their East India companies, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier set up an individual trading activity which, at his level, rivaled these entities with significant financial means. Generally speaking, the study of the - different - routes followed on each of his expeditions shows the care with which he travelled strategic routes, leading or passing through the main trading cities. Some of the goods he carried were debited there, while others were purchased through many capitalists, rent-seekers, merchants, commission agents, brokers, money changers, bankers or lenders<sup>12</sup>, such knowledge undoubtedly contributed to making his local network one of the most extensive of his time.

The observation of the successive itineraries taken by Tavernier allows us to understand the great meticulousness with which the merchant organized and then unfolded each of his expeditions and it is certain that he was thinking about his itinerary during preparations for his journeys. The preparation of this itinerary was based on many stakes, especially those described above, but let's also bet that of the evolution of tastes and fashions influenced it just as much in the purchase of this or that more or less appreciated merchandise. Finally, the economic and political conditions could threaten or, on the contrary, favor the passage through one region rather than another. In addition to these various factors, his exceptional longevity most likely contributed to the success of his activity. Only eighteen years old when he first set out on the Eastern routes, Tavernier would not stop his travels - at least in appearance - until 1668, more than sixty years after he had made six round trips between Europe and Asia on roads that were rarely safe.

Ultimately, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was not just a simple merchant, he knew each of the countries he travelled through and developed solid skills concerning the specificities of local goods, the different currencies and taxes in force, customs and usages. He knew, for example, that the pearls bought in the Persian Gulf had a higher market value at the Court of the Great Mogul<sup>13</sup>; that the diamonds traded in the Golconda mines in India could be resold directly in the rough in European marketplaces by jewelers or amateurs; that emeralds imported from South America, particularly from Colombia, were very successful in India<sup>14</sup>. Tavernier well understood this, since "it is hardly the custom to bring back money from the Levant, but rather to use it in good merchandise on which there can be a profit<sup>15</sup>".

And among these goods, he had his preference, particularly diamonds from Indian mines, located in the heart of the province of Hyderabad, a trade of which he was particularly fond of. Small in size, easily transportable, and capable of generating large profits, diamonds were undoubtedly a very profitable commodity that had to nevertheless be handled with care. If it was not easy to penetrate these remote territories and gain the trust of the local communities at the time, Tavernier assimilated this culture of diamonds throughout his career, a fascinating precious stone, and he proved through his traveling relationships the expertise he acquired: description of the mines, ways of extracting the stone, working conditions, negotiating methods... Even today, the testimony of Tavernier is a considerable source of information on the history of the diamond trade.

With a well established reputation in Europe and Asia, but also at the heart of a particularly influential network, Tavernier sold some of his most beautiful stones to talented European jewelers who would sublimate them into splendid creations, or to powerful figures, including members of the most beautiful courts in Europe and elsewhere.

#### A FAVORABLE EVOLUTION OF TASTES

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the growing European interest for the East considerably favored this trade of items then considered as exotic, and particularly that of diamonds. New jewelry fashions and new savoir-faire concerning stone cutting favoring brilliance and brightness, simultaneously contributed to make the 17<sup>th</sup> century a favorable period for this market<sup>16</sup>.

- 12 Xavier Beguin Billecocq, *Villes et commerce dans le golfe Persique au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 2015, p. 71.
- 13 Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, Paris, Gervais Clouzier, 1681, t. II, p.78.
- 14 Paris, AN, Minutier central, LIV, 332, Inventory after death of Paul du Jardin, April 7, 1661
- 15 Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, Paris, Pierre Ribou, 1713, t. III, p.296.



[FIG. 4] Nicolaes Maes *Portrait of a woman* 17<sup>th</sup> century, Oil on canvas, 80.5 x 102 cm, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse



[FIG. 5] Chitarman, *Shah Jahan holding a pendant with his portrait*, 1627-1628, Watercolor on paper, 38.9 x 25.7 cm, The Metropolitan Museum - New-York



New motifs, mostly ornamental, offered jewelers greater room for movement, allowing free rein to their imagination and creativity. Religious scenes, often enameled, which had been popular until then were gradually abandoned in favor of lighter floral and naturalistic motifs requiring the setting of more and more precious stones. These innovative models were initially inspired by new designs made by jewelers of different nationalities, for example, Thomas Cletscher, already mentioned, or Gilles Légaré, author of a certain type of bodice ornament, a bow called “à l'égaré” (lost bow), which was very fashionable among the wealthy classes of the time<sup>17</sup>. These master jewelers then regularly purchased Indian stones from traders such as Tavernier, stones that gradually became the main subject of the jewel, no longer only used as secondary ornaments of the precious object. Enhanced by new, more ambitious stone cutting techniques, the new place they occupied in jewelry made the settings lighter.

This greater variety of decorative repertoire also allowed the introduction of new motifs and it was not uncommon to perceive the Eastern influence in the works of jewelers, whether in the designs or in the materials used. Pearls were also progressively mounted on more and more ambitious jewelry. Necklaces, brooches, earrings or Eastern motifs such as *aigrettes* ... the same important names that made designs with diamonds incorporated pearls into their creations, naturally contributing to the demand for this material and to the evolution of tastes and fashion, the same names sometimes mentioned in the contracts signed by Tavernier. Anne of Austria, the mother of Louis XIV, did not fail to present him with a pear-shaped pearl one day “weighing six or seven carats”<sup>18</sup>. Making the link between European and Asian cultures, travelers like Tavernier could then be considered as true tree setters.

If Tavernier included many passionate individuals and talented craftsmen among his clients, his link with the highest spheres of power should not be underestimated. Jean Pittan “the younger”, *joaillier ordinaire de la Couronne*, and relative of Tavernier, was officially in charge of the purchase of the gems that would form the Royal collections. Thanks to him, Tavernier was able to sell some of his most beautiful stones to Louis XIV, a monarch fascinated by this gem and its symbolism from a very young age<sup>19</sup>. On August 29, 1670, the traveler and the jeweler actually enumerated their accounts before a notary because of the commission that Tavernier had to pay to the jeweler for “the sale made by Mr. Pittan of the part of diamonds to Monseigneur Colbert for His Majesty amounting to the sum of 900,000 pounds<sup>20</sup>”, a commission fee that the jeweler estimated to be worth 13,500 pounds, or 1.5% of the sale. On that day, December 6, 1668, on his return from his sixth expedition, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier sold the Sun King more than a thousand diamonds from Golconda. Among these diamonds, twenty in particular were the subject of an ambitious project supported by L'Ecole School of Jewelry Arts, a project that made it possible to reproduce these stones, now forgotten or disappeared, thanks to the collaboration of various institutions, including the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington<sup>21</sup>. True witnesses to these exchanges, these twenty replicas are today an unpublished source of the history of the diamond trade, the history of stone cutting, but also the history of jewelry in general, a history to which Jean-Baptiste Tavernier contributed greatly.

However, the traveller's network could not be limited by French borders. Thanks to his mastery of Eastern customs, Tavernier was successively welcomed by the most powerful kings and emperors of Asia. Called to the court of the Persian sovereign, Shah Abbas II, in December 1664, the Frenchman would sell him many European made items that day, including gems and jewels, the latter mentioning, among other items, in his relations, a pear-shaped diamond pendant, or a rich diamond ring on whose bezel were engraved the arms of the King of England. A few months later, in September 1665, it was in Delhi, at the Court of the Great Mogul, that Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was welcomed with pomp and circumstance. Aware of the sovereign's tastes, the merchant had reserved for him some of the most beautiful pearls from

16 J. Evans, *A history of Jewellery (1100-1870)*, Boston, Boston Book and Art, 1970; Provinciale Diamantmuseum (éd.), *Een Eeuw van schittering diamantjuwelen uit de 17de eeuw*, cat. expo., Antwerpen, Diamantmuseum (11 juin - 3 octobre 1993), Antwerpen, 1993; J. Ogden, *Diamonds. An Early History of the King of Gems*, Yale University Press, 2018.

17 G. Légaré, *Livre des ouvrages d'orfèvrerie* [...], Paris, 1663.

18 J.B. Tavernier, Paris, Gervais Clouzier, 1679, t. I, p. 265.

19 D. Alcuffe (sous la dir.), *La collection de gemmes de Louis XIV*, cat. expo., Paris, Louvre Museum (27 April-23 July 2001), Paris, Réunion des musées nationaux, 2001; M. Bimbenet-Privat, *Les pierreries de Louis XIV, objets de collection et instruments politiques*, Paris, Ecole des chartes, 2003.

20 Paris, AN, Minutier central, X, 148, Account between Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and Jean Pittan «the younger», August 29, 1670.

21 F. Farges, P. Dubuc & M. Vallanet-Delhom, « Restitution des » vingt plus beaux diamants de Tavernier « vendus à Louis XIV. Partie 1 », *Revue de l'Association Française de Gemmologie*, n° 200, June 2017, p. 23-29; F. Farges, P. Dubuc & M. Vallanet-Delhom, « Restitution des » vingt plus beaux diamants de Tavernier « vendus à Louis XIV. Partie 2 », *Revue de l'Association Française de Gemmologie*, n°201, September 2017, p. 26-31.

the Persian Gulf, including “a large bouquet of nine large pear-shaped pearls, the smallest of which was 30 carats, and the smallest (*moindre*) of 16, with another pear-shaped pearl alone worth 55 carats<sup>22</sup>”. It is also probable that the emeralds mentioned in a loan contract with the French jeweler Du Jardin, were likely to interest the Mughal sovereign or one of the members of his entourage<sup>23</sup>, a stone to which these men of Muslim faith attached very particular symbolism. A driver of links between Eastern and Western cultures, Tavernier finally also contributed to the contacts between the West Indies and the East Indies, between America and Asia, a new fact that made him a central figure in commercial and cultural exchanges in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Proof of his great adaptability, and thus reflecting the image of the Perfect Trader described at the same time by J. Savary<sup>24</sup>, Tavernier for more than thirty years was able to establish and maintain a relationship of trust with his various investors, creditors and buyers, thus establishing a dense network, both in Europe and Asia, and allowed his business to benefit from the best conditions to prosper. The way in which he prepared for his seventh and final journey to the Orient in the early 1680s proved the durability of his activity but above all his passion. Although he was nearly eighty years old, lenders and other sales and purchasing agents were still as numerous as ever. And if the sums allocated to him for his voyage were still as large as ever, sometimes more than 20,000 pounds, this time the treatment of the loan conditions mentioned new clauses. It was provided that if Tavernier died during the trip, it as his wife, Madeleine Goisse, who remained in Paris, who would have to repay the creditors for his investment<sup>25</sup>.

The unflinching confidence shown by his various interlocutors in the end demonstrates Tavernier's multiple qualities, including that of “knowing how to listen with attention and reflection [...]. One of the greatest secrets of the art of negotiation is to know how to distill in the minds of those with whom one is negotiating the things that are in one's interest to persuade them of<sup>26</sup>”. Relationships of trust with his suppliers and customers, mastery of the characteristics of the objects being offered, knowledge of the evolution of fashion and tastes, finesse of mind and dexterity in calculating the costs of each of his shipments, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier presented all the skills necessary to establish a fruitful business in the field of jewelry. His involvement in trade between Europe and Asia, as well as his role as a supplier of gemstones to European jewelers and artists have contributed to the evolution of jewelry and the jewelry arts in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

22 Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages*, Paris, Gervais Clouzier, 1681, t. II, p.78.

23 Paris, AN, Minutier central, LIV, 332, After death inventory of Paul du Jardin, 7 Avril 1661.

24 Jacques Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant* [...], Paris, Louis Billaine, 1675.

25 Paris, AN, Minutier Central, LXXIII, 524, Contract of obligation between Jean-Baptiste Tavernier and le Sieur Lefebvre, 10 November 1682.1

26 François de Callières, *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains*, Paris, Michel Brunet, 1716, p.148.

# Vincent Chenal

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## A Source of information on the Profession of Jeweler in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century: the Correspondence of Louis-David Duval (1727-1788) in Saint Petersburg

The written sources concerning the trade of jeweler and “bijoutier” are rather rare and written correspondence is even more rare. However, it is essential for our understanding of how luxury items were made. Geneva having been a particularly active place of production in the 18<sup>th</sup> century thanks to its watchmaking industry known as «la Fabrique» and its ancillary trades, such as jewelry, the public archives of this city still hold some traces of the activities related to these trades. In this case, the Library of Geneva preserves letters from the Geneva jeweler Louis-David Duval, active in Saint Petersburg between 1745 and 1788, addressed to his wife Marie-Louise<sup>1</sup>. The author of these epistolary documents wrote them during his two stays in Moscow, the first in 1767 and the second in 1775, to give instructions to his wife, so that she could ensure the smooth running of his business in his absence. These letters contain a great deal of information about the process of making jewels and jewelry (bijoux) from the customer’s order to their realization in the workshop. In particular, their interest focuses on the central role of design in the organization of work as one of the economic stakes of the company. This correspondence allows us to glimpse some elements.

### LOUIS-DAVID DUVAL, JEWELER IN SAINT-PETERSBURG

Louis-David Duval (1727-1788) descended from a French family that immigrated to Geneva at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and had been active in the trade of precious metals for the Geneva watch industry at least since 1722<sup>2</sup>. It is probably with the encouragement of his two brothers, David Duval-Du Roveray (1711-1791) and Jean Duval-Sigoret (1715-1781), jewelers active in London from 1740 to 1760 approximately, that he travelled to St. Petersburg in 1745. He carried a few watches with him, cases of various instruments and snuffboxes worth 5,000 roubles provided by his elders who had settled in the English capital<sup>3</sup>. Thanks to this merchandise, the three brothers hoped to open and conquer new markets in Saint Petersburg, a city open to Europe, then in full urban and economic development founded less than half a century earlier. The wealthiest Russians of the new capital adopted the taste of jewelry of western culture since the reigns of the Empresses Anna Ivanovna (1693-1740) and Elizabeth I (1709-1762)<sup>4</sup>.

This market proved fruitful for the Duval trade. Shipments of jewelry from London to St. Petersburg lasted for many years, since in 1775 Louis-David Duval still received goods from his brothers worth 140,000 rubles destined for Empress Catherine II of Russia<sup>5</sup>. The few names appearing in the correspondence of Louis-David Duval in 1767 and 1775 are part of Russian high society. The Geneva jeweler included among his clients the most prominent aristocrats of Saint Petersburg such as Ivan Betskoi (1703/1704-1795), Prince Grigori Potemkin (1739-1791), Count Ivan Shouvalov (1737-1797), Prince Dolgorouki (dates?), Nikita Akinievitch Demidoff (1724-1789), Count Alexander Stroganov (1733-1811) and Prince Alexander Kurakin (1752-1818).

Despite an abundant clientele, Louis-David Duval was confronted with competition upon his arrival in Saint Petersburg from many of his Russian or foreign fellow jewelers, *bijoutiers* and goldsmiths, most of whom were grouped together in a guild created in 1722 by Tsar Peter the Great, while others were independent<sup>6</sup>. He found with his fellow countryman jeweler Jérémie Pauzié (1716-1779) a welcoming place in the Russian capital<sup>7</sup>. Born in Geneva and living in St. Petersburg since 1730, Pauzié shared his experience of Russian customs with Duval in order to introduce him to clients. He helped him sell his merchandise brought from London, then hired him to work in accounting. Some time later, the two men signed a deed of partnership for four years, each investing 5,000 rubles in the company’s capital<sup>8</sup>. Thanks to this partnership, Louis-David Duval’s two brothers sold jewelry in Russia on commission sent from London. In St. Petersburg, however, this type of product was only allowed to be sold in stores, whereas Pauzié, as a jeweler, did not own any<sup>9</sup>. At the end of the four years, the association between the two men was not renewed because of their disagreement due to the unstable character of Duval<sup>10</sup>.

Louis-David Duval continued to work independently and became one of the most prominent jewelers in the Russian capital, especially after Pauzié’s definitive return to Switzerland in 1763. According to his correspondence, he had the status of a jeweler, although he also dealt in *bijouterie*. The general in charge of the «Intendancy of the Treasure» of the crown in Moscow (the Russian regalia) proposed Duval to «have him named the *jouaillier*»<sup>11</sup> «of this treasure of the Imperial family. But Duval declined this offer, preferring to continue his work in Saint Petersburg where most of his clients were located. If the «goldsmith and jeweler [is] the one who sells and processes diamonds, precious stones, and especially natural pearls, with which some jewels have been enriched in recent years», he is also «known under the title of *maker*»<sup>12</sup>; these, like bijoutiers, «mount fine or fake stones on rings, necklaces, pendants, or other ornaments of this type, while the others make & embellish snuffboxes, cases, cane handles, watch cases, etc.»<sup>13</sup>. These were the type of products that Louis-David Duval traded.

Although almost all, with few exceptions [FIG. 1], of the objects made under the direction of Louis-David Duval have disappeared, we know some of his production through his correspondence, which provides us with information on the

- <sup>1</sup> These letters from Louis-David Duval to his wife Marie-Louise Duval, née Dumont (deceased in 1815), are kept at the Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE) as Ms. fr. 3777.
- <sup>2</sup> Louis Duval-Engel (1684-1760), father of Louis-David Duval, joined forces for six years with Jacob Naville (1682-1744) in the gold trade (*Livre des inscriptions des sociétés des négociants enregistrés en Chancellerie, Genève, Archives d'Etat de Genève, Comm. D1, p. 107, 28 November 1722*). This company was dissolved on 2 February 1726 (*ibid.*, p. 116).
- <sup>3</sup> Jérémie Pauzié, *Mémoire abrégé de la vie de Jérémie Pauzié, born in Geneva in September 1716*, manuscript preserved at the Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), Ms. suppl. 1399, transcribed by Mélanie Draveny in her university thesis, *Édition critique in troduit et commenté du mémoire de Jérémie Pauzié, joaillier à la Cour de Russie de 1730 à 1763*, Master’s thesis under the direction of Wladimir Berelowitch, University of Geneva, 2004; we now cite Pauzié’s manuscript under the abbreviated reference Draveny.
- <sup>4</sup> Alexandre de Solodkoff, *Orfèverie russe du XVII<sup>e</sup> au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Fribourg, Office du Livre, 1981, pp. 37-40. See also the testimony of jeweler Jérémie Pauzié, excerpt published in Mélanie Draveny, «Jérémy Pauzié, joaillier genevois à la cour des tsars (1716-1779)» in Laurent Golay, Alexandra Kaourova (dir.), *Suisse-Russie: des siècles d’amour et d’oubli 1680-2006*, exhibition catalog, Musée historique de Lausanne, 17 February - 25 May 2006, Berne, Bentelli, p. 56.
- <sup>5</sup> David Duval-Du Roveray had relocated to Geneva by 1766 at the latest, since on that date he signed in Geneva the deed of foundation of a limited partnership with Louis Alexandre Rouzier, master watchmaker and inhabitant, Etienne Agasse, Plantamour, Rilliet and Jean Louis Delorme, for the manufacture and trade of watches, silverware and «dependencies» (*Livre des inscriptions des sociétés des négociants enregistrés en Chancellerie, Genève, Archives d'Etat de Genève, Comm. D1, p. 463, 20 April 1770*). David Duval-Du Roveray may have continued to send jewelry to Louis-David Duval from Geneva; we do not know if Jean Duval-Sigoret continued his career in London and until what date. In 1775 Louis-David Duval received goods from his brothers for the sum of about 140,000 roubles (letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 41-44).
- <sup>6</sup> On the guilds of goldsmiths’ and jewelers in Russia see Alexandre de Solodkoff, *Orfèverie russe du XVII<sup>e</sup> au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, op. cit.*, p. 19.
- <sup>7</sup> Information on the early years of Louis-David Duval’s life in St. Petersburg is based on Jérémie Pauzié’s autobiography, except for Louis-David Duval’s correspondence with his wife. This source is



range and variety of jewels and gems. We find brooches, rings, earrings, necklaces, bows, knots, aigrettes, cufflinks, ruffles, snuff boxes, «portrait frame[s]» (frame of a miniature), watch decorations [FIG. 2] and miscellaneous objects such as magnifying glasses, swords, horse equipment (bridles, tassels, and bangs), swords, vases, and an archiepiscopal cap enriched with jewels for Prince Gregory Potemkin; the Orthodox Church commissioned metal vases and chalices decorated with enamels from him, objects that belonged more to the realm of goldsmithing.

These objects were made of a wide range of raw materials, from stones to precious metals (gold, silver), elements of crystal, glass, tortoiseshell, and enamel. This resulted in different skills and trades that involved a collective organization of work.

### ORGANISATION OF WORK : SUBCONTRACTING

In his letters, Louis-David Duval never talks about the material realization of jewelry or jewels with his own hands, nor even about a workshop under his direction. In addition to the design of objects, his activity was limited to the supervision of their manufacture by independent workshops of jewelers or other craftsmen specialized in working with materials (stone, metals, enamel). Duval operated in a mode quite similar to that of the Geneva watchmaking industry and its ancillary trades such as jewelry making, namely the division of labor and the specialization of tasks<sup>14</sup>.

For Duval, this delegation took the form of occasional collaborations with jewelers who employed workers. These were Russians as well as foreigners living in St. Petersburg, such as the Geneva jeweler Jean-Pierre Ador (c. 1728-1784) or Marc-Conrad Fazy (1740-1779) (also from Geneva), a watch manufacturer in Moscow. These collaborations guaranteed him manufacturing work on the basis of drawn designs, as for example with Masson and Hogg<sup>15</sup>. The jeweler Jean-François Loubier (1744-after 1800) was one of the most sought-after by the two Duval generations, as he owned a workshop where workers creating on his behalf<sup>16</sup>. Louis-David Duval also relied on the best snuffbox manufacturers in St. Petersburg such as Jean-François Xavier Bouddé and Alexander Lang<sup>17</sup>.

In some cases, Duval turned directly to craftsmen specialized in working with materials. Among the lapidaries at his service were the sculptor Étienne-Maurice Falconet (1716-1791) then in St. Petersburg for the realization of the statue of Peter the Great and his collaborator, Marie-Anne Collot (1748-1821)<sup>18</sup>. He also called upon the lapidaries Ignati, Crasibnikoff de Peterhoff<sup>19</sup> and Newchirck<sup>20</sup>. Johann Caspar Jaeger also received commissions for his portraits cut in fine stones<sup>21</sup>, as well as the metal engraver and medallist Georg Heinrich König<sup>22</sup> (for a snuff box).

### DESIGN AT THE CENTER OF ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Design is a central element in the organization of work between Duval and his collaborators, from the conception of objects to their material realization, like most of his colleagues<sup>23</sup> [FIG. 3]. Duval and his wife executed many of them according to their correspondence<sup>24</sup>. Drawing was the starting point of the creative process. It allowed new shapes to be sketched, rectified if necessary, or adapted «in the taste of fashionable works<sup>25</sup>». Jewelers relied on models disseminated by printmaking, such as the *Premier livre de desseins de joaillerie et de bijouterie, inventés par Maria et gravés par Babel* by Nicolas-Joseph Maria [FIGS 4 AND 5], dating from the third quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a type of collection of engraved plates that circulated in Europe for this purpose<sup>26</sup>. Louis-David Duval suggested to Marie-Louise that she draw inspiration from this type of repertoire:

«The last drawing that you send me is one of the most beautiful and easy to execute without any changes, & quite in the taste of jewelry. I am extremely obliged to you, I will take care of all those that you will send me, & I will keep them, they can become very useful, there are

undoubtedly largely reliable, but rather biased since Pauzié had gotten angry with Duval. Mélanie Draveny, *Édition critique introduite et commentée du mémoire de Jérémie Pauzié*, op. cit., p. 100. On Pauzié, see also Mélanie Draveny's article, «Jérémy Pauzié, joaillier genevois à la cour des tsars (1716-1779)», art. cit., pp. 53-60.

- 8 Mélanie Draveny, *Édition critique introduite et commentée du mémoire de Jérémie Pauzié*, op. cit., p. 100.
- 9 Selon Pauzié, *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- 10 Selon Pauzié, Louis-David Duval suffered from psychological problems.
- 11 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie Louise, 28 January 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 13-15. The general's name is not mentioned.
- 12 Jacques Lacombe, *Encyclopédie méthodique. Arts et métiers mécaniques*, Paris, Pancoucke, Liège, Plomteux, t. 5, 1788, p. 410.
- 13 Article « Metteurs en œuvre », in Denis Diderot, Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, 1751-1780*, platform d'édition critique ENCCRE, <http://enccre.academie-sciences.fr/encyclopedie/article/v10-1236-0/>, consulted July 12, 2019. Let us specify again that the *bijoutier*, in this same encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert (vol. II, p. 248) is equivalent to jeweler.
- 14 Antony Babel, *La Fabrique genevoise*, Neuchâtel, Paris, Éditions Victor Attinger, 1938, p. 13-14, 34-37. See also Osvaldo Patrizzì, *Dictionnaire des horlogers genevois. La fabrique et les arts annexes du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle à nos jours*, Genève, Antiquarium Éditions, 1998, p. 42-53.
- 15 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 37-38.
- 16 Letter from Jacob Duval to his mother Marie-Louise Duval, St. Petersburg, December 6, 1790, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3778, fol. 17-18: "I am delivered from my worries, Mons. Loubier is infinitely better, he is up and can already have his eye on these workers, our works will be finished in time".
- 17 For these two jewelers, as well as Jean-Pierre Ador, Georg Heinrich König, Johann Baltasar Gass, Johann Gottlieb Scharff and Jean-Jacques Duc, all of whom were active in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in St. Petersburg, see Fritz Falk, *Gold of the Tsars. 100 Masterpieces of Goldsmith's Art of the Hermitage, St. Petersburg: The Guild of Foreign Masters*, Stuttgart, Arnoldsche, 1995, p. 20. For Jean-François Bouddé's collaboration with Louis-David Duval, see the latter's letter to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, March 1, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 31-34.
- 18 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, St. Petersburg, February 12, 1775, Bibliothèque de



[FIG. 1] Louis-David Duval's workshop, *Tige of lily in a vase*, gold, silver, copper, diamonds, brilliants, pearls, chrysolite, height 30 cm, bouquet 25 x 14,5 cm, circa 1785, St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum of the Hermitage



[FIG. 2] Workshop of Louis-David Duval, *Chatelaine watch*, gold, silver, diamonds brilliants, glass, enamel, case diameter 4,3 cm, length of the chain 11,7 cm, 1780, Saint-Petersburg, Hermitage Museum (inscription on the chatelaine: "St-Petersburg by Mr L.D.D.M.N.T. fec. 9")



[FIG. 3] Drawing of a jewel, Jean-Charles Ducrollay album, ink and watercolor on paper, circa 1760, London, Victoria and Albert Museum





[FIG. 4] Louis-David Duval, brooch, gold, silver, diamonds, 7.2 x 7.2 cm, ca. 1774, St. Petersburg Petersburg, Hermitage Museum



[FIG. 5] Engraving in Nicolas-Joseph Maria, *First book of designs of toy making and jewelry*, invented by Maria and engraved by Babel, sold in Paris at the author's, [2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century].

some in the printed book of flower earrings, & flower pots or baskets, that I would like to know how to copy, or imitate, you will feel the merit of this last drawing after having read what I mark in my previous one & you will see that I do not impose them to flatter you with regard to necklaces & bows, you just have to do half<sup>27</sup>.»

However, Duval gave Marie-Louise additional explanations in the conception of the drawings in order to take financial imperatives into account. The positioning and size of the stones in the design of a jewel depended in part on the cost of producing the object. The Genevan had had the opportunity to see «a tulip in small diamonds which opened at the slightest breath & revealed as many diamonds inside as outside, carnations, jasmine very perfectly drawn<sup>28</sup>»; but it was to point out to his wife that «the private individuals do not pay the creation of these kinds of works where half of the stones are lost in the contours & are not seen». Louis-David Duval specified to her precisely that a plant leaf formed «by very small diamonds» in «large quantities, is not worth it, because small diamonds are very expensive, & that the price of the work is based as much on the number as on the size of the stones».

To remedy the problem of the cost of the setting, Duval advised Marie-Louise to modify the designs she had proposed and to make them «simpler, & easier to execute, where the diamonds are also visible, where the large stones occupy the middle, & where there are only small stones where the work must necessarily have a little bit of contour<sup>29</sup>».

### TRAINING CRAFTSMEN AND DESIGNERS

Due to the shortage of skilled workers in St. Petersburg and Moscow, in 1775 Louis-David Duval intended to create «two stores made up of jewelers with the means to maintain them», although this required him to advance a «large quantity of gold<sup>30</sup>». In particular, the lack of manpower was felt on the designers' side. While he put his own ideas on paper with the help of his wife Marie-Louise, Louis-David Duval very frequently called upon craftsmen who had mastered the art of drafting<sup>31</sup>.

Aware of the importance of the graphic arts in the jewelry making process, Louis-David Duval considered solving some of these problems at the source in 1775. He announced to his wife his will to «train a large number of workers in all the professions that are most similar to the liberal arts<sup>32</sup>». If he did not specify his plans more precisely, Duval was undoubtedly referring to the teaching of drawing in private workshops<sup>33</sup> or in public drawing schools in France, the latter having been created in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to train workers destined to work in manufactories<sup>34</sup>. This idea did not materialize. Nevertheless, Duval and his wife considered placing their eldest son, Jacob (1768-1844), with a Master draftsman to train him in the jewelry trade<sup>35</sup>. Their second son, François (1776-1854) followed the same apprenticeship. These two brothers continued their father's jewelry business on the same model until the 1810s in Saint Petersburg<sup>36</sup>.

The attention paid by Louis-David Duval to training his sons and workers in the art of design underlines how much was at stake. On this apprenticeship depended the ability of jewelers to adapt to the tastes of their customers and to organize the manual work delegated to specialized craftsmen in order to meet the company's profit obligations. In this correspondence, drawing emerges as a vital economic element for the jeweler's trade, far beyond the mere idea of artistic creation.

Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 22-23, and letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, March 1, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 31-34.

19 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, January 28, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 13-15. Ignati is hired to cut rubies; Crasibnikoff is commissioned to cut garnets.

20 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, February 25-26, 1775, Geneva Library, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 28-30. It is stated in this letter that Newchirck has been working for Duval for ten years.

21 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, February 1, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 16-17. Duval spells the name «Yager», but it is undoubtedly Johann Caspar Jaeger, a gem engraver active in St. Petersburg between 1772 and 1780; on this engraver, see Diana Scarisbrick, *Portrait Jewels. Cameos, medals and miniatures of the Medici at the Romanov*, Paris, Thames and Hudson, 2011, p. 175, fig. 184. Duval commissioned him to cut and engrave a sapphire, probably for this stone, but without precision.

22 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 20-21.

23 Note that no drawing made by the Duvals has survived.

24 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 51-52, concerning the realization of a vase for the Orthodox Church: «For three months the design of these pieces has been out of my mind & I cannot give any suitable direction, neither on the armor».

25 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, 8 March 1767, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 3-4.

26 Let us add, for example: Jean-Henri-Prospér Pouget, *Traité des pierres précieuses et de la manière de les employer en Parure*, [followed by] *Nouveau Recueil de parures de joaillerie second livre*, engravings by Jean-Baptiste Piauger, Paris, Chez l'Auteur, Md. Joyaillier, Quay des Orfèvres au Bouquet de Diamants, and chez Tilliard, Libraire, Quay des Augustins à St. Benoist, 1762; 1764.

27 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, March 12, 1767, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 5-6.

28 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, March 8, 1767, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 3-4.

29 *Ibid.*

30 Letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie-Louise Duval, Moscow, April 13, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 49-50. Duval complained in several letters about the lack of available workers and sometimes



about their lack of seriousness and delays in deliveries.

- 31 As an example, letter from Louis-David Duval to Marie Louise, Moscow, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 53-56: "The draftsman must also provide a sketch for the engraving of the bottom of the plate, otherwise we will have to take the idea of another church plate & do much better."
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 For example, Jacques Saint-Ours (1708-1773) (the father of the history painter Jean-Pierre Saint-Ours, 1752-1809), had opened a private school of drawing in Geneva in 1740 (Danielle Buysens, *La Question de l'art à Genève : du cosmopolitisme des Lumières au Romantisme des nationalismes*, Geneva, La Baconnière, 2008, p. 61). On the Geneva School of Drawing opened in 1751 by the engraver Pierre Soubeyran (1709-1775), see Danielle Buysens, «Introduction,» in Pierre Soubeyran, *Mémoire sur l'établissement d'une école de dessin, et en particulier sur celle établie à Genève* (1766), Genève, Bibliothèque de Genève, 1998.
- 34 On the liberal arts and schools of drawing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, see Agnès Lahalle, *Les Écoles de dessin au xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle : entre arts libéraux et arts mécaniques*, Rennes, PUR, 2006, and Renaud d'Enfert, *L'Enseignement du dessin en France : figure humaine et dessin géométrique (1750-1850)*, Paris, Berlin, 2003.
- 35 Letter from Louis-David Duval to his wife Marie-Louise Duval, 1775, Bibliothèque de Genève, Ms. fr. 3777, fol. 35-36.
- 36 The Library of Geneva also keeps archives of Jacob and François Duval, but their content is less rich on the exercise of their profession. Nevertheless, some information also indicates collaborations with other jewelers and workers.

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## Pierre Sterlé (1905-1978): manufacturer or retailer? Reflection on the Production and Status of a Maker and His Maison in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

If during his lifetime, Pierre Sterlé enjoyed wide fame in France and abroad, it appears that, nowadays, this creator is a forgotten figure in the history of jewelry. And although the work devoted to the jeweler by Viviane Jutheau in 1990<sup>1</sup> made it possible to publish a large number of archives, its proposal was based mainly on the elements brought back in 1961 by Lucien François<sup>2</sup>, the first author to be interested during his lifetime as much in the man as in his production.

Born in 1905, Pierre Sterlé by his father was descended from a family of Alsatian bank employees who settled in the Paris region at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>3</sup>. Following training in jewelers' workshops, he founded his own company in 1934 as a «jeweler manufacturer<sup>4</sup>». This company is registered as a general partnership, Sterlé joining forces with a designer, Alexandre Diringer (1893-1981). The two managers initially set up shop at 51 bis, rue Sainte-Anne. In 1942, «Sterlé et Diringer» became «Sterlé et Cie», making Pierre Sterlé the sole manager of the very young company. The end of the Second World War marked a decisive turning point in the history of the Sterlé company, which reached its peak in the second half of the 1950s. One of the factors was a move, in 1947, to 43, avenue de l'Opéra, with the challenge of welcoming and making customers comfortable. The Opéra Garnier was a valuable ambassador, which Sterlé would not hesitate to exploit as part of a commercial strategy that played on the image and prestige of this edifice<sup>5</sup>. These advertisements reflect the lavish lifestyle of some of the jeweler's customers. They also suggest the vision of a Paris that had regained its status as the «universal capital of luxury» in the early post-war years, an advantageous conjecture that Pierre Sterlé took full advantage of. The rise of the Maison Sterlé was all the more encouraged by the restoration of international relations interrupted by the war, leading to a return of foreign customers to the capital. This new turnaround taken by the Maison Sterlé around 1950 was also perceptible in view of the many events in which it took part. This was the case for the annual competition organized by the De Beers diamond company, of which Sterlé won first prize in 1957<sup>6</sup>. On the occasion of the third Biennale des Antiquaires, Pierre Sterlé captured the attention of visitors with a spectacular canopy under the glass roof of the Grand Palais as a showcase for his creations<sup>7</sup>. After the consecration of the 1950s, the following decade marked the slow and gradual decline of the Maison Sterlé, until its closure in 1976. This period was marked by the financial difficulties facing the jeweler. In the words of his contemporaries, Pierre Sterlé was a «bad manager<sup>8</sup>», but it also appears that he no longer enjoyed the popularity he had in the fifties. Competing with developments in costume jewelry, the Parisian jewelry Maisons also saw their hegemony over jewelry creation and production challenged by the emergence of new centers, such as Italy and the United States<sup>9</sup>. The oil crisis of 1973 also marked the end of the thirty post war years which fostered a flourishing luxury goods industry in France.

As a manufacturer, Pierre Sterlé was characterized by the complexity of his production, working both for his own company and for others, contracting numerous collaborations. These collaborations took different forms and methods, depending on the partner concerned and the period of activity. Therefore, based on these observations, the following question should be asked and applied to each of these associations: was there still a part of the jeweler's own creative activity or did it completely disappear in the face of the preponderance of the spirit of the contractor concerned? Through the prism of their respective characteristics, these partnerships allow us to question Sterlé's very position within his own company: was he a true creative spirit or a simple entrepreneur? How does the elaboration of a jewel, from its intellectual conception to its materialization in precious metal, passing through its transposition on paper, take place? Who are the players involved and what means are used?

### THE MAISONS BOUCHERON AND VAN CLEEF & ARPELS: DECISIVE SPONSORSHIPS

It would seem that the first helping hands extended to the young Pierre Sterlé, as soon as his company was founded in 1934<sup>10</sup>, were those of members of the Van Cleef & Arpels family on the one hand, and of Paul Radius (1876-1949), the «great

- 1 Viviane Jutheau, *Sterlé Joaillier Paris*, Paris, Vecteur, 1990, n.p.
- 2 Lucien François, *Comment un nom devient une griffe*, Paris, Gallimard, 1961, p. 183-1187.
- 3 Birth certificate n°53 of Pierre, Paul STERLÉ, 1905, Cote : 4E 1717 1, Archives de la ville de Paris.
- 4 Trade Register, n°262.637 B, Société «Sterlé & Diringer», 1934, Cote : D33U3 1233, Archives de la ville de Paris.
- 5 Publicité «Sterlé Joaillier» in *L'Officiel de la Mode*, n°377-378, September 1953, n.p.
- 6 [Anonymous], «Bruits et sons», *L'Officiel de la Mode*, n°405-406, December 1955, p. 203.
- 7 [Anonymous], «Bruits et sons», *L'Officiel de la Mode*, n°405-406, December 1955, p. 203.
- 8 Quote from an interview conducted on April 4, 2018 with Béatrice de Plinval, Pierre Sterlé's last collaborator between 1976 and 1978.
- 9 Alba Cappellieri, *Bijoux du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. De l'Art nouveau au design contemporain en Europe et aux États-Unis*, Milan, Skira, 2010, p. 48-49.
- 10 This is evidenced by a preparatory drawing for a pair of «petites créoles» whose annotation attests that they were delivered to Boucheron as early as August 1934, just one month after Sterlé's installation at 51bis, rue Sainte-Anne (Archives Boucheron, Paris).



man from Boucheron<sup>11</sup>», on the other. The origin of these encounters can possibly be found in the person of Georges Pinçon, Pierre Sterlé's maternal uncle, with whom he was trained in jewelry making<sup>12</sup>. As one of the most influential jewelry makers of the *Chambre Syndicale de la Bijouterie-Joaillerie-Orfèvrerie*<sup>13</sup>, Pinçon was, therefore, highly appreciated by the great names of Place Vendôme. With his partner, Victor Magnier, he ran a workshop at 10 rue Castiglione, working for the Van Cleef & Arpels and Boucheron Maisons, among others. It is therefore likely that he played the role of intermediary between Sterlé and these two jewelers.

The terms of these initial associations between Pierre Sterlé and the retail Maisons are, however, not documented by any written sources that would allow us to delineate the creative part of the Maison Sterlé in this production. The study of this part of Pierre Sterlé's career is based solely on the analysis of iconographic documents, gouaches and retail cards, preserved by Boucheron and Van Cleef & Arpels. Nevertheless, as is customary in the practice of jewelry design, none of these projects are signed and therefore do not allow the author to be identified. It is therefore difficult to rule on the fact that Sterlé was at the origin of the jewelry ideas created by his Maison for the jewelers of Place Vendôme. Other testimony tends however to corroborate this hypothesis, like Lucien François, who reveals that Sterlé «worked for a long time only for the jewelers executing his designs.<sup>14</sup> «This statement suggests that these jewelers sought Sterlé's services for his innovative qualities, with the objective of renewing their artistic line and not only to subcontract production that their workshops were unable to honor, given the quantity of pieces to be produced. Moreover, the fact that Sterlé, during his early years, was half managed by a designer, would tend to confirm the creative part of the company and not simply to see it as a manufacturer's workshop. Finally, the exact similarity between the pieces produced for both Van Cleef & Arpels and Boucheron corroborates the conceptual attribution of these works to the manufacturer. For each of these two Maisons, Sterlé supplied a series of charms<sup>15</sup> between 1936 and 1938, capturing the aspirations and evolution of contemporary society in platinum. The same iconography can be found in Van Cleef & Arpels retail cards as well as in the gouache paintings in the Boucheron order books. Reflecting the apogee of a society of leisure and the rise of transportation, the Jocker [FIGS. 1 AND 2], Sailboat, and Ocean liner charms [FIGS. 1 AND 2] exist for both jewelers.

Their composition is similar, deconstructed in multiple simple geometric units, thanks to the use of calibrated diamonds, the principal elements of the subject represented. Thus, the workshop on rue Sainte-Anne was most certainly to provide pieces of jewelry imagined by Sterlé, transcribed on paper by his designer, Alexandre Diringer, and then manufactured by his craftsmen. We can therefore assume that Sterlé submitted preparatory drawings that were then validated by Boucheron and Van Cleef & Arpels, leading to their realization, then delivery and finally their exhibition in the shop windows of Place Vendôme.

Moreover, while it was common for large jewelry Maisons to employ the services of smaller scale workshops of Parisian jewelers, they were also eager to showcase these manufacturers. Looking for the best craftsmen in the capital in order to meet the demand of an ever-growing clientele, they did not fail to sneak in their names at international exhibitions, and also allowed themselves the right to apply their hallmarks on pieces that were subsequently signed in the name of Boucheron or Van Cleef & Arpels. This collaboration was doubly profitable for both retail jewelers and their subcontractors. While it allowed the former to benefit from the technical innovations developed by each workshop, the latter enjoyed relative recognition through the influence of the retail Maisons at major events, such as Universal and international exhibitions. Thus, Pierre Sterlé, as a manufacturer associated with the Maisons Boucheron and Van Cleef & Arpels, certainly had to take advantage of the reputation of its employees, both within the profession and among its customers, both in Paris and abroad. His relationships with the major brands of the Place Vendôme thus proved to be a significant advantage for this young entrepreneur and a choice sponsor to lead him towards a personal career.

11 Lucien François, *Comment un nom devient une griffe*, op. cit., p. 184.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 186.

13 Georges Pinçon was one of the founding members of the sub-group of the «Fabricants Joailliers Bijoutiers Décorateurs» in 1926. This group within the *Chambre Syndicale*, had the objective of defending the interests of manufacturers whose «efforts were much more artistic than industrial. Minutes of the *Chambre Syndicale de la Bijouterie, Joaillerie, Horlogerie*, session of July 6, 1926, Archives de la BJOP, Paris. Pinçon

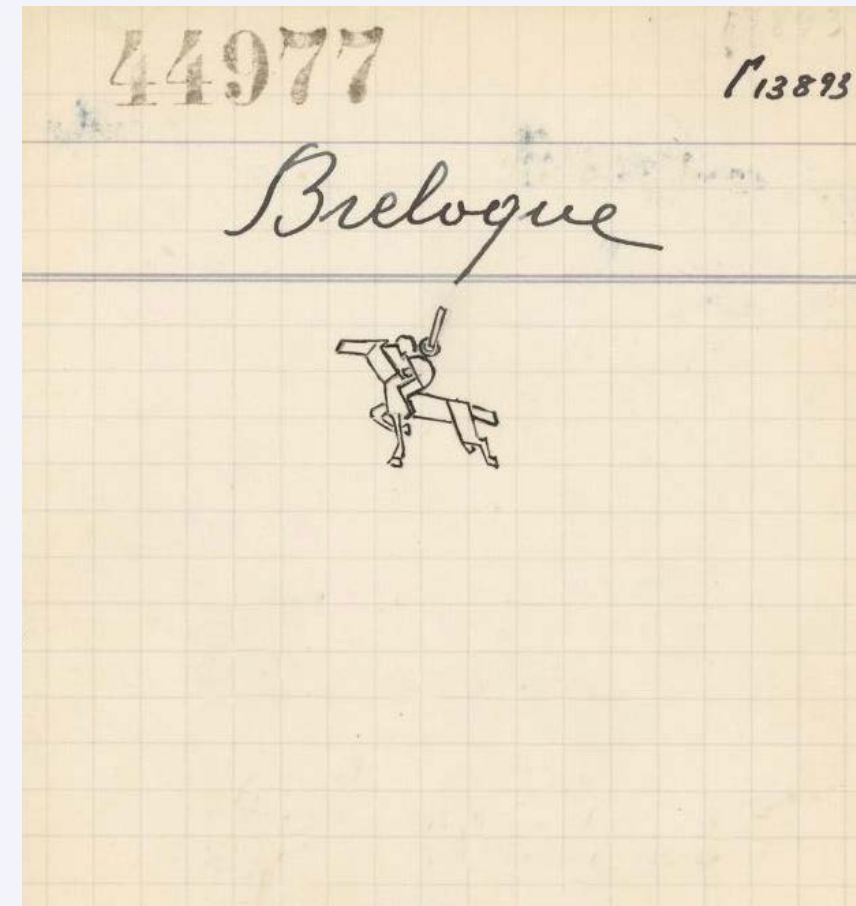
14 Lucien François, *Comment un nom devient une griffe*, op. cit., p. 184.

15 The name charms, an Anglicism that has nowadays replaced the term «brelouques», refers to a «small object, often made of gold or mounted in precious metal, with a bail to be hung on a piece of jewelry [...]. Charm, often considered as lucky charms, are of an infinite variety: animals, heart, tooth, clover, horseshoe, etc.. «Definition taken from Marguerite de Cerval, *Dictionnaire international du bijou*, Paris, Éditions du Regard, 1998, p. 91.

16 Copyright: Boucheron Archives.

17 Copyright: Van Cleef & Arpels Archives.

18 Source: Christie's, Magnificent Jewels Sale, Geneva, 14 Novembre 2017.



[FIG. 1] Retail Card for the Jocker charm, 1936. Van Cleef & Arpels Archives, Paris<sup>16</sup>



[FIG. 2] Gouaché of the Jocker charm, 1936. Boucheron Archives, Paris<sup>17</sup>





[FIG. 3] Cuff, 1965, Platinum, yellow gold and diamonds, Private Collection<sup>18</sup>



[FIG. 4] Argine Brooch, 1965, Platinum, yellow gold, aquamarine, malachite and diamonds, Chaumet Collection, Paris



[FIG. 5] Book of the Apocalypse, 1958-1961, Bronze, yellow gold, pearls, jasper, sapphires, calcedony, emeralds, sardonyx, carnelian, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, hyacinth, amethyst, Private Collection<sup>29</sup>

## POST-WAR CONSECRATION

Gradually, the production marketed by Sterlé inhibited its activity as a manufacturer. The last piece made for Boucheron dates back to 1944. The post-war years initiated the consecration of Pierre Sterlé. His customer base expanded considerably and became more international, while he increased his visibility in the press. From 1945, this new state of self-sufficiency finally allowed the company to become independent and assert its identity. Nevertheless, Sterlé still received a few orders from jewelers, like the New York subsidiary of Cartier. A single piece, a cuff dated 1965 [FIG. 3], allows us to make such an association.

Although this type of bracelet is not included in Sterlé's production, the particular attention paid to metal working corresponds, on the other hand, to the jeweler's stylistic aspirations. Made in yellow gold, this piece has incised grooves on the surface of the metal. In addition, it is bordered at one end by a row of gold rods, placed at an angle to contrast with the verticality that dominates the composition. Among the jeweler's contemporary creations, the line of jewelry called «Mirage<sup>19</sup>», is also characterized by a surface animated with relief. In addition, the contrasting use of yellow gold and white gold is found in both creations. Finally, a series of triangular motifs in platinum, set with pavé diamonds and with wavy contours, evoking flames, were added to this yellow gold base in the central part of the bracelet. This flamed silhouette can be found in many pieces of jewelry made by the Sterlé workshops in the 1960s, to symbolize feathers in the case of Bird Brooches or the petals of a flower transposed into a clip. So many stylistic clues suggest that the Maison Sterlé was at the origin of this model, both in its design and its manufacture.

In the same way, the transposition of the art of portraiture to the field of jewelry, as experimented in its own production, was also executed by Sterlé for the Maison Chaumet. As in the the «Cartes à jouer» collection around 1965. The series of characters represented respects the organization and denomination of the figures composing the French card game. The club suit, in particular, is illustrated in a commercial visual published by Chaumet<sup>20</sup>. Its three representatives appear: Alexandre, Lancelot and Argine. In addition to the iconography, these pieces concentrate all of the innovations initiated by Sterlé for his own commercial activity, both in metalworking and in the enhancement of gems. Let's look at the Argine brooch [FIG. 4].

Her hair, surmounted by a crown, is made of twisted gold threads, close to the gold cote de maille technique developed by Sterlé from 1951<sup>21</sup>. Her features are carved in aquamarine, while she is dressed in a malachite dress decorated with a majestic fraise collar and framed by a yellow gold border worked in the style of a nugget. Throughout the fifties and sixties, Sterlé strove, particularly in his Bird Brooches, to associate fine stones with precious metals, such as gold and platinum, and stones of greater value, mainly diamonds. Through these unexpected associations, Sterlé broke with the hierarchy of stones and tended to enhance the value of gems previously little used in jewelry, such as amazonite, labradorite, or in the case of the Argine brooch, malachite. In addition, gemstones have the advantage of offering a very diversified color range, as well as different degrees of opacity or, on the contrary, transparency, like aquamarine. These stones, although of lesser value, provided the jeweler with an infinite number of possible combinations, which he could then multiply by playing on the various gem sizes. The lace of the dress, finally, was transposed by Sterlé's famous «cheveux d'ange<sup>22</sup>», invented in 1956 and this time realized in platinum, punctuated with brilliant cut diamonds. This piece is undoubtedly a remarkable contribution by the jeweler to the expression of his partner's identity, at a time when Chaumet wanted to renew its guiding principle with works in a «contemporary spirit<sup>23</sup>».

## SALVADOR DALÍ : TRANSCRIBING THE MANNER OF THE ARTIST

If Pierre Sterlé maintained and extended his privileged relationships with the great Parisian jewelers during the fifties and sixties, he also endeavored

- 19 The name «Mirage» is mentioned in a commercial catalog published by Pierre Sterlé in 1969 (Dossier Documentaire, Sterlé Pierre, département Moderne et contemporain-xxe bijou, MAD, Paris.) but this line appears as early as 1963 in the company's archives (Ancienne Archives Pierre Sterlé-Collection Privée).
- 20 Advertisement «Chaumet jeweler since 1780», dated 1965 and kept in the iconographic collection of the Forney Library, Paris (Recueil. Bijoux. Publicités. Annonces de presse, Cote : ICO PUB BIJO-01).
- 21 This technique was described for the first time in a retail card produced for a «Clip feuille» in March 1951 (Ancienne Archives Pierre Sterlé-Collection Privée).
- 22 [Anonymous], « Une nouvelle technique en joaillerie : Les cheveux d'ange de Sterlé », *Femme : Beauté, Élégance*, October 1956, p. 75.
- 23 Chaumet, *Jacques et Pierre Chaumet sont heureux de vous présenter un florilège de leur dernière collection haute joaillerie*, Paris, s.n., 1973, n.p.

to contract new ones, this time with the actors of the artistic scene of his time. In a context of questioning of the artistic hierarchy initiated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, jewelry found its way back into the view of artists, offering them, in the following century, a new medium to transpose their artistic thinking<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, these artists, who were not familiar with the rudiments of metal working, were confronted with their limits as practitioners. However, the art of metal presents several constraints that are difficult to overcome. It requires, on the one hand, a savoir-faire built on years of training, but also, on the other hand, the financial means to obtain the precious materials as well as the practical means, i.e. tools and a space specifically dedicated to this activity. This is why these artists turned to professionals who, for many of them, would devote themselves exclusively to the realization of jewels imagined by the artists they worked with. This was the case, from the sixties, of François Hugo, working notably for Pablo Picasso and Max Ernst<sup>25</sup>, or Gem Montebello, who knew how to attract the interest of the big names of the international artistic scene of his time, such as Man Ray, Hans Richter or Sonia Delaunay<sup>26</sup>.

Including Colette among his first clients<sup>27</sup>, Sterlé came to meet many intellectuals and artists who made up the Court over which the writer reigned from her apartments in the Palais-Royal. Among these courtiers was, of course, Jean Cocteau. Cocteau was called upon to participate in an ambitious collaborative project launched in 1958 by the publisher Joseph Forêt<sup>28</sup>. Bringing together various artists, writers and craftsmen under the leadership of Salvador Dalí, it aimed to reinterpret the biblical text of the Apocalypse according to Saint John. To do so, Forêt called upon seven artists and seven writers, including Georges Mathieu, Bernard Buffet, Léonard Foujita, Leonor Fini, and Jean Giono. In addition, given the diversity of savoir-faire required for this daring undertaking, the skills of various craftsmen, including parchment makers, calligraphers, bookbinders and cabinetmakers, became indispensable. The same was true of the front cover [FIG. 5], of which Dalí had reserved the design for himself.

The artist wished to transcribe in bronze an «apocalyptic gush<sup>30</sup>», rampant with biblical references. In order to do so, it was necessary to seek the services of a founder's<sup>31</sup> workshop and a jeweler. It is likely through Jean Cocteau, also a participant in the project, that Pierre Sterlé's workshops were chosen. The cover was first worked in wax by Dalí. Then, under the supervision of Carlos Alemany<sup>32</sup>, Sterlé's lapidaries and setters worked to enrich it with fine and precious stones. Various gems, twelve in all, are inserted into the steep bronze casts, referring to the stones that adorn the walls of Heavenly Jerusalem as described in the Gospels<sup>33</sup>. These stones, scattered chaotically across the panel, are of different sizes. In addition, twelve white pearls are grouped in the center of the composition, in accordance with the vision of St. John<sup>34</sup>. Finally, in addition to the jeweler's work, metal inlays add to the preciousness of this binding. Fine needles of yellow gold pierce the torturous bronze surface as well as Christ, forming at the same time thorns piercing his flesh and rays haloing him.

Thus, for Pierre Sterlé and his craftsmen, it was a question of translating the artist's wishes into a jeweler's art, that is to say the transposition from one medium to another. Sterlé's one time contribution to the production of this work was limited to that of a manufacturer, insofar as it was limited to the sole work of execution, without any intervention in the design process. This condition does not seem to have displeased the jeweler, since the collaboration between Pierre Sterlé and Salvador Dalí lasted throughout the 1960s and ended in 1970<sup>35</sup>. However, no jewelry was produced as a result, only silverware. However, these works made great use of techniques specific to the jewelry arts, such as enameling, and occasionally setting of fine stones. In addition to Salvador Dalí, Pierre Sterlé kept the friendship of all the contributors to the Book of Revelation. In his guestbook, one can identify the signatures of Leonard Foujita, Ludmila Tchérina or Leonor Fini, but also a versed testimony of friendship from Jean Cocteau<sup>36</sup>.

At the end of this study, we are thus able to distinguish two types of collaboration: those that called upon Sterlé as a manufacturer, and therefore focussed more on his material and technical services than on his creative services, and those that, on the

24 Brought back in favor by the Arts and Crafts movement at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the production of artists' jewelry flourished from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, while artistic groups and schools that cultivated a sustained interest in the so-called «minor» arts, such as the Wiener Werkstätte in Vienna and the Bauhaus in Weimar, multiplied. Emmanuel Guigon, *Bijoux d'artiste, une collection, exhibition catalogue*, Besançon, Musée du Temps (11 June-11 October 2009), Paris, Hazan, 2009.

25 Pierre Hugo, Claire Siaud, *Bijoux d'artistes, Hommage à François Hugo*, Aix-en-Provence, Les Cyprès Éditeur, 2001.

26 Marilena Mosco, Alessandro Poli, Rossana Bossaglia, *L'arte del gioiello e il gioiello d'artista dal '900 ad oggi*, cat. expo., Florence, Museo degli Argenti (10 March-10 June 2001), Firenze, Giunti, 2001.

27 This is evidenced by a retail card produced for «a gold coin», probably supplied by the writer, «to be mounted as a brooch» (Pierre Sterlé Archives - Private Collection). In addition to this commission, Colette also evoked the figure of this «neighbor» who regularly visited her, accompanied by his creations, in one of her last works: the *Fanal Bleu*.

28 Christian Karoutzos, *L'Apocalypse de saint Jean*, Clermont Ferrand, Éditions d'art KC, s.d., p. 14-15.

29 Source: *Ibid.*, p. 4.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 14-15.

31 It is to the art foundry Susse that had the responsibility to transpose in bronze the will of the artist

32 Carlos Alemany, goldsmith of Argentinian origin, accompanied Salvador Dalí in his jewelry projects in an almost exclusive way.

33 «The foundations of the city wall were decorated with all kinds of stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh hyacinth, the twelfth amethyst. «Revelation, XXI, 19-20.

34 «The twelve gates were twelve pearls". Revelation, XXI, 21.

35 The last work resulting from this collaboration between the artist and the jeweler is a ewer dated 1970.

36 A reproduction of Pierre Sterlé's guestbook can be found in a commercial catalog published by the Maison in 1968. Dossier Documentaire, Sterlé Pierre, Modern and Contemporary-XX<sup>e</sup> bijou department, MAD, Paris.

contrary, were addressed to this jeweler in particular for the singularity of his artistic imagination. Moreover, the hypotheses formulated following the examination of the collaborations with Boucheron, Van Cleef & Arpels, Cartier and Chaumet, allow us to consider the role held by Sterlé within his jewelry Maison as that of an artistic director. In addition to his role as a business manager, Pierre Sterlé was obviously the originator of jewelry ideas, which he then passed on to his designers who were responsible for putting them down on paper. More broadly, the research carried out on the singular case of Pierre Sterlé allows us to shed new light on the organization and practices governing the jewelry industry in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



CREATIONS  
AND USES

## Adornment and Jewels in Royal and Princely Tombs (13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> Century)

The issue of jewelry in a funerary context is at the crossroads of different disciplines such as art history, archaeology, anthropology, as well as goldsmithing and gemology. In the absence of tangible proof, and following the vandalism and destruction of burial sites, particularly during the anti-monarchical violence of the Revolution, jewels from the late Middle Ages in a funerary context have been little studied. During the Middle Ages, the omnipresence of death (as a consequence of war or disease, but also of the preponderance of imagery on this subject) was evident<sup>1</sup>. The study of last wills and testaments reveals a meticulous preparation for the final end, in the hope of life after death<sup>2</sup>. The salvation of the soul also involved the precise choice of the form and location of the burial site as well as the objects deposited there to accompany the deceased<sup>3</sup>. Under the Merovingians, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century before the rise of Christianity, the deceased were accompanied by many richly worked jewels, as the tomb of Queen Aegonde (c. 516-574/80) testifies. In the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries under the Carolingians, on the other hand, with the strengthening and development of Christianity, a great piety settled in the funerary context, stripping the burial sites of almost all ornamental objects. Finally, from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, during the reigns of the Capetians and the Valois, we see a certain reintroduction of jewelry in tombs, on the tomb and around it, with an entire staging of death. This leads us to the following question: what are the reasons, other than religious, that the elites took *parures* and jewelry with them on their last great journey?

### ATTRIBUTES OF PAST EARTHLY POWER: REGALIA

The objects that most often accompanied the Royal and princely deceased in their graves were rings, clasps, and, less frequently, seals, pendants, belts.... However, the one that was most often found, especially in the Royal sphere, was the crown. Indeed, according to an account by Dom Poirier, a Benedictine monk from Royaumont Abbey in charge of supervising the opening of the tombs in 1793, the crown was among the objects most often placed in tombs, followed by scepter and hands of justice<sup>4</sup>. Of course, one cannot rule out the hypothesis that some objects were stolen before the inventory was drafted. The crown, the scepter and the hand of justice represented, together with the orb, the insignia of power, also called regalia. Their presence symbolized the royal, temporal, judicial and religious power of the new sovereign. The crown and the scepter are the most present elements in these burials.

The crown is ancient and is believed to date back to Mesopotamia, where it resembled a cloth headband that surrounded the head of the person at the top echelon of society<sup>5</sup>. It was more a distinction than a decorative jewel, and it allowed one to see, through the wearer, a physical and moral superiority<sup>6</sup>. Little by little this headband (also called a diadem (*diadema* in Greek, meaning «royal headband»)) became an object in metal during the Medieval period, also called the *circle*, and then a true goldsmith jewel composed of vertically-placed ornaments, the *crown*<sup>7</sup>. These ornaments, made of metal plates, were cut to form a pattern, usually floral. The floral motif also gave the most common crown of this period, the crown with fleuron and/or *fleurs-de-lis*. Usually richly ornamented with gemstones and pearls, the crown was a true badge of power that was also found in illuminated manuscripts, paintings, and sculpture. In two Capetian tombs mentioned by Dom Poirier, those of Louis VIII (†1226) and Philip IV (†1314), two diadems had been found, as shown in this watercolor by Alexandre Lenoir, kept in the Graphic Arts Department of the Louvre Museum and representing the remains of Louis VIII [FIG. 1]. We see him here wearing a «diadème, bande d'étoffe tissée en or [surmonté] d'une grande calotte d'étoffe satinée»<sup>8</sup>. The presence of the diadem is surprising here since we know that the crown was already used by kings. Indeed, research in royal inventories tells us that it was already in use during the reign of Philip Augustus (1180-1223), father of Louis VIII, with his famous crown known as «Charlemagne's» crown [FIG. 2]<sup>9</sup>.

Finding a diadem in a funeral context is quite interesting here. Could it be a reminiscence of the past? So it would have remained in the graves while outside, in ceremonies and other events where the king was present, the diadem

- 1 Sophie Balace and Alexandra De Poorter (dir.), *Entre Paradis et Enfer : mourir au Moyen Âge, 600-1600*, Bruxelles, Fonds Mercator, Musées royaux d'art et d'histoire, 2010.
- 2 Jacques Chiffolleau, *La comptabilité de l'au-delà : les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d'Avignon à la fin du Moyen Âge (vers 1320- vers 1480)*, Paris, Albin Michel, 2011, p. 19.
- 3 Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *Le Roi est mort : étude sur les funérailles, les sépultures et les tombeaux des rois de France jusqu'à la fin du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Art et métier graphiques, 1975.
- 4 Georges d'Heylli, *Les tombes royales de Saint-Denis : histoire et nomenclature des tombeaux, extraction des cercueils royaux en 1793. Ce qu'ils contenaient. Les prussiens dans la basilique en 1871*, Paris, Librairie générale, 1872, p. 87.
- 5 Paul-Ernest Desautels, *L'Univers des pierres précieuses*, Paris, Arthaud, 1973, Chap. IX, p. 200.
- 6 Silvia Malaguzzi, *Bijoux, pierres et objets précieux. Représentation et symbole*, Paris, Hazan, 2007, p. 183.
- 7 Marguerite de Cerval (dir.), *Dictionnaire international du bijou*, Paris, Édition du Regard, 1998, p. 154 ; Silvia Malaguzzi, *op. cit.*, 2007, p. 219.
- 8 Hervé Pinoteau, *La symbolique royale française V<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, La Roche Rigault, Presses Sainte-Radegonde, 2004, p. 235.
- 9 *Regalia : Les instruments du sacre des Rois de France. Les Honneurs de Charlemagne*, [exhibition, Paris, Louvre Museum, October 14 1987-January 11 1988], Danielle Gaborit-Chopin, Paris, Édition de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1987, p. 11.; *Couronnes du Monde*, exhibition at the Abbaye de Daoulas, June 16 to October 1, 1989, Daoulas, Centre culturel Abbaye de Daoulas : Arts et culture en Finistère, 1989, n°111.

had long since given way to the crown? It is only from the tomb of Louis X the Stubborn (†1316) that we find the first mention of the crown. The sequence of crowns mentioned is not at all or hardly detailed. The only details we have are the materials for some of them: copper, gilded copper, or silver gilt. This is certainly not much, but we can see that there is a predominance of gold, which is already a start. The color of gold, luminous, represents the sun and light, as well as glory and prestige. Gold is also the symbol of wealth, divinity and immortality, since it is unalterable<sup>10</sup>. In the tomb it represents the immortality of the royal entity. However, none of the objects (except for a gold band) is made of pure gold, which raises the question of the material value of these objects stored in tombs. Indeed, for what reasons are these objects less valuable than what was made during the King's lifetime? We know that in the Late Middle Ages, the art of goldsmithing was highly developed and refined, and the so-called crown of Charlemagne that we have seen is a good example. In addition, other richly worked crowns set with precious stones were also found in the inventories of the jewels of certain Kings, such as those mentioned in Charles V's *Inventaire du mobilier*<sup>11</sup>. This is not, therefore, an inability to make precious adornments. These objects, not intended to be seen, were considered symbolic to the deceased: their feigned preciousness was just a sign of the grandeur of the royal remains. They represented the power of the deceased King, while the most precious objects returned to the successor and new King at the time of the Coronation. The regalia, and more precisely the crown, are therefore here the symbol of an immortal power and represent, beyond the individual himself, his social rank and sovereign power.

### THE REGALIA OF THE KING RENÉ, DUKE OF ANJOU

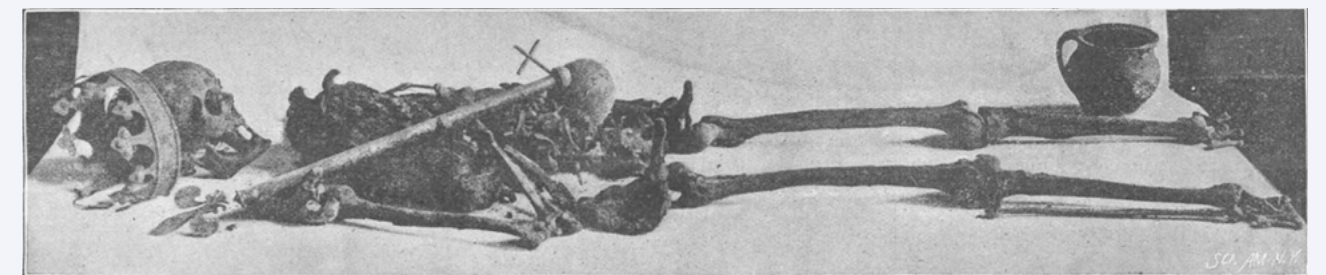
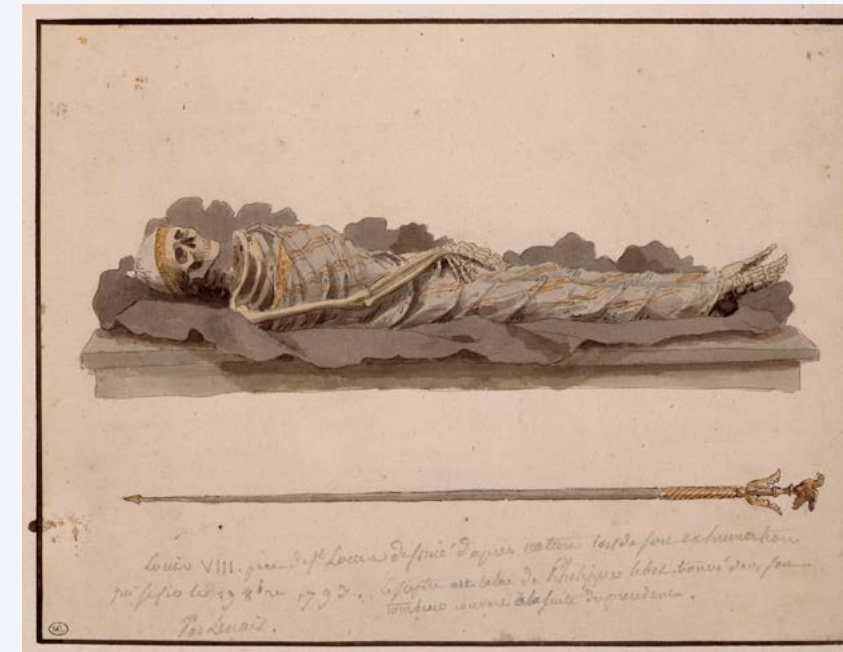
The princely houses have always tried to match, if not surpass, royal pomp, and this increased between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially during certain events such as receptions or funerals. But what about burial? It would seem that it depended on the prince himself. Let us take a rather unique example, that of Duke René d'Anjou. Objects were indeed found in his tomb in 1896 and mentioned in a report written by Canon Urseau on the opening day of the tomb, June 5, 1896<sup>12</sup>. They included a crown of alternating large and small fleurons on the right side of his skull; a gilded copper scepter with a fleur-de-lis with four carved branches; and finally, a sphere surmounted by a cross (i.e., an orb) that was placed on the left side of his chest. These objects are still in the coffin today, in their place of origin in the cathedral of Angers [FIG. 2]. They are stripped of all ornamentation. They are also insignia of power, specially designed to «appear in the funeral ritual and to follow the Duke into the tomb».<sup>13</sup> But, as we have seen, these attributes were, however, reserved only for Kings! It so happens that the Duke of Anjou, although he had a principality, also had royal status since he was King of Sicily, Naples and Jerusalem. Hence his claim to be buried with the attributes of power reserved for Kings, especially since he had been anointed like other European monarchs. Moreover, it is worth noting that the scepter is surmounted by a fleur-de-lis, the exclusive symbol of the Kings and princes of France. The demonstration of the Duke's power in his coffin is accompanied, in a way, by a presentation of his own identity.

### JEWELRY AS AN OBJECT HIGHLIGHTING A PERSON'S IDENTITY

#### The silver seal of Queen Isabelle de Hainaut

Isabelle de Hainaut, the wife of Philippe Augustus (1180-1223), was buried in 1190 in the choir of Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral<sup>14</sup>. Her coffin was found and opened in 1858 under the orders of Viollet-le-Duc. Various items were found near her body, including a seal that is now in the British Museum [FIG. 4]. It is large and depicts the Queen adorned with a crown, a scepter with fleuron, a fleur-de-lis, and a *fermail*. The seal was in the form of a pendant that was to be worn around the neck of the Queen's body from a chain that was not found or perhaps a ribbon that, because of its perishable nature, had disappeared. Why wear such an object in her

- 10 Silvia Malaguzzi, *op. cit.*, 2007, p. 300.
- 11 *Inventaire du mobilier de Charles V, roi de France*, Jules Labarte, Paris, Imprimerie nationale, 1879, p. 12-14.
- 12 Charles Urseau (Chanoine), *Ouverture du tombeau du roi René à la Cathédrale d'Angers*, Angers, Grasnier, 1895, p. 3, 5 et 8; Louis de Farcy, *Les sépultures princières de la cathédrale d'Angers*, Angers, Germain et G. Grassin, 1906, p. 60, 63 et 64; Camille Enlart, *Manuel d'archéologie française*, t. III, *Le costume*, Paris, A. Picard, 1916, p. 393, 399 et 401.
- 13 Camille Enlart, *op. cit.*, 1916, p. 370.
- 14 Raymond Johnes, "The Seal Matrix of Isabel of Hainaut, queen of France", in *The Antiquaries Journal*, vol. XL, London, January-April 1960.



[FIG. 1] *The Remains of Louis VIII, exhumed from his tomb in 1793*, Alexandre Lenoir, watercolor, Louvre Museum, Paris, Department of Graphic Arts, Album Lenoir Alexandre - 4 -, detail of folio 14 r., RF 5282.14. © RMN / Michele Bellot

[FIG. 2] Coronation crown, known as "of Charlemagne". Watercolor reconstitution of the crown of Charlemagne, from the book by Bernard Morel, *Les Joyaux de la Couronne de France. Les Objets du sacre des rois et des reines*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1988

[FIG. 3] The skeleton of King René and his attributes of power around 1480, photographed during the exhumation of 1894-1895. Photograph taken from the *Cahiers of Fanjeaux*, 1998, p. 470





[FIG. 4] Silver seal of Queen Isabella of Hainaut (\*1190), taken from her sepulture in 1858, in the choir of the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris. Dimension : 9,6 cm. British Museum, London. c British Museum



[FIG. 5 et 6] Ring with the portrait of John The Fearless, Duke of Burgundy (1404-1419) Paris, circa 1410. gold, agate (?), jet, emerald, ruby, translucent enamel on gold. D. : 2,3 cm. © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) /Jean-Gilles Berizzi



coffin? We know that seals were used as signets. The letters inscribed around it are in negative, which confirms its function, that of embossing a signature. The Queen signed with this seal by pressing it on wax (on envelopes or official documents). The presence of this seal highlights both the individual and the royal title with the insignia of the power she bore.

#### The Ring of John the Fearless

Another object with real identity function is the ring with the portrait of John the Fearless, kept at the Louvre Museum [FIG. 5]<sup>15</sup>. There is still doubt today as to its possible place in the coffin of John the Fearless. But, if it is generally agreed that this ring was indeed in the Duke's tomb, what should we think? For some a ring, for others a band, this jewel is composed of a gold rod or body on which are inlaid in its upper part gems representing the portrait in profile of John the Fearless, second Duke of Burgundy of the House of Valois. This portrait is recognizable since many paintings or illuminations represent him in this way, as confirmed by the illumination extracted from the manuscript *Le Livre des Merveilles* (Ms. fr. 2810, fol. 226) made between 1410 and 1412. Made of agate or white chalcedony, with jet, ruby and emerald, this is meticulous work combining the technique of chasing with that of stone cutting. The choice of stones in the Middle Ages was not insignificant. Indeed, these stones, beyond their simple color, shine or other physical properties, were an indicator of the social rank of the owner, could represent a virtue, have a talismanic or medicinal value. This science of stones, and the symbols attributed to them was known in the Middle Ages and written down in «*lapidaires*» that were spread throughout Europe (such as the famous *lapidaire* of Marbode, a bishop of Rennes)<sup>16</sup>. Thanks to these *lapidaires*, we learn that the ruby can evoke love and beauty, but more probably strength and respect. From a religious point of view, it would symbolize charity and would represent (according to Aristotle's *Ethics*) one of the four cardinal virtues, Prudence. The emerald, on the other hand, was a symbol of faith but also the representation of one of the cardinal virtues, (still according to Aristotle's *Ethics*) Justice. The jewel has inscriptions on the inner part of the shank where is engraved a carpenter's plane (which was the emblem of John the Fearless that he had chosen in response to the gnarled staff, the emblem of his enemy, the Duke Louis of Orleans). A Latin inscription, somewhat erased, means: Vere [...] iste (Vere [filius Dei erat] iste), «Truly, he was the Son of God,» according to the Gospel according to St. Matthew 27:54 and St. Mark 15:39. This type of ring is the only one we have found so far. It could be from a funerary context. However, it was not a unique example; indeed, this type of jewelry was known and developed during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. John the Fearless would have received this ring as a gift from one of his sons-in-law. In the context of burial (but this is only a hypothesis) this ring was not necessarily wanted by John the Fearless here, since he had not, unlike the others, organized his own funeral, having been murdered before. Certainly present by chance, this ring nevertheless serves to enhance the individual that was John the Fearless, a wealthy and powerful Duke who owned one of the richest and most prosperous territories, as well as an artistic hub, Burgundy. It represents not only his face in profile, but also the personality of the deceased through the symbols associated with the gems, but is also a proof of loyalty on the part of the person who gave it to him, showing the superiority of the Duke.

#### PRIVATE JEWELS AND PARURES AND "INVISIBLE ADORNMENT".

##### Bands

In some Royal tombs, *anneaux* (bands) were found and mentioned in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the Benedictine Dom Poirier. This is the case of two *anneaux* in the tombs of Philip IV (\*1314) and Charles IV (\*1328), one "of gold" and the other "of silver". Contrary to the ring, with which it is often associated, the *anneau* is not the support of any ornament (such as a gem). Instead, it can be engraved and bear inscriptions. The *anneaux* found in these Royal burials may be an object of remembrance, power, devotion, identity or protection. They may be *anneaux* of a

15 Éric de Mévius et Rémy de La Soudière, *Miroirs d'un prince : une iconographie historique de Jean-sans-Peur, duc de Bourgogne*, Couture-Saint-Germain [Lasne, Belgique], E. de Mévius, 2005, p.139-140.

16 Marbode, *Poème des pierres précieuses* : XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, translation from latin, presented and annotated by Pierre Monat, followed by a *Lecture symboliste des lapidaires médiévaux*, Claude Louis-Combet, Grenoble, éd. J. Millon, 1996.

more intimate nature, wedding *anneaux* (which have existed since the end of Roman antiquity and represent, by their circular shape, the eternity of love that has neither beginning nor end)<sup>17</sup>. Of course, this remains a hypothesis since we have no details, apart from the material, of these *anneaux*, nor on which finger they were found. However, Maximin Deloche, in his work retracing the history of rings in France, tells us that the wedding *anneau* of Saint Louis was a ring interlaced with a garland of lilies and daisies, alluding to the names of the Royal couple. The ring bore a crucifix engraved on a sapphire, accompanied by the motto: «*De hors c'est annel pourraient avoir amour?*»<sup>18</sup>. So it was not a simple band, like those mentioned in burials, but a rich and precious ring. Saint Louis died and was buried in Tunis in 1270 but was repatriated to Paris a year later, in 1271. His body was cut up and boiled until the flesh and bones were separated, following the custom of *mos teutonicus*, a process used in Medieval times for people who died far from their chosen burial place. Only his dried bones returned to France, to the necropolis of Saint-Denis. If he had died in France and was buried in Saint-Denis, would this ring have accompanied him in his coffin? Or would he have changed it for a more modest *anneau*?

Other rings and *anneaux* were also reported with the remains of Joan of Burgundy and Joan of Bourbon. The first wife of Philippe of Valois (1328-1350), Joan of Burgundy (+1348) was found with a silver *anneau* on her finger<sup>19</sup>. And Joan of Bourbon (+1377), wife of Charles V (1364-1380), wore a gold *anneau*. Again, perhaps it was a wedding *anneau* that the deceased wished to take with them. Another ring was found and reported in the tomb of Isabelle of Hainaut, wife of Philippe Augustus (1180-1223), who died in 1190 and was buried in the choir of Notre-Dame de Paris Cathedral. Apart from the seal, a gold ring with a rose quartz was also found. Quartz is not a precious stone like sapphire, emerald, diamond or ruby. But, as we saw earlier, stones in the Middle Ages could represent a virtue, carry a symbol, or possess prophylactic or healing powers. Indeed, some women used green jasper, topaz, or coral to prevent bleeding. But concerning this ring in particular, we unfortunately do not have enough information to be able to hypothesize, which could be erroneous. However, we can suggest that this quartz ring had an personal aspect that must have been either emotional or medicinal-magical.

#### “Parure Invisible”.

Lastly, we can address the notion of “*parure invisible*” (invisible adornment). The jewel is, according to Daniele Alexandre-Bidon, the foundation of silent communication. This notion makes us consider that the piety of the deceased and their humble burial would perhaps, finally, be a form of ostentation. Indeed, we know that, especially in the princely sphere, they wanted to stand out and show their individuality (through emblems, mottos, ornaments or insignia). Humility and the desire for a somber burial were part of the aim to distinguish themselves. This theme of the invisible adornment seems to be present for some princes such as Louis d’Orléans who wished for a funeral, a tomb and a pious burial, which he specified in his will<sup>20</sup>. But, even if it seems imbued with great piety, it was not taking into account his burial place, which was a recognized and rich convent, the convent of the Célestins, and within the capital (the Prince thus put forward his royal blood, since Kings reside in the capital). Moreover, his tomb, which was to be, according to his will, somber and stripped of all ornament, was still to be made of expensive materials (such as marble).

From the outset, this research was hampered by the undeniable lack of tangible evidence. Destruction, vandalism, desecration and poor conservation conditions within the coffin which accelerated the deterioration of objects and ornaments made of perishable materials are the cause. If the synthesis of data did not allow to illustrate an evolution of jewelry in men and women in graves, it nevertheless highlighted several major axes such as the power that the owners held during their lifetime and that they would represent forever; or still the valorization of the individual; or finally the private aspect that it could take on. It was a period of transition between the taste for humility in burial under the weight of religion (under the Carolingians and the majority of the Capetians) and the splendor that gradually took hold, especially starting with the Valois.

17 Sandra Hindman et Scott Miller, *Take this ring : Medieval and Renaissance rings from the Griffin Collection*, Chicago, Brepols Publishers, 2015 ; Daniel Prigent et Jean-Yves Hunot (dir.), *La mort : voyage au pays des vivants. Pratiques funéraires en Anjou*, Angers, Association culturelle du département de Maine-et-Loire, 1996, p. 55.

18 Maximin Deloche, *La Bague en France à travers l'histoire*, Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1929, p. 13-14.

19 Georges d'Heylli, *op. cit.*, 1872, p. 122.

20 Murielle Gaude-Ferragu, *D'or et de cendres. La mort et les funérailles des princes dans le royaume de France au Bas Moyen Âge*, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2005.



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## Antique Stage Jewelry: A Misunderstood Objet d'Art

### WHAT IS A STAGE JEWEL ?

Although they are legitimately part of the great history of jewelry, jewels created for the stage have different characteristics from those of precious parures<sup>1</sup>. Often denigrated for their character of imitation jewelry, or considered as futile «*toc*» trimmings not worthy of interest, theater jewels are the great forgotten element of the history of stage costume. Sometime evoked without giving them too much attention, they nevertheless have a rich and fascinating past.

Jewelry designed for 19<sup>th</sup>-century stage shows is distinguished by the extreme refinement of its details and the arrangement of the components between them. They are true pieces of goldsmith's art, each unique in its workmanship and technique, aiming to give the illusion of preciousness to the spectator and to highlight the actors, singers and dancers who wore them on stage. This play between luxury and trinkets, the physical intimacy with the artist and the closeness to the whole show: all make the stage jewel a piece of art that is both surprising and fascinating, a vector of wonder or amusement, visible to all spectators from the stage floor to "paradis" (the top rows).

Every stage jewel is created for a given production and role according to the instructions of the costume designer. It is part of an overall system where costumes, sets and lighting, poem and music, and the number of performers, each play an essential role. An overall harmonious balance that constitutes the jewel case of the stage. In theater as in opera, the costumes, props and sets are particularly meticulous: they are a guarantee of quality that is indispensable and prized by the audience, one of the main reasons for its attraction to the stage. Thus, the jewels must be sparkling, visible from the farthest rows of the hall and easily recognizable. This is the responsibility of the costume designer, who, by respecting the libretto, indicates the origin and function of the parure in the plot. This work must allow the spectator to distinguish at a glance an oriental-style jewel from a Medieval jewel, to differentiate a King from a clergyman, for example<sup>2</sup>.

### STAGE JEWELRY : PRECIOUS JEWELS?

In jewelry, the value of a piece of jewelry is traditionally defined by its weight, its precious metal content and the quality of the materials of which it is made. Thus, the carat is used as a yardstick for weighing diamonds, precious stones and pearls; it also makes it possible to evaluate the preciousness of gold alloy. The uniformity and color of a gemstone are also important factors in assessing the quality of a piece of jewelry. In the case of stage jewelry, these criteria have a very different importance. Above all, it must be considered as the working materials of the costume designer. Created for a given show, it is intended to be reused several times, worn by different artists for various roles until it is partially or totally worn out, then broken and recycled. It can be deliberately stripped down and its components reused to create a new piece of jewelry, or modified according to the needs of the new production: unsetting, adding charms, dipping in metal electrolytic baths to change the color.

On the other hand, stage jewelry is created from materials that are far less noble than those used by traditional jewelers and goldsmiths. Its value is thus inevitably lower than a precious jewel. However it is indeed a question of imitating the appearance of stones or antique cameos, their cutting and setting, but at a lower cost and often for a purpose other than pure ornamentation. To estimate the value of a stage jewel, it is therefore necessary to evaluate different criteria: the age of the jewel, the quality of the realization, the technique, the rendering of a style, its author - jeweler and costume designer -, the artist who wore it, whether it is a unique piece made for a solo performer or an ornament in several copies intended for a less central role. In this sense, the jewel is inseparable from the actor who wears it, sometimes adapted to a dancer, sometimes to a singer, which leads to differences in weight, size, noise effects. These parameters define the historic interest of the object and its possible market value. The more prestigious the provenance, the more likely it is to be sold and at a high price. Thus, stage jewelry can be found in auctions or in galleries. Sarah Bernhardt's jewelry *parures* in particular, are

1 Proof of their importance can be found in the following articles: « Bijoux de scène » p. 485, « Bijoux de la Comédie Française » p. 144, « Bijoux de l'Opéra national de Paris » in Marguerite de Cervat (dir.), *Dictionnaire international du bijou*, Paris, Les Éditions du Regard, 1998.

2 The doctoral thesis I am currently preparing deals precisely with orientalist style ornaments. Entitled *Le Bijou de scène orientaliste au tournant des XIX<sup>e</sup> et XX<sup>e</sup> siècles (1870-1914)*, and written under the direction of Christine Peltre (specialist in Orientalism, University of Strasbourg), it will be defended in 2021.

enjoying remarkable popularity. In recent years, there have been several auctions of the actress's memorabilia: in 2001 at the Théâtre de la Renaissance, in 2010 at Piasa, and the following year by the auctioneers Delorme and Collin du Bocage<sup>3</sup>. The highest sales result recorded for a stage jewel is that of a tiara - possibly created by Lalique - for the role of Mélissande in Edmond Rostand's *La Princesse lointaine* (1895)<sup>4</sup>, sold by Piasa for €18,651. More recently, a Parisian gallery offered a lot for sale of a theatrical headdresses: among them were a pair of Egyptian headdresses and another with feathers, marked with a *Salammbô* stamp. The latter bears an astonishing resemblance to the helmets of the African woman kept in the Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra [FIG. 1]<sup>5</sup>. Although they are still perceived as curiosities, the many stage jewels sold recently thus confirm the public's lively interest in these astonishing works of art.

### BEHIND THE SCENES OF CREATION

The manufacture of a stage jewel in the 19<sup>th</sup> century involved several participants, each specialized in a precise stage of its conception. First of all, the costume designer was at the origin of the jewel design. In the case of large Parisian theaters such as the Comédie-Française or the Paris Opera, it was very often the costume designer in charge of the couture workshops<sup>6</sup>. He was in charge of the costume drawings and their decorations for each new production. During the Second Empire, historicism and eclecticism were highly developed. This vogue, which lasted until the turn of the century, encouraged costume designers to erudition through the study of the past, and to recreate new forms inspired by it. Accuracy was expected in the rendering of traditional and historical costumes presented on stage. A library was thus placed at the disposal of the costume designer so that he could do his research, consult archives, press clippings and other iconographic documents to inspire his sketches. At the Paris Opera, the archives attest to a documentation room dedicated to this purpose, whose holdings have been added to the current Bibliothèque-Musée. In the case of the Comédie-Française, the costume designers had extensive documentation, probably built up over time, in use in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, entitled «*iconographie costumes, planches d'autorité*». These compilations of images mainly consisted of engravings, tracings and drawings classified by country and in alphabetical order. In order to fully understand their subject of study, some costume designers even travelled to fully immerse themselves in the atmosphere of a country, its light and its customs, and thus best depict them in their productions. Let's mention some of the great names that marked the Paris Opera House from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Paul Lormier (1813-1895), Alfred Albert (1814-1879), Eugène Lacoste (1818-1907), Charles Bianchini (1860-1905), Charles Bétout (1869-1945) and Joseph Pinchon (1871-1953)<sup>7</sup>. Let us also mention the prolific Théophile Thomas (1846-1916), who practiced his art in many theatrical institutions of the capital: the Opéra-Comique, Théâtres de l'Odéon, Renaissance and Porte Saint-Martin<sup>8</sup>.

In order to realize the design of a stage costume and its accessories, the designer would create a sketch of the costume, in pencil or ink, colored with watercolor or gouache, more or less annotated and rich in information: materials and colors, specificities of each piece. One could understand through this document the relationship between the jewel and the costume for which it was designed, the fact that they were inseparable and functioned as a whole: it was therefore essential to study them together. The interest in *parures* and stage ornaments was shown in some cases by sketches exclusively dedicated to jewels [FIG. 2]. This could be an enlargement of a detail of the parure, a simple sketch or watercolor of similar quality to a jeweler's gouache, more or less detailed and annotated. In some cases, the jewelry could be pure copies of existing pieces, made from hieroglyphics or Mesopotamian bas-reliefs, for example. Others were completely new creations inspired by various historical sources, eclectic jewels that demonstrated the creativity and imagination of their designers<sup>10</sup> [FIG. 3].

3 Please refer to the catalogs of these sales for more details.

4 *La Princesse lointaine*, a drama in verse of four acts by Edmond Rostand, premiered at the Théâtre de la Renaissance on April 5, 1895. For more details, see: M. Auclair and B. Cailmail, *Artisans de la scène*, CNCS, 2017, p. 27-29. It should be added that this headdress was part of the collection of Sacha Guitry, who acquired it at an auction in 1977.

5 Stamped gold metal helmet surmounted by a plume of purple ostrich feathers and black horsehair vertically mounted, gold inner lining, ten copies catalogued BIJOUX-1(A-J) and preserved at BMO. The copies on sale are devoid of feathers (calamus still visible in places but feathers torn off), only the horsehair remained in place: this observation was made in May 2019. *L'Africaine*, an opera by Eugène Scribe, music by G. Meyerbeer (posthumous), premiered at the Opéra Le Peletier on April 28, 1865.

6 cf. M. Kahane, *Opéra côté costume*, Parsi, ONP/Éditions Plumes, 1995, p. 46.

7 Refer to l'Opéra de Paris à N. Wild, *Décors et costumes du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Tome I. Opéra de Paris*, Paris, BNF, 1987.

8 *Id.*, *Dictionnaire des théâtres parisiens. 1807-1914*, Lyon, Symétrie, 2012.

9 Thanks to a 19<sup>th</sup> century decree, all the mock-ups made for the Paris Opera productions are kept at the Bibliothèque-Musée de l'Opéra de Paris (BMO). This vast collection of models of costumes and sets is partly accessible online at <gallica.fr>

10 As an example, refer to Charles Bianchini's costume models for *Le Fils de l'Étoile* in 1904, available online.



[FIG. 1] Helmet in gilded metal, surmounted by a plume of purple ostrich feathers and black horse hair, gold lining, after a model by Paul Lormier, unknown jeweler. Ten copies marked BIJOUX-1(A-J), *L'Africaine*, 1865 (BnF, Music dept. / Library museum of the Opéra)

[FIG. 2] Auguste Garneray, models for the ornaments of Mademoiselle Caroline and Monsieur Nourrit, *Aladdin*, 1822 (BnF, Music dept. / Library museum of the Opéra)

[FIG. 3] Eugene Lacoste, costume model for the little flutist of Indra's Paradise, *The king of Lahore*, October 1876 (BnF, Music dept. / Library museum of the Opéra)



The completed drawing was then sent to an independent theater jeweler in charge of making the stage jewelry according to the costume designer's instructions. These jeweler-goldsmiths were a dozen in Paris in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, located near the theaters, the Opera, the rue de la Paix, the faubourg du Temple and the Porte Saint-Martin. They made jewelry ornaments for theatrical institutions and artists in search of the ideal accessory for their work. They also offered pieces that met the expectations of a private clientele who were adept at *costuomanie*<sup>11</sup>. Let's cite their creations: head jewelry (crowns, diadems, tiaras, caps, combs, nets, hairnets, hairpins), necklaces (bib necklaces, «esclavage» sautoirs, necklaces, chokers, rhinestone rivières, necklaces in trimmings or metal), bracelets (wrist, arm, calf and ankle bracelets), rings (finger and toe rings), various earrings, body jewelry (waist, hip or chest belts, leather-lined armor pieces, bustiers, beaded corsets and sequined boleros), costume accessories (brooches and fibulae, belt and shoe buckles, metal-worked épaulettes, fans and fly-whisks, *aumônières* and other little bags, masks, daggers and swords, scepters and regalia, hand mirrors, opera glasses, etc.). All these jewels, mainly made of gold or silver-plated metal, were decorated with various components such as feathers, gauze, frontal or lateral pendants, paste diamonds, paste stones and glassware, metal or cardboard-stone elements.

Of the stage jewelers of the Second Empire, let us mention E. Granger, *Fournisseur de l'Opéra, des Théâtres Nationaux de Paris et des Théâtres Impériaux et Royaux de l'Étranger*, proposant *Bijouterie et armes de théâtre*, multi-medalist at the *Expositions des Produits de l'Industrie* of 1844 and 1849, established at 74, rue de Bondy - Cité Riverin (Paris X<sup>e</sup>). His successor was Leblanc-Granger, *Fournisseur breveté de l'Opéra et des principaux théâtres étrangers*, proposant *Armes, armures, panoplies, objets d'art, bijoux historiques, joaillerie imitation de diamants*, workshops and stores at 12, boulevard Magenta (Paris X<sup>e</sup>). He collaborated with the Paris Opera in the 1870s and 1880s. The Leblanc-Granger estate was managed until the end of the Belle Époque by Richard Gutperle, *Fournisseur de l'Opéra et des principaux théâtres étrangers*, proposant *Bijouterie et Armes pour Théâtres*, gold medalist at the 1889 Universal Exhibition. He created in the workshops of his predecessor on Boulevard Magenta. In the same period we can also mention Églésia, *Bijoutier pour théâtres*, residing 37, rue Simart (Paris XVIII<sup>e</sup>). He worked regularly with the Opera in the 1890s. Finally, let us mention their descendant Boutiller, *Fournisseur des Théâtres de l'Opéra, du Français et des principaux théâtres étrangers, Fabricant de parures et accessoires de théâtres - bijoux, armes, armures-* whose activity spanned from 1920 to the 1970s, located at 19 rue Meslay (Paris XIX<sup>e</sup>)<sup>12</sup>. There were also renters of historical and picturesque costumes and accessories, as well as other craftsmen specialized in metal work such as armourers and belt makers, who offered historical military outfits and fake weapons in metal and leather for theaters and private individuals.

#### TECHNIQUES AND SAVOIR-FAIRE

The techniques of the theater jewelers are close to those of precious and costume jewelry. They work exclusively with metal (copper, brass, aluminum, silver), which is then cut, filed, sanded, open-worked and filigreed according to the pieces. The metal is often gilded with gold leaf or is electrolytically treated to change its color. The theater goldsmiths also bought their products from various subcontractors located in the area of their workshops. On the one hand, from art printers whose catalogs offered a wide choice of jewelry components, metal galleries, cutting tools, punches and dies or hollow balls. The whole was made of metal, realized according to the techniques of stamping, cutting and shaping. Once the metal parts were made, they were laid out side by side and welded, or attached to each other with rings for a more flexible finish. The welding was more or less precise and resistant, the ingenuity of the arrangement varied. Thus, to form a headband or a belt, a dozen decorative components could be used; for a cuff bracelet, preferred for the stage because it was resistant and easily made, a section of patterned gallery was taken from which the ends were welded. This metal base constituted the frame

<sup>11</sup> *La costuomanie* – a marked interest in historical and picturesque costume – was very much in vogue in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, encouraged by the many opera balls, carnivals and other costumed receptions.

<sup>12</sup> The work of theater jewelers and their manufacturing techniques, as well as the suppliers they collaborated with, will be further developed in my doctoral thesis.



[FIG. 4] Headdress in gilded brass, engraving and glass paste, blown pearls and rhinestones, lining in red silk red silk, after a model of Theophile Thomas, unknown jeweler, *Lakmé*, 1883, one copy marked BIJOUX-22 (BnF, Music dept. / Library museum of the Opéra)

[FIG. 5] The jewelry collection of the Opera Garnier. Closet of the soloists' headdresses, photograph for *Life magazine*, 1960s (BnF, Music dept. / Library museum of the Opéra)

of the jewel. In order to embellish this structure, the theater jewelers obtained their supplies from specialized merchants and wholesalers: merchants of beads (blown, in wood, glass, pâte de verre), various types of gemstones (gemstones or imitation stones), organic plant or animal materials (coral, cameos, shells, leather, skin, furs, feathers), modern and innovative materials (celluloid, bakelite, plastic), or other decorations (artificial flowers). Thanks to these manufacturing methods, stage jewelry could easily deceive the spectator and compete with real precious adornments [FIG. 3]. To complete the jewelry, fabric was often added as a lining by the jeweler himself or by the theater's couture workshops to protect the performers and their costumes from the possible runoff stains of the metal<sup>13</sup>. After delivery of the jewelry to the theater, the theater jeweler was responsible for its regular maintenance and any necessary repairs. Starting in 1875, the stage jewels of the Opéra Garnier were stored between each performance in the *Bijouterie*, a storage space included in the *Service de Couture*. It was managed by the Costume Manager. Identical bracelets of stage extras were grouped together in boxes by show, while the more important headdresses and parures of soloists were stored in large glass display cases [FIG. 5]. The neighboring reserve, the *Armurerie*, housed the weapons, armor, and other *cottes de maille* for the stage.

The savoir-faire of theater jewelers prospered throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the profession gradually disappeared from the capital. Stage jewelry gradually lost its hegemony and its being, becoming rather a mere complement of costume. From the 1910s, the *Service de la Couture* of the Palais Garnier replaced the theater jewelers. It was soon out of the question to solicit outside goldsmiths to save time and money because of the increasingly sustained pace of stage productions. Members of the costume workshops had to therefore improvise as jewelers themselves and use various stratagems to create new jewels. They would then gladly reuse jewelry from previous productions stored in the *Bijouterie* to adapt them, while maintaining strong ties with some of their suppliers. As a result, many *parures* would be modified, broken and reused. They also did not hesitate to use the same jewelry, like a soloist's headdress, in another production. Fortunately, there are photographic testaments of the older costumes and *parures* of the Paris Opera, systematically photographed at the request of the administration from the 1860s<sup>14</sup>.

#### EVOLUTION AND MODERNIZATION OF STAGE JEWELRY DURING THE BELLE ÉPOQUE

The renewal and modernization of stage jewelry went hand in hand with the evolution of live productions. Thus, from 1905-1910, the Parisian stages underwent radical changes. The progress of industrialization allowed for development of staging, breaking with the relatively static and highly effective declamations of the past. Costume and its decorations, which until then had played a major role in the animation of the stage and constituted one of its central points of interest, were widely re-evaluated. The quantity of ornaments and other metallic trinkets was drastically reduced, favoring costumes embroidered with gold and silver threads imitating jewelry. Movement and color triumphed, the artist's body was more and more unveiled, freed from the weight and noise constraints of the past. This purification spread to the domains of costume and its accessories, but also to decoration and music<sup>15</sup>. Inspired by troops from the East, such as the *Ballets Russes* led by Serge Diaghilev, it allowed the emergence of a new form of visual and theatrical expression. Léon Bakst's role in this aesthetic revolution was essential. The stage jewelry sector was particularly affected: jeweler-goldsmiths were less and less solicited and tended to disappear. The couture workshops of theaters made new jewelry from old pieces by adding new less expensive materials that modified their initial appearance (plastics, glues, wire, pipe cleaners). The world of entertainment then turned a page in its history. The stage jewel is thus, in our opinion, emblematic of the «fin-de-siècle» period and the Belle Époque. It carries within itself the last flames of a festive and carefree society, which would be extinguished with the war of 1914.

13 In the Opera collection, they are made of yellow or white silk and cotton, with the exception of some bustiers where the very fine silks are beige, imitating the color of skin.

14 These images are available for consultation at the Opéra Garnier Library-Museum. For more details see: M. Auclair, « Le ballet et la photographie », in Auclair and Ghristi, *Le Ballet de l'Opéra. Trois siècles de suprématie depuis Louis XIV*, Paris, Albin Michel/ONP/BNF, 2013, p. 146-151.

15 cf. *op. cit.* M. Kahane, *op. cit.*, p. 81.



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## From the Nécessaire (Vanity Case) to the Minaudière™ at Van Cleef & Arpels During the Art Deco Period: Uses, Evolution and Techniques

“The box represents an element of fantasy, useful and frivolous at the same time, the object of «taste» that can be offered to «honest women» who would not accept a string of pearls or a bracelet (at least in Balzac’s time!). What daughter of Eve doesn’t need a cigarette case, a little hand bag, a powder compact, a tube of lipstick? If the word «nécessaire» had not been created for two centuries, it would have to be invented for those trinkets without which the existence of a Parisian woman would not be worth living<sup>1</sup>.”

At the beginning of the 1920s, precious little *nécessaires*, called vanity cases by American women, appeared. Direct descendants of the objects of virtue of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they are at the crossroads of jewel and accessory. *Nécessaires* are containers of small dimensions, measuring on average eight centimeters long by four centimeters wide and one or two centimeters thick. There is no standard design for their shape, however, at Van Cleef & Arpels they are most often rectangular or oblong. They are also equipped with different attachment mechanisms; either they are slipped into a bag or held in the palm of the hand, or they are decorated with a chain ending in a ring - sometimes replaced by a tube of lipstick - which allows you to carry the necessary items elegantly. Others are attached to the wrist with a silk strap like the Japanese *inrō*, or with an enamel chain ending in a ring, inspired by the *châtelaine* watches that were very fashionable in the 1910s. At Van Cleef & Arpels, the interior contained at least one mirror on the back of the lid, a powder compartment and a removable lipstick holder. It appears that sometimes a blush compartment was added to the ensemble or replaced the lipstick holder. Some made room for a few cigarettes, a pen, a comb or a small watch, but this was more rare. La Minaudière™ is a box the size of a small book, «clean, naked, without a handle<sup>2</sup>» and goes with everything, thanks to its sober design and neutral colors. The result of delicate workmanship, it was available in platinum, gold or *stypstor*<sup>3</sup>. Sometimes covered in black lacquer, it was embellished with a clasp, often interchangeable, set with precious stones.

The most luxurious *nécessaires* and *Minaudières*™ were made by the great jewelers of Place Vendôme. The Maison Van Cleef & Arpels, founded in 1906, built its reputation on its formidable production of vanity cases between the twenties and thirties. The craze for these «boîtes à vanités<sup>4</sup>» illustrates the evolution and the change in function of the jewel at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it now served to reveal part of one’s privacy. A new companion for these ladies, it was not worn around the neck or attached to the earlobe, but was placed in the palm of the hand and could be placed on the corner of a table to develop all its power of seduction. Owned to be exhibited in public, they took on a social, almost political function: by their sumptuousness the woman who carried them revealed her social rank and the quality of her taste in the eyes of all. The use of these *nécessaires* hence accompanied the evolution of feminine social habits. At once vectors of emancipation and social influence, they were also the embodiment of the Art Deco style and the result of intense stylistic and cultural exchanges specific to the period but also to the Maison of Van Cleef & Arpels. Finally, their development has led to the perfecting of jewelry making *savoir-faire* through the intervention of several specialized craftsmen and the rediscovery of ancestral techniques.

### DECORATION OF *NÉCESSAIRES*: MULTIPLE INFLUENCES

The twenties and thirties were the time of the *Café Society*, a cosmopolitan milieu that emerged in the aftermath of World War I and was the forerunner of the *Jet Set*. This worldly circle includes among its ranks wealthy, educated and cultured heiresses - such as Daisy Fellowes or Florence Jay Gould - who liked to surround themselves with the greatest artists such as Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau or Erik Satie. Their social evenings had, apart from an infinite quest for pleasure, only one objective, that of «promoting a superior way of life<sup>5</sup>». This great world could be found at the *Folies Bergère*, at the famous *Boeuf sur le toit*, in the casinos, as well as during sumptuous and whimsical balls given by illustrious members of the aristocracy such as Count Etienne de Beaumont<sup>6</sup>. The slightest extravagance in the clothing of these elegant women or the last jewel in the crown at a cocktail party or charity event was immediately described in detail by the society pages<sup>7</sup>. Their accessories were signed by the greatest jewelers of Place Vendôme, such as Van Cleef & Arpels. Each *nécessaire* produced by the Maison was a unique creation in shape, decoration and content, and illustrated the quintessential Art Deco style. While the twenties were marked by an abundance of ornamental motifs that

- 1 « L'art précieux de notre temps », Le Figaro, 31 décembre 1930, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k296463n/f4.item.r=le+figaro+31+décembre+1930>, consulted 17<sup>th</sup> juin 2019.
- 2 « Des boîtes à vanités », *Vogue*, juin 1935, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k65395423/f46.item.r=vanité>, consulté le 5 avril 2019.
- 3 *Stypstor* is an alloy of silver and pewter patented in the 1930s by Van Cleef & Arpels and generally used for the production of *Minaudières*.
- 4 « Des boîtes à vanités », *op.cit.*
- 5 Alice Bernard, « Le mode de vie du grand monde Parisien : modalités et persistance d'un modèle culturel attractif (1900-1939) » in Katia Béguin et Olivier Dautresme, *La ville et l'esprit de société*. Tours, Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, 2004. (pp. 129-144), <http://books.openedition.org/pufr/1758>, consulted 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2019.

increased *a crescendo* until about 1928, the thirties favored the appearance of purer lines heralding the arrival of modernism embodied by the *Minaudière* invented in 1933. Their decoration was a skillful and exclusive combination of multiple exotic influences mixed with ancient styles and modern innovations.

The founders of the Maison of Van Cleef & Arpels were great travelers, and this was reflected in their creations, which are mostly imbued with Chinese, Japanese and Indo-Persian styles. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cultural exchanges between Europe and the East intensified thanks to the improvement of navigation techniques and the vogue for cruise ships. The city of Shanghai became, along with Paris, London and New York, one of the most attractive cities<sup>6</sup> and the favorite destination of rich Europeans in search of a change of scenery, who brought back engraved jade pieces, lacquer boxes, snuff boxes and small furniture from their stays. The elegant women of the inter-war period had Chinese salons<sup>9</sup> with silk-covered walls that brought «a bit of the mystery of the temples there<sup>10</sup>». The world of entertainment participated in the mythification of the Celestial Empire with the success of the *Grand Bal Chinois* given at the Paris Opera in 1923. Colors, patterns and landscapes taken from screens or porcelain from the Kangxi<sup>11</sup> period, as well as materials such as jade borrowed from Chinese craftsmanship, were found on *nécessaires*. The dragon, an imaginary animal emblematic of Chinese culture since the Han<sup>12</sup> period, was highly appreciated by jewelers. A *nécessaire* [FIG. 1] of oblong shape in red and black enamel made in 1925 for the Maharani Sita Devi of Baroda<sup>13</sup>, depicts a pair of dragons moving in the middle of swirling clouds. Its ends are decorated with large coral cabochons carved with floral motifs reminiscent of cinnabar lacquer objects<sup>14</sup>.

The Japanese decorative arts, discovered in the 1860s<sup>15</sup>, were also a source of inspiration for Van Cleef & Arpels, which drew many new patterns and forms from them. The *inrō* - literally «seal basket» - is a traditional Japanese small-sized case, usually made of bamboo covered with lacquer, with several horizontal compartments that nest into each other. Its barrel shape and cord are found in many *nécessaires* [FIG. 2] produced by Van Cleef & Arpels. Also, the naturalistic forms and motifs of Japanese art presented on traditional prints and stencils allowed for all kinds of fantastical interpretations. Flowers - *sakura* flowers or chrysanthemums - were often used by Van Cleef & Arpels, who did not hesitate to make them the sole motif of some of its *nécessaires*. Also, the sober lines of Japanese architecture inspired certain border motifs whose shapes interlocked in the manner of *akari shōji*<sup>16</sup>, Japanese decorative movable partitions used to compartmentalize rooms. Finally, the technique of mother-of-pearl marquetry allowed the best craftsmen to reproduce the characteristic landscapes in miniature of masters like Hiroshige and Hokusai<sup>17</sup>.

Van Cleef & Arpels jewelers were also curious about Indo-Persian civilizations. In 1903, the *Union centrale des Arts décoratifs* organized the Exhibition of Islamic Arts and unveiled for the first time a large number of miniatures, bindings and manuscripts. However, the event that triggered the craze for the aesthetics of these distant cultures was the first performance of the symphonic poem *Scheherazade* by Serge de Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in 1910. Léon Bakst's colorful costumes and sets from a fantasized Orient enthralled Europe and definitively marked the production of the decorative arts of the period. At the same time, after the Great War, fashion and jewelry maisons welcomed a new type of prestigious customers: the Maharajahs. During the British *Raj*, they amassed colossal fortunes and, acquiring a taste for the Western way of life through frequent trips to Europe<sup>18</sup>, discovered the unequalled savoir-faire of French craftsmanship while bringing the jewelers of Paris the jewels of their civilization. The latter would draw their inspiration from architecture, carpets, ceramics, Persian miniatures or the cutting of precious stones. Indo-Persian motifs enthused designers who made extensive use of flora, sometimes stylized to the extreme<sup>19</sup>. The arabesques, palms, tulips or rosettes intertwine in skillful symmetrical compositions as on the enamel and diamond *nécessaire* «Arabesque»

- 6 Manfred Kelkel, *La musique de ballet en France de la Belle Époque aux Années Folles*, Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1992, p. 218.
- 7 Alice Bernard, *op. cit.*
- 8 «Promenade dans Hollywood», *Midinette*, 15 janvier 1937, <https://www.retronews.fr/journal/midinette/15-janvier-1937/>, consulté le 6 juin 2019.
- 9 «Les belles demeures», *Comoedia*, 14 novembre 1923, <https://www.retronews.fr/journal/comoedia/19-janvier-1927/>, consulté le 6 juin 2019.
- 10 *Ibid.*
- 11 Marie-Catherine Rey, Huei-Chung Tsao, *Jade, des empereurs à l'Art déco*, Paris, Somogy, 2016, p. 262.
- 12 Zeev Gourarier (dir.), *Dragons : au jardin zoologique des mythologies*, Paris, Editions Serpenoise, 2005, p. 167.
- 13 Amin Jaffer, *Fastes occidentaux de maharajahs*, Paris, Citadelles & Mazenod, 2007, p. 276.
- 14 Cinnabar lacquer has a red color obtained by tinting the resin with cinnabar powder or mercury sulfide.
- 15 The World's Fair in London in 1862 presented 600 Japanese objects from the collection of the first British Consul General in Japan, Sir Rutherford Alcock. At the Paris World's Fair in 1867, for the first time in history, Japan held its first pavilion.
- 16 Nicolas Fiévé, «Histoire de l'architecture et des jardins du Japon pré-moderne (milieu du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle - milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle)», *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences historiques et philologiques*, <http://journals.openedition.org/ashp/1535>, consulté le 5 juin 2019.
- 17 In Japan the traditional themes and style of prints were renewed at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century thanks to Hokusai (1760-1849) and Hiroshige (1797-1858) who founded a new genre: the landscape print.
- 18 Amin Jaffer, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
- 19 Albert Racinet, *L'ornement polychrome*, Paris, Bookking International, 1988, p. 34.



[FIG. 1] Enamel, coral and diamond vanity case, by Van Cleef & Arpels, 1925, n° 27703

[FIG. 2] Enamel and sapphires vanity case by Van Cleef & Arpels, 1928, undisclosed number





[FIG. 3] « Arabesque » vanity case in diamonds, aventurine, quartz, onyx and enamel, by Van Cleef & Arpels, 1928, n°. 31389



[FIG. 4] « La Chasse » vanity case, in enamel, mother-of-pearl and diamonds, made by Aronsberg for Van Cleef & Arpels, 1926, n°. 27642 and 6891



[FIG. 5] Enamel, gold and hard stones vanity case, made by Strauss, Allard & Meyer for Van Cleef & Arpels, circa 1930. N°s 28774 and 7246

[FIG. 3] made in 1928. The association of colors was influenced by the pink tones of Benares enamels but also by the green and blue feathers of the peacock, the fetish animal of India<sup>20</sup>.

The Maison of Van Cleef & Arpels nonetheless retained a certain attachment to Western styles of the past, from which it drew motifs that it reinvented or modified. This historicism is part of the vocabulary of ornamental *nécessaires* from the 1920s to around 1929. The 18<sup>th</sup> century was a source of inspiration for the designers of the inter-war period, as shown by the work of Art Deco traditionalists, such as the cabinetmaker Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, whose furniture was an extremely simplified reminiscence of the 18<sup>th</sup> century style<sup>21</sup>. It was then possible to find imitation of pink marble on enameled *nécessaires*, but also crowns of flowers and delicate diamond garlands reminiscent of Louis XVI period furniture. The Medieval period and its colorful illuminations provided jewelers with admirable subjects such as hunting scenes or chivalry. Inspired by the small full-enamel paintings that Pierre-Karl Fabergé executed on his cigarette cases, these medieval subjects were reinterpreted and reproduced in mother of pearl marquetry and hard stones as on a 1926 *nécessaire* [FIG. 4] showing a hunting scene.

From the 1930s, beside the luxurious creations of the major jewelry Maisons, avant-garde jewelry appeared with brutally straight lines, made by independent jewelers such as Jean Després or Raymond Templier. This approach, which called into question the established order of jewelry, was in line with the Bauhaus and again adopted the forms of cubism and futurism. Van Cleef & Arpels created pieces merging luxury and modernity to satisfy the most discerning clients.

The *nécessaires* with abrupt angles were adorned with simple geometric motifs often within a limited chromatic palette. Other creations succumbed to the wave of machinism, an extreme fringe of modernism that praised the reign of the machine and highlighted the primacy of industrial art<sup>22</sup>. One *nécessaire* [FIG. 5], made around 1930, is covered with black onyx and decorated with tooth-like blades arranged in a zigzag pattern that, taken separately, can evoke any mechanism: motor, pulley or gear. Another *nécessaire* entitled «*Machine esthétique*», a direct reference to Fernand Léger, who «invented images of machines like others make up imaginary landscapes<sup>23</sup>». On this vanity case is repetitive geometric abstraction whose forms refer to the abstract compositions painted by Le Corbusier or Sonia Delaunay. This modernist wave reached its apogee with the invention of the Minaudière™ in 1933. This luxurious and practical box responded to the new modernist trend that glorified line rather than color. It was an ideal response to Adolf Loos and his «passion for smooth and precious surfaces<sup>24</sup>» which he expressed in his 1908 essay *Ornament and Crime*. La Minaudière™ was unencumbered by ornament and offered clean lines that emphasized sumptuousness and quality materials.

#### ARTISANS SPECIALIZED IN CREATING PRECIOUS BOXES

The creation of a *nécessaire* or a Minaudière™ requires long hours of work and the mastery of a great deal of savoir-faire. The manufacture of boxes does not require the same skills as for a classic piece of jewelry. The interior layout and the various techniques used to create very specific ornamentation required the inventiveness of specialized craftsmen who collaborated at all stages of the manufacturing process, bringing their eye, experience and savoir-faire to achieve perfection. It is however difficult to know to what extent these craftsmen had freedom of maneuver in the creation of *nécessaires* for the Maison Van Cleef & Arpels, but what is certain is that the craftsman, beyond the manufacturing process, also nourished the creation by bringing finesse and quality of execution. These workers from the shadows achieved moreover in 1925, during the International Exhibition of Decorative Arts, the indication of their names next to those of the great Maisons on the jewelry stands. The craze for *nécessaires* encouraged the appearance of a new trade, that of the *boitier*. This craftsman, both goldsmith and jeweler, was

- 20 Guillaume Glorieux (dir.), *Paradis d'Oiseaux*, L'École des arts joailliers, Paris, 2019, p. 50.
- 21 Alastair Duncan, *Art Deco*, Paris, Éditions Thames & Hudson, 1989, p. 14.
- 22 Isabelle Papieau, *L'Art déco une esthétique émancipatrice*, Paris, L'Harmattan, Coll. Logiques Sociales, 2009, p. 30.
- 23 Yuki Yamamoto, « Fernand Léger et la ville moderne : une analyse de la structure spatiale dans la peinture », *The Japanese Society for Aesthetics, Aesthetics* N°17, 2013, p. 31.
- 24 August Sarnitz, *Adolf Loos*, Taschen, 2016.
- 25 *Les grands ateliers de France*, <http://www.grandsateliersdefrance.com/fr/mobile/l-atelier-de-l-objet-10.html>, notice « L'atelier de l'objet », consulted the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

specialized in the realization of jeweled boxes but also precious objects such as clocks, perfume bottles, pens, academician swords, trophies, glasses or fans<sup>25</sup>. In addition to the Strauss, Allard & Meyer company, one of the well known cases was Alfred Langlois, who in 1932 signed an exclusive contract<sup>26</sup> with Van Cleef & Arpels. A highly skilled craftsman, he invented several systems for changing the decoration on a piece of jewelry, for opening a cigarette box with a hinge in 1927, and a new mechanism for intelligently integrating a watch into a *nécessaire* in 1930. Even if to this day all his creations are not signed or listed, he nevertheless left his «style» which is discernible on *nécessaires* made for other important Maisons.

The jewelers at Van Cleef & Arpels rediscovered or learned to master ancestral techniques. The art of enamel was used in cloisonné, champlevé, full enamel or, more rarely in *plique-à-jour*, for its almost infinite decorative qualities. Lacquer, a technique which arrived in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and was perfected at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by artists such as Gaston Suisse, was worked in a very sober way like a glaze on Minaudières<sup>TM</sup> or according to traditional Japanese processes such as *Maki-é*, a fresh lacquer sprinkled with gold or silver powder. The most breathtaking technique is that of mother of pearl and hard stone marquetry, which is the same as that of *pietra dura*, or *commesso*, which reached its peak in Italy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Mother of pearl and stones are chosen for their aesthetic appeal, then cut into the desired shape and assembled like a puzzle. The absolute master of this refined art was the Russian artist Vladimir Makovsky (1884-1966) who, from 1920 to 1930, created the most beautiful mother-of-pearl inlays for the jewelers of Place Vendôme. He was born in Russia then fled the 1917 Revolution to Paris where he started a new life. He became known to the great jewelry Maisons thanks to the Strauss, Allard & Meyer workshop for which he initially worked. Largely inspired by the techniques of Chinese and Japanese lacquers, his specialty was nevertheless unique in Europe. Guided by the exotic fashions of 1925, he drew his inspiration from Persian miniatures, Chinese landscapes and Japanese prints, sometimes infusing them with his Russian heritage<sup>27</sup>. Another artist or workshop, Aronsberg, probably specialized in mother of pearl and stone marquetry, collaborated with Van Cleef & Arpels for the realization of several *nécessaires*. The first represents a Medieval hunting scene in enamel and mother of pearl [FIG. 2] and the second, of which only one drawing remains today, represents the frame of a Romano-Byzantine window. On a polychrome enamel background is a standing knight half hidden by his blue enamel shield. No information about Aronsberg is available to date.

*Nécessaires* and Minaudières<sup>TM</sup> produced by Van Cleef & Arpels between the 1920s and the 1930s embody the Art Deco style at its most luxurious and dazzling. Both a symbol of a certain liberation from traditional feminine customs and a vector of social influence, these precious boxes helped to further forge the reputation of excellence of French jewelry savoir-faire. Although their production declined at the dawn of the Second World War, these *vanity cases* continue to enthuse collectors and private individuals to this day. Indeed, their uniqueness justifies their rarity on the art market and their auction price sometimes reaches several hundred thousand euros. This success on the secondary market in no way hinders the choice made by Van Cleef & Arpels to maintain production of *nécessaires* to order and sometimes as part of its high-end jewelry collections.

<sup>26</sup> Guillaume Glorieux, *Objets précieux Art déco*, L'École des arts joailliers Paris, 2018, p. 88.

<sup>27</sup> *Hancocks London*, <https://www.hancocks-london.com/maker/makovsky%2C-vladimir/>, notice "Vladimir Makovsky", consulted 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019.



## Jewelry at the 1925 Exhibition of Modern and Industrial Arts

The International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, which took place in Paris in 1925, dedicated the work of a wide variety of art industries, including the jewelry industry. The first major international exhibition since the end of the Great War, this event, which brought together 22 countries<sup>1</sup>, was considered a competition in its time and was a real showcase for various industries, aiming to boost their economies. Jewelry was no exception to these considerations, as its recurring participation in Universal or international exhibitions dates back to their origins in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1925 Exhibition is thus a continuation of these events, which brought together a large number of powers, but with a distinct character: it was the first International Exhibition exclusively dedicated to the decorative arts to be held in Paris.

The main stake of the French *bijoutier* and jeweler exhibitors in 1925 was to prove that the jewelry industry was capable of renewal and adapting to the spirit of the times, which resulted from the central place devolved to Paris at that time. Indeed, the French capital was then the leading city for the world gemstone market<sup>2</sup>. The great Parisian jewelers, especially those on the Place Vendôme, also had an international reputation, some of them having developed branches abroad, whether in Europe or the United States. Major French Maisons had already proven themselves and regularly exhibited at the various fairs and exhibitions that marked the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Cartier, Boucheron, Van Cleef & Arpels, Vever and jewelers such as Georges Fouquet and Paul Templier. French jewelry was thus a real reference on the international scene. Studying the jewelry industry within this exhibition also helps to evaluate the place and role it played in the decorative arts at that time.

### THE SETTING FOR THE EXHIBITION OF THE BIJOUTIERS-JOAILLIERS

Universal and International Exhibitions were organized according to a precise distribution of exhibiting arts professions, forming various sections and classes. If, traditionally, *bijouterie-joaillerie* and goldsmithing exhibited in the same section, being concentrated in the same trade union body, at the 1925 Exhibition, while goldsmithing, a member of class 10 «art and metal industry» was attached to group II furniture<sup>3</sup>, *bijouterie-joaillerie* was designated member of group III la parure, with class 24 specifically dedicated to it<sup>4</sup>. This unprecedented distribution was illustrated by a reflection of Mr. Fouquet-Lapar, president of the *chambre syndicale de la bijouterie, joaillerie et orfèvrerie* who declared: «I have three daughters, but one of them got lost»<sup>5</sup>.

This progress marked the evolution that was taking place in the very conception of this craft. A transition was taking place from an industry considered for its materials to an industry participating in an entire whole, that of feminine adornment. In addition to class 24, the group of *la parure* was composed of five classes dedicated to clothing, its accessories, «fashion, flowers and feathers», and perfumery<sup>6</sup>. The choice to link the jewelry industry to the other fashion industries was certainly explained by the special place that Paris occupied in the trade related to women's fashion and its impact in the country's economy. The report of the Exhibition offers a reminder of the importance of Paris by pointing out that «in jewelry as in other branches of fashion, Paris sets the tone for the elegant women of Europe and America; it is there that they come to seek «what is worn»»<sup>7</sup>.

In addition to this new affiliation to the fashion industry, Class 24 was distinguished by the variety of trades represented. Indeed, it was composed of both «*bijouterie* and jewelry, lapidary work» and «costume and imitation *bijouterie*». An important investment was made by these professions on the occasion of this event, the list of French exhibitors including about a hundred French members<sup>8</sup> in this class. Among the participants were jewelers particularly active in the guild, such as Georges Fouquet, Boucheron and Radius, Van Cleef & Arpels, Cartier, Mauboussin, Marzo, Dusausoy, Raymond Templier, Lacroche, Aucoc, Linzeler and Marchak, Gustave-Roger Sandoz... The very high number of French craftsmen testified to the development of the guild at that time, unlike foreign industries which did not

- 1 Yvonne Brunhammer, *1925*, Paris, Presses de la Connaissance, 1976, p. 8.
- 2 Marguerite de Cerval, *Mauboussin*, Paris, Éditions du Regard, 1992, p. 88.
- 3 [Anonymous], *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes: catalogue général officiel: Paris. April-October 1925*, Paris, Imprimerie de Vaugirard, 1925, p. 28.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
- 5 Pierre Contreau, «L'exposition des arts décoratifs 1925», *Le grand négoce: organe du commerce de luxe français*, numéro spécial, 15 March 1926, p. 36.
- 6 [Anonymous], *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes: catalogue général officiel: Paris. April-October 1925*, op. cit., p. 32.
- 7 Paul Léon, *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes Paris 1925: rapport général: section artistique et technique. Parure: classes 20 à 24*, vol. IX, Paris, Larousse, 1927, p. 90.
- 8 *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes: catalogue général officiel: Paris. April-October 1925*, op. cit., p. 286-287.

manifest themselves through a trade union grouping. On the contrary, France was distinguished by an increase in guilds in this sector of activity. The *Chambre Syndicale de la Bijouterie-Joaillerie et de l'Orfèvrerie* was located next to the *bijouterie de fantaisie*, which had its own guild, as well as the *Chambre Syndicale des Marchands en Diamants, Perles, pierres précieuses et des lapidaires*<sup>9</sup> (Union Chamber of Diamond, Pearl, Precious Stone and Lapidary Dealers), whose *Pavillon des Diamantaires*<sup>10</sup> (Diamond Dealers' Pavilion) was attached to class 31 and was designed to present «a diamond cutting shop and a workshop in which the visitor can witness the particular work of pearl drilling»<sup>11</sup>.

Foreign powers were represented by eleven other nations among the exhibitors in Class 24, including Austria, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Great Britain and Turkey. Thus, there were nearly 190 exhibitors presenting their work in this class. This number of participants is completely unprecedented. In comparison, at the International Exhibition in Milan in 1906, the jewelry class had only nine exhibitors in jewelry and seven in *bijouterie*<sup>12</sup>. However, this class was relatively undeveloped compared to the other art industries since 200,000 exhibitors were spread over the entire Exhibition<sup>13</sup>.

While the members of Class 24 presented their creations in numerous pavilions and spaces, the main exhibition of French jewelers, *bijoutiers, bijoutiers de fantaisie* was held at the Grand Palais [FIG. 1]. The space allotted to them was significant, 500 square meters<sup>14</sup>, and constituted a true French consecration, made possible thanks to the major investment of the *Chambre Syndicale*, which organized an architectural competition for the occasion<sup>15</sup>, won by Éric Bagge. For the architect, the challenge of the layout emerged from the coexistence of different types of *parures*, whether precious or costume jewelry, the main concern being that these different types of *parures* «do not undermine each other»<sup>16</sup>. In this dedicated space, Cartier distinguished itself with the use of mannequins in its shop windows, a presentation method that was adopted at the same time by fashion houses. Further sealing this special link with fashion, Cartier also exhibited in the *Pavillon de l'Élégance*, alongside the fashion houses Callot, Worth, Lanvin and the leather goods manufacturer Hermès. This principle of double exhibition was also implemented by certain *bijoutiers* and jewelers who were members of the *Société des artistes décorateurs*, such as Paul-Émile Brandt, Georges Fouquet and Raymond Templier, who exhibited not only at the Grand Palais, but also in the *Chambre de Madame* designed by André Groult, located in the *Une ambassade française* pavillon.

### THE ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS, A REFLECTION OF A DIVERSIFIED PROFESSION

Among the fundamental principles resulting from the exhibition program was the incentive to exhibitors to foster collaborations between artists and manufacturers. The influence of collaborations between jewelry Maisons was a major force in 1925. On the 38 displays in the Grand Palais exhibition space, 23 of the jewelers were cited as presenting works from various collaborations.

To provide designs or models, the Maisons approached two categories of artists. The first were traditionally part of the jewelry field, like lapidaries, assemblers, manufacturers, the recourse to collaborators being an old custom in this guild. Indeed, the manufacturing of each piece was subject to various stages that could involve the participation of several trades. Among the many models submitted to the Admissions Committee, a large number were supplied by outside designer-manufacturers who were seconded and had their own Maisons. Thus, the works presented by Boucheron and Radius were the result of work by the Maison with more than fourteen collaborators, including Pinçon, Verger, Rubel, Maynier, Bisson, Le Turcq, Hattot, Le Saché, etc. Some pieces required the work of several of these craftsmen, such as corsage ornaments by Boucheron and Radius but whose designs were by Lucien Hirtz, settings by Bisson, and the lapidary work by Brethiot [FIG. 2].

In addition to the active and valued participation of various craftsmen, the field of artists was broadened in 1925. The valorization of another type of collaboration indeed appeared. It was about the input of various artists,

9 [Anonymous], « À l'exposition des arts décoratifs. Inauguration du pavillon des Diamantaires », *La Perle*, 2<sup>e</sup> année, n°10, 25 June-10 July 1925, p. 3.

10 Yvonne Brunhammer, 1925, Paris, Presses de la Connaissance, 1976, p. 14.

11 [Anonymous], « À l'exposition des arts décoratifs. Inauguration du pavillon des Diamantaires », *La Perle*, 2<sup>e</sup> année, n°10, 25 June-10 July 1925, p. 4.

12 Gustave-Roger Sandoz, Paul Dreyfus-Bing, *Exposition internationale de Milan 1906, Rapport général de la section française*, Paris, Comité français des expositions à l'étranger, 1906, p. 6.

13 Gabriel Boissy, « L'exposition des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes », *Les Échos des industries d'art*, n°1, April 1925, p. 11.

14 Jacques Guérin, « La bijouterie-joaillerie à l'Exposition des Arts décoratifs de 1925 », dans Georges Fouquet (dir.), *La bijouterie, la joaillerie et la bijouterie de fantaisie au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, s. n., 1934, p. 183.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 166.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 167.

who contributed to the work of the *bijoutiers* and jewelers by providing designs of jewels. This association between artists and jewelry Maisons was particularly well illustrated by the example of the Maison Fouquet. His collaborations with André Léveillé, Éric Bagge, Adolphe Mouron (known as *Cassandre*) were indeed very much noticed. The creation of models by André Léveillé for Georges Fouquet was, in 1925, unheard of for this artist, initially a textile manufacturer who regularly exhibited in the Salons from 1905<sup>17</sup>. The influence of the painter can be felt in his drawings, which have a marked use of color in common and a geometrization of shapes [FIG. 3], some of his designs resembled cubist paintings, or abstract ornaments. However, this collaboration, which was very fruitful in 1925, seems to have been limited to this period. The same is true for *Cassandre*, a multidisciplinary artist, poster designer, painter and decorator, who in 1925 distinguished himself with the creation of the Grand Prix winning poster “Au Bûcheron”. Georges Fouquet also had a special relationship with Eric Bagge, who provided him with a set of drawings for the occasion. Indeed, if the latter was known as an architect, he also worked as a drafting teacher at the *École de la bijouterie, joaillerie et orfèvrerie*, attached to the *Chambre Syndicale*<sup>18</sup>. If these collaborations were particularly noted, Georges Fouquet was not the only one to have worked with artists outside the jewelry field. For example the case of the pastelist and decorator René Charles Massé, who worked as a designer at Boucheron, or Jules Chadel, a multidisciplinary artist, at the same time painter, engraver, designer and sculptor, who in 1925 executed jewelry designs for the Maison Vever<sup>19</sup>.

Class 24 at the Grand Palais also appeared to reflect the collaborative work undertaken by the various jewelry Maisons. While the number of employees varied for each one, ranging from one to more than a dozen, a certain number of them were able to work with several jewelers. This was the case for Verger, who was cited by Fouquet as a collaborator of Marzo, Linzeler and Marchak, Van Cleef & Arpels, as well as Pinçon and Rubel who also provided models for the same Maisons. This phenomenon reflected the exchange of creations between artists and led to the observation of Mr. Jacques Guérin, class 24 rapporteur, who wrote at the sight of the display windows of the Grand Palais exhibition:

Wasn't the least well-informed visitor, placed in the center of the ellipse where the greatest names in Parisian jewelry were gathered, struck by an obvious kinship between numerous pieces of jewelry, works from different Maisons?<sup>20</sup>

These diverse artistic collaborations corresponded to a desire to broaden the field of traditional creator-manufacturers by allowing various artists to provide designs. These creators thus allowed a renewal of shapes which was praised by the jury of class 24 of the jewelry industry, chaired by Georges Fouquet. Thirty-five awards were given to various collaborators. These interdisciplinary exchanges reflected the dynamism of the decorative arts at that time as well as the new impetus given to the discipline.

### FRENCH ENGAGEMENT EMBODIED IN THE WORKS PRESENTED

Under the effect of this trade-based grouping, French jewelry was distinguished by what has been described since 1925 as a «common effort»<sup>21</sup>. Indeed, jewelers went beyond an individual vision of their art to develop common progress. Their works, gathered together in the Grand Palais, offered a panorama of the interpretations of the strategy adopted by *bijoutiers-joailliers* and *bijoutiers de fantaisie*, in keeping with the dichotomy between the two major trends emerging from the Exhibition, namely the so-called traditionalist and modernist sides of Art Deco.

While the notion of modernity was omnipresent in the Exhibition strategy, the artists nevertheless appropriated a certain number of motifs from the styles of the past, using, among other things, references to the styles of the Ancien Régime but also to the Directoire or Empire styles, their creations being

17 Chantal Bizot, Yvonne Brunhammer (dir.), *Cinquante ans de l'Exposition de 1925*, Paris, Musée des arts décoratifs, Presses de la Connaissance, 15 October 1976-2 February 1977, p. 136.

18 [Anonymous], « Assemblée générale du 10 novembre 1925 », *Recueil mensuel des procès-verbaux des séances de la bijouterie de la joaillerie, de l'orfèvrerie de Paris et des industries qui s'y rattachent, exercice 1925-1926*, vol. 46, n°12, p. 215.

19 Évelyne Possémé, « Jules Chadel dessinateur de bijoux », in Nathalie Roux, Amandine Royer, Évelyne Possémé, *Jules Chadel (1870-1941). Dessins et gravures*, Montreuil, Gourcuff Gradenigo, 2015, p. 33.

20 Paul Léon, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

21 Henri Clouzot, « La parure à l'exposition des arts décoratifs français », *La Renaissance de l'art français*, vol. 1, January 1926, p. 46.



linked in this respect to a traditionalist vision. This tendency was manifest in the jewelry on the occasion of the 1925 Exhibition. The most common motif was stylized flora, with as reference the emblematic model of the flower basket. Adopted by designer-decorators, it was used on a series of furniture and *objets d'art* before 1925, in the work of artists such as Süe et Mare or Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann. Floral motifs traditionally present in jewelry were thus reinterpreted in the creations presented at the 1925 Exhibition, thus testifying to the interactions between different industries, whether for furniture or *la parure*. Jewelers and *bijoutiers* appropriated this traditional motif by bringing it a new stylization. There were many examples in the display cases of Class 24 at the Grand Palais, whether works of high jewelry such as the «roses» bracelet presented by Van Cleef & Arpels, or costume jewelry boxes de-signed by Jean Desmarès.

Another emblematic motif used in various sectors of the decorative arts was the water jet or «fountain» motif, which can be found in several of the Exhibition's characteristic creations, such as René Lalique's luminous fountain, known as *Les Sources de France*, or the *Oasis* screen by ironworker Edgar Brandt. This motif was massively adopted and in an unprecedented way by jewelers, with variations of designs. Among jewelers, the variety of materials used and changes in stone size lent themselves particularly well to this type of representation, as shown by a Mauboussin *nécessaire* [FIG. 4] whose design represents a fountain, with water jets of di-amonds falling into a mother-of-pearl basin. This was also the case of the emblematic *Grande Fontaine* tiara, decorated with water jets created by the use of stepped brilliant-cut and round brilliant-cut diamonds, a work that was awarded a Grand Prix. A variant of the fountain motif can be found, for example, in Raymond Templier's design for Paul Templier, in a diamond and amber head ornament.

In addition to this development of traditionalism, the first signs of a certain modernism in the field of jewelry could also be observed, the 1920s being characterized by a renewal of the applied arts. Some artists favored a very somber aesthetic and questioned the use of ornament and decoration. From that time on, this phenomenon became more noticeable among certain artists, as Henri Clouzot states:

Simplification of lines, austerity of decoration, love of precise and fixed shapes, all the principles that manifested themselves in so many different ways at the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs find their implementation here.<sup>22</sup>

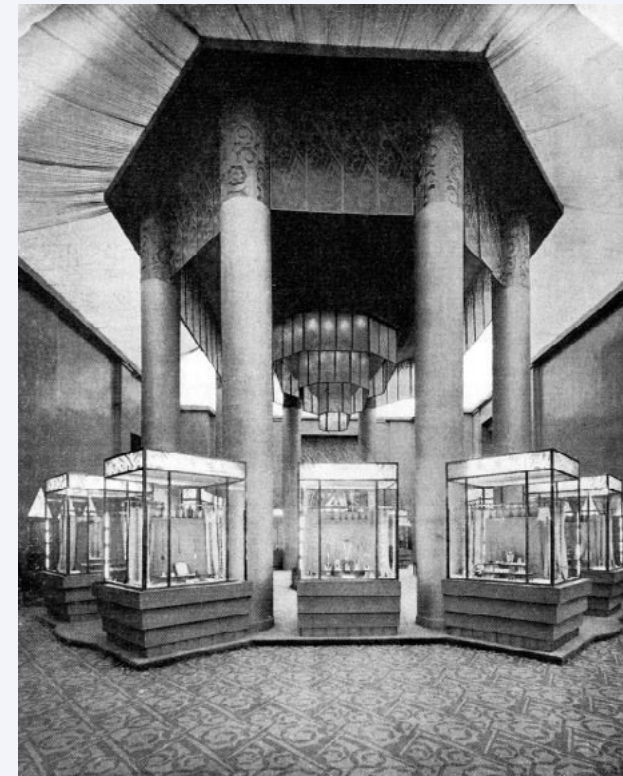
This modernist vision of creation did not constitute a radical break with the styles of the past, but rather corresponded to an aesthetic evolution. The works of jewelers remained, in this respect, very luxurious, as shown by a cuff bracelet by Cassandre for Georges Fouquet, implementing the use of clean volumes, flat surfaces and favoring rectangular or circular shapes as motifs for creations [FIG. 5]. A few personalities stand out for the modernist turn undertaken for their works, which are more generally in line with developments in other art industries, such as Raymond Templier, Gérard Sandoz or certain pieces of the Maison Dusausoy, or models proposed by Éric Bagge and Jean Fouquet for Fouquet. An architectural vision emerged from these pieces, as Gabrielle Rosenthal expressed it, according to which «bright, colorful, as never before, heavy, architectural, the jewel presents us with an unexpected similarity with the decor that surrounds us»<sup>23</sup>.

French works at the Grand Palais were hailed in the press, in recognition of corporate investment to the detriment of foreign productions. The quality of French work was almost unanimously recognized in trade newspapers and magazines specializing in fashion and the decorative arts. A journalist from the magazine *Les Échos des industries d'art* noted, for example, that «seeing these gems, one is convinced that jewelers, who only yesterday were artisans, have become artists»<sup>24</sup>. Generally speaking, the desire to renew the guild was consecrated in the press. However, some criticisms had been expressed at the production of the French members of Class 24, crystallized in two main points. The first was the rejection of a social vision of the decorative arts. The second was criticism of the luxury

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Gabrielle Rosenthal, « Le bijou moderne », *L'Art vivant*, tome 2, n°19, 1<sup>st</sup> October 1925, p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> [Anonyme], « Les beaux bijoux français modernes », *Les Échos des industries d'art*, n°5, December 1925, p. 13.



[FIG. 1] Stand of the class 24 of the Grand Palais at the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, Paris, 1925

[FIG. 2] Corsage front, gold palladium, lapis lazuli, onyx, coral, jade and diamonds, 90 cm x 48 cm, Boucheron and Radius (edition), Lucien Hirtz (design), Bisson (setting), Brethiot (lapidary), circa 1925. Boucheron, Paris

[FIG. 3] Pendant, platinum and white gold, diamonds, coral, jadeite, onyx, H: 7.6 cm, Andre Leveille (drawing), Georges Fouquet (editor), 1925. Private collection



[FIG. 4] Cuff bracelet, diamonds, lapis lazuli, coral, amethysts, aquamarines, gold and platinum, H: 4,9 cm, Georges Fouquet (editor), Adolphe Mouron (designer), circa 1925. Private collection



[FIG. 5] Make-up vanity case, platinum, gold, enamel, diamonds, mother of pearl, onyx, dimensions unknown, Mauboussin, 1925. Vartanian & Sons, New York

and ostentatious character of a large number of works<sup>25</sup>. This criticism did not only concern jewelry, but also the work of decorative artists or the ephemeral architecture erected for the Exhibition. This was how the art critic Lucien Titz expressed himself:

The megalomania of the new times also influences the jewelers and goldsmiths. Just as *palais* became *palaces*, the construction of buildings and ornaments were weighing down on women, whom a strange fashion was trying to reduce. Affirmation of triumphant materialism, philosophers will conclude<sup>26</sup>.

Hence, the 1925 Exposition contributed to reassess the place of jewelry within the other decorative and industrial arts. It was through the work of the French artists gathered at the Grand Palais that a new impetus was given to this art industry which had been in search of re-natal and «modernity» for years. The Class 24 exhibition at the Grand Palais was the culmination of the craft of *bijoutiers-joailliers*, providing a showcase for these industries. Aware of the lead taken by the other sectors of the decorative arts and the evergrowing need to revitalize the profession, the jewelry industry had strengthened its ties with other industries, and was now assertively involved in high fashion. The incursion of architects, painters, designers, in the field of jewelry marked the opening of this industry to other sectors of applied arts. In addition, the French exhibitors of Class 24 realized, through their creations, a first step towards modernization of this industry, as Émile Sedeyn underlined:

In the history of Modern Decorative Art, the 1925 Exhibition marks a decisive stage, a first success frankly asserted, not an outcome. The public was won over, the ground was cleared, the road was wide open, and from now on any new acquisition would count, any progress would be made in the direction of unity, towards this style<sup>27</sup>.

If the year 1925 embodied for some designers a first move towards a simplification of shapes and a more apparent stripping down, this approach continued in the years that followed. Hence the year 1929 was characterized by two important events, the exhibition *Les Arts de la Bijouterie, Joaillerie et de Orfèvrerie* at the Galliera Museum, which consecrated research previously carried out, and the adhesion of several *bijoutiers* and jewelers to *L'Union des artistes modernes (UAM)*, in the image of Jean Fouquet, Gerard Sandoz and Raymond Templier.

<sup>25</sup> [Anonymous], *Paris, arts décoratifs, 1925: Guide de l'exposition*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1925, p. 326.

<sup>26</sup> Pierre Contreau, *Bijoux et bijoutiers*, Paris, La France horlogère, 1932, p. 155.

<sup>27</sup> Émile Sedeyn, « Origines et développements du mouvement moderne en bijouterie et en joaillerie », in Georges Fouquet (dir.), *La bijouterie, la joaillerie et la bijouterie de fantaisie au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, s. n., 1934, p. 105.



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## “Pirates” and Pearls: the Slow Rise of French Merchants in the Arabo-Persian Gulf at the End of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

« Tu t'en iras à travers les petits sultanats de la côte arabique. Du cheikh de Haora, tu passeras chez le sultan de Makalla. Peu après, sur la rive d'Oman, le sultan de Mascate te recevra, et, un jour, sur je ne sais quel bateau, tu te présenteras à la porte du golfe Persique. Ce sera un beau jour ! Toutes les fées de Perse et d'Arabie t'ouvriront leur royaume. Elles te conduiront elle-mêmes sur les bancs de Linga, où si blanches sont les perles ; puis à Doubaï, sur la côte des Pirates, où les perles sont si chaudes. Enfin, porté par une galère capitane, voiles rouges gonflées et galériens aux rames par une aurore aux doigts de rose, à Bahrein, tu aborderas ! »

Albert Londres, *Pêcheurs de perles*,  
Paris, Albin Michel, 1931, p. 12.

If the account of Albert Londres's stay (1884-1932) in the Arabian Peninsula remains engraved in collective memory, the facet of the history of jewelry that it evokes has, for its part, remained in the shadows. This concerns the commercial relationships maintained by the various countries of the Arabo-Persian Gulf with France and this, for approximately half a century. From the beginning of the 1880s to the end of the 1920s, intense exchanges took place between these two regions, exchanges concentrated around a single object: the pearl.

Here we must recall that before the advent of the cultured pearl, shortly before 1930, the very high value of the pearls of the Gulf was explained not only by their beauty, but also by their rarity. Now called «*fine*» or «natural», they had to be picked at random from thousands of oysters, themselves fished in conditions as difficult as dangerous, by young divers often from East Africa and working without assistance all day long and during long summer months, in waters far from the coast and infested with jellyfish, octopi and sharks.

However, just as the vast majority of pearls sold in Paris at the beginning of the previous century came from the western shore of the Gulf, almost all the pearls then fished in this area were shipped to France to be sold in Paris, which at that time was the world capital of the pearl trade<sup>1</sup>. The question then arises as to what were the factors that allowed the French to become the privileged partners of Arab merchants despite the British presence in the Gulf?

### FROM “PIRATE COAST” TO “PEARL COAST”

The commercial success of the French in the Gulf was neither sudden nor easy. This is evidenced by the number and audacity of the attempts made by a few unscrupulous merchants before 1900, merchants whose activities were closely watched by the British. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Crown made sure to protect its trade with India from different types of «assailants» through various agreements to protect merchant ships and fishing grounds by the Indian Navy, and thus the development of the pearl trade.

Pearl fishing being at that time one of the main sources of income in the region, the establishment of a curfew during the summer pearl season appeared to be a necessity in the eyes of the English. In 1820, a first treaty was therefore submitted by the Crown to the various sheikhs of the coast in order to put an end to the acts of piracy carried out notably from Ras al-Khaimah by several local groups such as the Qawasim or the Al-Qasimi. However, facing new maritime attacks, this time from Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ajman, the British had to put pressure on their respective leaders to sign a real maritime truce in 1835<sup>2</sup>. Stable and secure trade could then begin to develop between the various emirates, kingdoms, principalities and cities of the Gulf with the British Empire via India [FIGS. 1 AND 2].

In addition to Bandar Lengeh, the main port on the Persian shore, Basra as well as various ports in the Gulf were linked to Bombay in 1862 by the British East India Company. Following the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869, the port of Basra became a stop on the sea trade route. It began to export directly to Europe thanks to newly established connections in London with a British company: the Mackinnon Mackenzie Company, which established itself in Bahrain in 1883, then in Dubai in 1891. As early as 1881, however, representatives of the Parisian company Izoard & Co. embarked on a steamer<sup>4</sup>, then called the SS Severin, to conduct a trial trade mission from Muscat to Basra, a mission that failed spectacularly despite the presence on board of the very enterprising Denis de Rivoyre (1837-1907) and large quantities of French goods on board. The port of Basra, which was growing rapidly at the time, was finally connected to Marseilles the following year by a French company with ten ships, the *Compagnie des Steamers de l'Ouest*, established by Rivoyre himself and a certain Jules Mesnier, in partnership with the *Charbonnages Poingdextre du Havre*<sup>5</sup>.

### HYACINTHE-ALEXANDRE CHAPUY (1847-1899)

Also in 1881, a mysterious Frenchman named Hyacinthe-Alexandre Chapuy, left Mauritius on his own sailboat to head alone to Muscat. There, he intro-

- 1 See Guillaume Glorieux & Olivier Segura (eds.), *Marchands de perles. Rediscovery of a commercial saga between the Gulf and France at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century*, Dubai and Paris, L'Ecole Van Cleef & Arpels, 2019. For a general history of pearl fishing in the Gulf, see also Robert A. Carter, *Sea of Pearls. Seven Thousand Years of the Industry that Shaped the Gulf*, London, Arabian Publishing, 2012.
- 2 For this reason, people began to speak of the States of the Trucial States, a term that from that time on included the current United Arab Emirates as well as those of Dibba, Hamriyah, Kalba and Hira. While that of Umm al Qaiwain was added the following year, another ten-year Truce was signed in 1843, followed ten years later by a Perpetual Treaty of Maritime Truce.
- 3 Eugène Napoléon Flandin, *Voyage en Perse de MM. Eugène Flandin et Pascal Coste pendant les années 1840 et 1841*. Paris, Gide et J. Baudry, 1851.
- 4 On this topic read Stephanie Jones, “British India Steamers and the Trade of the Persian Gulf, 1862-1914”, *The Great Circle*, Vol. 7, No. 1, April 1985, p. 23-44.
- 5 “Précis of correspondence on international rivalry and British policy in the Persian Gulf, 1872-1905”, [12v-13v] (25-27/116), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/PS/20/C247.

duced himself as the representative of an important company based in Marseille, France, responsible for informing the Paris Chamber of Commerce about trade in Oman and the Gulf. After living in the Gulf for two years, he was noticed and then closely watched by British agents. Described by Colonel Ross as «half adventurer, half merchant and complete schemer», Chapuy was even suspected of working as an intelligence officer for Russia.

If his luxurious way of life, described as «extravagant» by the English, did not seem to displease the Sultan of Oman, Chapuy did not however manage to succeed in his business and finally had to leave Muscat for Bander Abbas in 1883 to try his luck in the transport via cargo ships, disrupting in particular the business of the British companies in place. After two short round trips to France, Chapuy reappeared in 1890 in Bandar Abbas accompanied this time by a certain Mr. Pierrepont, whom he introduced as his pearl fishing and business partner. The latter had however some difficulties bearing the local climate and a strong fever finally forced him to go to Europe<sup>7</sup>. The pearl trade also experienced a boom at that time: while Lorimer estimates the total value of pearl exports from the main ports of the Gulf at £327,268 around 1886-1887, it reached £549,243 in 1890.

Accompanied this time by another fellow countryman called Tramier or Thorny, Chapuy then went three times to Umm Al Quwain to buy shells and invest in pearl fishing. This was primarily perceived by the English as an attempt to gain favor with Sheikh Ahmad I bin Abdullah Al Mu'alla, who had been in power since 1873. The Indian Secretary of Foreign Affairs, H. M. Durand, then noted that these Frenchmen could cause great harm to the English if they wished. Indeed, according to British agents stationed in Lingah<sup>8</sup>, the Sheikh is said to have granted the two men a plot of land near his own residence after the French managed to sail a dozen ships from Sour, Oman, without being bothered by the British<sup>9</sup>. Chapuy and his compatriot had indeed permitted these dhows to hoist a French flag, thus allowing them to escape the right to search by the British and thus to fearlessly engage in all types of trafficking, such as (never really interrupted) slaves<sup>10</sup>, but also arms<sup>11</sup>.

According to Major Adelbert C. Talbot (1845-1920), the British political representative in the Gulf, France and Russia would also have agreed at the end of the 1880s to try to weaken the general position of the British in the Gulf, with the burden falling on France for the western and southern parts of the region. The latter therefore suggested the conclusion of a new formal agreement on the model of the one of December 1887, in order to make the new Trucial States a British protectorate and thus repel the potential claims of other European countries, mainly France and Russia. Finally signed in March 1892 by the six Sheikhs of the Trucial States and Bahrain<sup>12</sup>, this one was clear and stipulated that neither the Sheikhs, nor their heirs, nor their successors could in any case conclude any other agreement or correspondence with a power other than that of the British Government, nor authorize on their soil the presence of agents from other nations.

However, this Exclusive agreement was not immediately respected by all the Sheikhs of the coast, those of Dubai and Sharjah having later affirmed that they interpreted the receipt of ratified copies as an invalidation of the treaty. The Sheikh of Dubai is said to have hesitated for a time to «take the French flag in order to escape the malice of the English»<sup>13</sup> However, in 1894 a French consulate was opened in Muscat. It was strategic for the French for whom the Sultanate of Oman embodied a key step on the sea route linking Suez, Djibouti and the Northern Indian Ocean to French Indochina. If Chapuy perished five years later, this by no means marked the end of the troubles for the British nor the end of French ambitions in the region: for as early as 1899, another colorful character settled there, named Antonin Goguyer (1846-1909) [FIG. 3].

### ANTONIN GOGUYER (1846-1909)

At the same time engineer, arms dealer and Arab adventurer, Goguyer was not far from resembling the personality of Chapuy, but also of Rimbaud and Loti<sup>15</sup>, while heralded that of Henry de Monfreid. After studying Arabic, he settled

- 6 Washington, D.C., Library of Congress Geography and Map Division, G7420 1864 .J6.
- 7 "Persian Gulf Administration Reports 1883/84 - 1904/05" [120r] (244/602), BL:IORPP, IOR/R/15/1/709.
- 8 "Agreements with the Trucial Chiefs and also with the Chiefs of Bahrain" [6v] (16/162), BL:IORPP, IOR/R/15/1/191.
- 9 "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Vol I. Historical. Part IA & IB. J G Lorimer. 1915" [738] (881/1782), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/1.
- 10 On this subject read Matthew S. Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire*, New Haven & Londres, Yale University Press, 2015, p. 302
- 11 Voir Crouzet, Guillemette, "A matter of imperial safety." *Trafic d'armes et contrebande dans le golfe Arabo-Persique : la mondialisation d'un espace à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Enquêtes*, n° 1, May 2015, p. 1-15.
- 12 "Précis de correspondance regarding Trucial Chiefs, 1854-1905" [70] (82/106), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C248D.
- 13 "Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Vol I. Historical. Part IA & IB. J G Lorimer. 1915" [739] (882/1782), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/1.
- 14 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Société de Géographie, SG PORTRAIT-2056.
- 15 Indeed, as early as 1900, the writer Pierre Loti (June Viand) stopped in Bushire on his way from Muscat to Tehran.



[FIG. 1] Eugène N. Flandin (1803-1876), *Bander-Bouchir, Persian Gulf*, 1843<sup>6</sup>.

[FIG. 2] *Johnson's Turkey in Asia: Persia Arabia &c.*, New York, Johnson and Ward, 1864<sup>7</sup>.

[FIG. 3] Anonymous, Antonin Goguyer (1846-1909), 1890<sup>14</sup>.





[FIG. 4] Anonymous, The Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah on horseback (1837-1915), Kuwait, November 1903<sup>21</sup>.



[FIG. 5] W. & D. Downey, *Portrait of Mary of Teck* (1867-1953)<sup>22</sup>, wearing a Boucheron<sup>24</sup> tiara, and an important parure in diamonds and natural pearls.

in Algeria and then Tunisia<sup>16</sup> before joining Djibouti in 1897, then Muscat, accompanied by his sons Jean and Auguste who were enrolled as students in 1903 in the Carmelite house in Baghdad<sup>17</sup>. Also his Algerian nephew whom he also considered his son, named Ibrahim Elbaz, would now assist him in his business. Sometimes nicknamed the «French Lawrence of Arabia», this renowned Orientalist collector, correspondent in the Persian Gulf for the *Bulletin du Comité de l'Asie Française*, appears however above all in the eyes of Lorimer as «a notorious Anglophobe»<sup>18</sup>.

Indeed Goguyer began to interfere at this time in the hope of seeing a confederation under French influence along the western shore of the Gulf, while the Persian shore would return to the Russians<sup>19</sup>. One of his main local interlocutors was then Emir Abderrahmane ben Faisal Al Saud (1850-1928), a Saudi prince then in exile in Kuwait and preparing the reconquest of Arabia by his lineage<sup>20</sup>. In order to impress the latter, it was as a distinguished guest of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah (1837-1915) [FIG. 4] that Goguyer landed in Kuwait in February 1904. The reason for such a visit is clear from the number of crates of arms and ammunition that were to be shipped to the Sheikh from Muscat the following month.

Indeed, it should be noted that the arms trade was strongly growing in Kuwait in 1904. But even more than with weapons, it was even more through pearls that one seemed to make a fortune in the region. If we believe Lorimer, the total value of pearl exports from the Gulf reached the sum of 1,493,375 pounds sterling in 1904, more than triple that of 1901, two thirds of which was for the island of Bahrain alone. Goguyer then became the representative in Bahrain of Sigismund N. Ettinghausen (1838-1918), a trader in diamonds, pearls and colored stones originally from Frankfurt but established in Paris before 1867<sup>22</sup>, and on whose behalf he bought pearls<sup>23</sup>.

As early as February 1903, a businessman named Joseph Dumas of Dumas & Guien<sup>24</sup>, accompanied by an engineer named Castelin, had traveled to Bahrain in the hope of obtaining from Major C. A. Kembal, British political representative in Bouchehr, a concession to fish for pearls in deeper waters than those traditionally visited by local fishermen. Despite their letters of recommendation from the Ministry of Trade and Foreign Affairs and 42 packages of furniture, provisions and samples of fabrics, soaps and perfumes from French factories that they brought with them, the two men were refused with a warning that was unfriendly to say the least. While Castelin went back to Marseilles to recruit a professional diver and to bring back an underwater vehicle, Dumas went «to Turkish Arabia». On his return to Bahrain, he was forced, following an interview with the Sheikh obtained through the intermediary of an Indian merchant named Tekchand Dwarkadas, to quickly leave the region to reach Baghdad and then France in May, pressed furthermore by rumors of a plague epidemic<sup>25</sup>.

On April 6, 1905, it was the turn of a certain Gaston Perronne, then freshly out of his military service and back from a first trip to Tibet via China, to set foot on the soil of Bahrain to try his luck in the pearl trade<sup>26</sup>. Due to a cruel lack of financial resources and a relative amateurism in business, Perronne, only 26 years old, seems to have been forced to couple this activity with that of a press correspondent. However, he left the Gulf on July 30 after spending a week in Bandar Lengeh, according to the scrupulous report of British Captain F. B. Prideaux written on May 19, 1906 in Bahrain<sup>27</sup>.

This same report informs us that his departure would have been immediately followed, on August 6, 1905, by the arrival in Bahrain of a certain Madame Émile Nattan, described as the widow of an owner of an important Parisian jewelry shop. It does not seem to be Augustine Ozanne, who actually married Emile Hippolyte Nattan and with whom she had Jenny Nattan in 1880, but who died in 1890. Similarly, the two wives of the Parisian jeweler Georges Nattan, who was born in 1839 and who owned a workshop on rue de la Jussienne, died before 1900. Remained Colombe Nattan, born Mordecai, the widow of the famous jeweler Hippolyte Nattan, whose many orders were intended for a Middle Eastern clientele. It seems however surprising, because she was 85 years old in 1905 (she would die three years later)! She also worked often for Frédéric Boucheron once he was

16 A native Creusois by birth, Goguyer left France for Ouled Rahmoune in Algeria, where he worked as a court interpreter. In 1879, he converted to Judaism so that he could marry Yasmina El Beze (1859-1915), a native of Batna, who bore him a daughter named Blanche in 1881. Two boys named Jean and François were born in 1884 and 1887. That same year, Goguyer translated the K. Qatr al-Nadâ by Ibn Hisham («The Dew Rain and the Quenching of Thirst»), and the following year he translated Alfiyyah, a grammar book in Arabic verse composed in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by Ibn Malik. Two other children would follow, named Auguste and Rose, respectively born in 1889 and 1893 in Tunis this time. Among his publications of the period can be cited «L'antiesclavagisme anglais en Tunisie», in *Revue française de l'étranger et des colonies*, XII, n° 106, 15 Nov. 1890, p. 590-597; «Le servage dans le Sahara tunisien», in *Revue Tunisienne*, 2, 1895, p. 308-318 and «La mejba (capitation tax), after the commentator Abouddiaf», p. 471-484.

17 «Précis of correspondence on international rivalry and British policy in the Persian Gulf, 1872-1905» [4v] (29/116), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C247.

18 «Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Vol I. Historical. Part IA & IB. J. G. Lorimer. 1915» [345] (488/1782), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/1.

19 Read Crouzet, Guillemette, a «troublesome man» or «Lawrence d'Arabie» français? «, in Delphine Boissarie (dir.), *Les négociants européens et le monde: Histoire d'une mise en connexion*, Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018, p. 147.

20 The Emir is indeed the father of King Abdelaziz, known as Ibn Saud (c. 1876-1953), founder of modern Saudi Arabia.

21 British Library: Visual Arts, Photo 49/1/21.

22 Arch. 9<sup>th</sup> arrondissement, marriage May 2, 1867 of Sigismund Ettinghausen and Claire Rebecca Halphen. Arch. nat., LH 1260/46, dossier Georges Henri Halphen.

23 This time it was due to the wish to found a new banking network that a certain Mr. Jouannin, Secretary General of the French Asia Committee, went to Muscat in August 1903 and then in September to Bahrain where he was refused by the Sheikh. Unable to travel to Central Arabia, he allegedly left Bahrain to reach Baghdad via Basrah. Read «Précis of correspondence on international rivalry and British policy in the Persian Gulf, 1872-1905». 14v] (29/116), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C247; «Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Vol I. Historical. Part IA & IB. J. G. Lorimer. 1915» [345] (488/1782), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/1.

24 A Marseille firm then located at 54 rue Puvis de Chavannes. Joseph Dumas was also an agent for the trading house Volkart Frères (founded in

established, Vever tells us<sup>28</sup>: «Mrs. Nattan’s workshop, with more than 100 workers, executed all the orders that Boucheron liked»<sup>29</sup>.

One can imagine how far the pearls worn by the Queens and beauties of the time, such as Mary of Teck, the future Queen Consort of the United Kingdom and Empress of India, then Princess of Wales in 1905, had come [FIG. 5].

But Colombe Nattan, if it is indeed her, however did not go alone to Bahrain. She was accompanied on this occasion by her daughter and her nephew, Mr. Pierre Sandoz, who can for his part be linked to the famous dynasty of Parisian jewelers, and in particular to Gustave Roger Sandoz (1867-1943) who left the Palais-Royal in 1895 to settle at 10 rue Royale<sup>32</sup>. But Mrs. Nattan also enlisted the services of an interpreter named Jean Goguyer (1887-1907)! The latter was none other than the son of Antonin Goguyer who, after the arms trade, became a pearl trader and joined the troupe a week later.

It is therefore not surprising that all the activity of the group formed around Mrs. Nattan was placed under close surveillance by the British intelligence services, who did not hesitate to go through the children’s correspondence without being able to recognize the handwriting of their parents<sup>33</sup>. We know from their reports that Mrs. Nattan stayed in Manama for about a month, before sailing to the port of Bouchehr, on the Iranian shore, leaving the Goguyer family behind. She then returned to Bahrain on September 27<sup>th</sup> but without Mr. Sandoz, who had gone to Madagascar. On October 9, Mrs. Nattan and her daughter returned to Europe while the Goguyer family returned to Muscat on October 20. Shortly after his return, Jean Goguyer died there at the age of 22 in early 1907. He was soon followed by his father Antonin, who died there in October 1909 at the age of 63.

The adventure of the French merchants in the Gulf did not stop there, however. On the contrary, it had only just begun, because if the stays in the Gulf of Chapuy, Goguyer, Dumas and Perronne were not very fruitful, Madame Émile Nattan brought back with her to France 40 000 rupees (400 000 francs) in pearls<sup>34</sup>. After her success, she considered returning to the Gulf but finally decided to call on her brothers, Léonard (1874? -1955) and Victor Rosenthal, who were destined to become the «Kings of Pearls» in Paris and Bombay: as early as 1910, the latter would bring 6,400,000 rupees of pearls from Bahrain to Paris for their own newly founded company<sup>35</sup>. The Parisian golden age of the natural pearl had begun.

1851 in Winterthur and Bombay by Salomon (1816-1893) and Georg (1825-1861) Volkart) and for Fuhrmeister, Klose & Co. in Shanghai. Read File 2830/1914 Pt 2 «Persian Gulf: Pearl Fisheries. Investigation into Alleged Depletion of Pearl Banks. Germans and the Industry, Concessions, etc.» 243r] (498/578), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/10/457.

25 Persian Gulf Administration Reports 1883/84 - 1904/05 [272r] (548/602), BL:IORPP, IOR/R/15/1/709; ‘Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf. Vol I. Historical. Part IA & IB. J G Lorimer. 1915’ [345] (488/1782), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/1; Part II. J G Lorimer. 1915’ [2248] (765/1262), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/2; ‘Précis of correspondence on international rivalry and British policy in the Persian Gulf, 1872-1905.’ [55r] (110/116), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C247.

26 File 1508/1905 Pt 1 ‘Bahrain: situation; disturbances (1904-1905); Sheikh Ali’s surrender; Question of Administration Reforms (Customs etc)’ [136r] (277/531), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/10/81.

27 *Administration Report on the Persian Gulf Political Residency for 1905-1906*, Calcutta, Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1907, p. 84; ‘Administration Reports 1905-1910’ [51r] (106/616); [51v] (107/616), BL:IORPP, IOR/R/15/1/710.

28 Read *French Jewelry of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (1800-1900)*. III. *The Third Republic*, p. 401.

29 Cited by Viruega Jacqueline, « Les entreprises de bijouterie à Paris de 1860 à 1914 », in *Histoire, économie et société*, 2006, 25<sup>e</sup> année, n° 4, par. 38.

30 Platinum print, 28.6 x 17.1 cm. Royal Collection Trust, RCIN 2808148.

31 This one would then be dismantled by the jeweler Garrard.

32 Deceased in 1904, Henri Sandoz had opened a boutique at 24, avenue de l’Opéra, where his son Maurice succeeded him.

33 File 1508/1905 Pt 1 ‘Bahrain: situation; disturbances (1904-1905); Sheikh Ali’s surrender; Question of Administration Reforms (Customs etc)’ [36r] (76/531), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/10/81.

34 F. B. Prideaux, ‘Report on the Trade of the Bahrein [sic] Islands for the year 1905’ in *Report on the Trade of Oman, Bahrein [sic], and Arab Ports in the Persian Gulf: trade reports for Bahrain for the financial years of 1904-1905*, n° 273, Bahrein, 25 May 1906. Also read John Gordon Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, ‘Oman and Central Arabia, Volume I, Part II (Historical)*, Government of India, 1915, ‘Appendix C: The Pearl and Mother-of-Pearl Fisheries of the Persian Gulf’, [2251] (768/1262), BL:IORPP, IOR/L/PS/20/C91/2; ‘File 27/4 Miscellaneous Trade Reports’ [17r] (38/702), BL:IORPP, IOR/R/15/5/79.

35 *The Persian Gulf Trade reports, 1905-1940*, vol. 3, 1910-11, Cambridge, Archive Editions, 1987, p. 3.



JEWELRY AT  
THE CROSSROAD  
OF ARTS

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## When the Jewel Tells Its Story: Jewelry and Literature in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

How does literary text of the 19<sup>th</sup> century portray jewelry? How is it seen, perceived, described? In correlation with the concepts elaborated on the analysis of representations and social interactions in literature<sup>1</sup>, it is appropriate to ask about the inclusion of the jewel within the novels of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. How does literary text give voice to the jewel? Throughout the lines, the jewel undergoes fixed projections, judgements, positions, elaborated stagings which allow to better grasp the stakes but also the very essence of this object. Jewels and gems, by their ability to reveal, beyond appearances, the ideal truth of beings in the texts of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are true literary material, a precious language.

### LUXURIOUS MIRRORING

The 19<sup>th</sup> century is the “parleur d’objets<sup>2</sup>”. This period, which saw the triumph of consumer society, the arrival of new commercial structures, the culture of national and then Universal Exhibitions, is full of luxuriant trinkets that writers took possession of. The jewel to which one allotted preciousness and rarity became new material to be exploited: «Verses are ornaments like jewels, and literature is assimilated to high-society life.<sup>3</sup> «As a creative stimulator, it will arouse the imagination, generate a way of writing, be enriched by multiple correspondences and infuse the text with aesthetic value.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, books were covered with precious materials. In his rich bindings, Victor Prouvé used techniques similar to those of the jeweler. Like jewelry, the leather was chased, incised, engraved, embossed, covered with mosaic, decorated with metal and cloisonné enamels. Thanks to this artistic penchant, the artist from Nancy proposed to see a book as a true total *objet d’art* [FIG. 1]. The materiality was expressed as much «on» as «in» the text. Through the lines, it was related by the presence of numerous stylistic figures, excessive descriptions of objects, and by the establishment of a true «Esthétique du Bibelot<sup>4</sup>». So much so that the text, overloaded, seems to become a luxury itself, a work, a jewel. In accordance with the social and economic dynamics that tended to underline the revaluation of the decorative arts, the authors of the end of the century claimed the decorative and ornamental aspect of their writing. By correlating their art with that of jewelers and goldsmiths, the poets and writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century began to reflect on the position of the artist. By placing the noble art of writing alongside jewelry, they attempted to complexify their style in order to position themselves as artisans of words, as creators of an elite art. The poet, then complete artist, «sculpts, files, chases» «verses, marble, onyx, enamel<sup>5</sup>».

Within the text, the debate on the notion of luxury and works of art becomes a dominant topic. Don’t writers copy the game of the rising class by proposing lines filled with materiality? Don’t they consume words like the bourgeois collect objects? Doesn’t the jewel within the literary text allow the novel to position itself as a luxury object? In *À la recherche du temps perdu*, Marcel Proust mentions the name Boucheron<sup>6</sup> several times. The presence of the famous jeweler within the narrative reinforces the realism of the story<sup>7</sup>. In this sense, Proust insists on the value of a piece of jewelry, which at the time was worth 30,000 francs. In the same vein, Honoré de Balzac in *Eugénie Grandet*<sup>8</sup> evokes the creations of the famous Bréguet watchmaker, while Janisset was known for thier turquoise jewelry in Théophile Gautier<sup>9</sup>. Some authors would find in the aristocratic ethos an opportunity to highlight a certain ostentatious mode of consumption that was in vogue at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These consumerist dynamics exploded with the arrival of department stores<sup>10</sup> and the effervescence emerging from world exhibitions. During these large international gatherings, many countries exhibited their creations, thus encouraging the establishment of a luxurious and excessively materialistic imagination within literature. In 1851, at the Crystal Palace in London, Théophile Gautier discovered in the Indian pavilion the jewels of the Thousand and One Nights, but also rich carpets, refined silks, precious stones, embroidery, ivory and sandalwood<sup>11</sup>. Surely captivated by the exhibition of the *Koh-i-Noor*, the largest diamond in the world at the time, the writer compared oriental fabrics to precious stones<sup>12</sup>. Within the text, the colors of the fabrics are textualized in gems: «[...] ce sont de larges bandes d’or, fleuves de lumières qui ruissellent en miroitant entre des rives d’améthyste, de rubis et de saphir [...]»<sup>13</sup>.

Thanks to the lexical field of jewelry and gemstones, Théophile Gautier incensed the text, which was then transformed into a luxurious material. The writer used the jewelry theme to raise his pen and at the same time to inscribe himself in the bourgeois emulation that emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. If this materiality was thus fixed in Gautier’s stylistic exuberance or in that of the Goncourt brothers, other authors counteracted the consumerist agitation of the end of the century by associating a morbid dimension to luxury. Eager to criticize the aristocracy’s spending habits, the decadent writers of

- 1 Carine Barbaferi et Alain Montandon (dir.), *Sociopoétique du textile à l’âge classique. Du vêtement et de sa représentation à la poésie du texte*, Hermann, 2015.
- 2 Marta Caraison, « Objets en littérature au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle », *Images Re-vues*, n°4, 2007.
- 3 Dominique Pety, *Poétique de la collection au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Du document de l’historien au bibelot de l’esthète*, Nanterre, Presses Universitaires de Paris Ouest, 2010, p. 316
- 4 Geneviève Sicotte, « La matérialité décadente et l’économie: entre la fascination et la ruse », in Guri Ellen Barstad, Pirjo Lyytikäinen (dir.), *The Decadence or an Aesthetic of Transgression*, Nordlit, n°28, 2011, p. 27-40.
- 5 Théophile Gautier, « L’Art », *Poésies*, Éd. Lemerre, Vol. 2, 1890, p.223-226.
- 6 Marcel Proust, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, t. III *Le côté de Guermantes*, Vol. I, Paris, nrf, 1920.
- 7 Théophile Gautier, *Spirite, nouvelle fantastique*, Paris, G.Charpentier, 1866, p. 124.
- 8 Honoré De Balzac, *Eugénie Grandet*, Paris, Librairie Gedalge, 1921.
- 9 Théophile Gautier, *Spirite, nouvelle fantastique*, Paris, G.Charpentier, 1866, p. 124.
- 10 Émile Zola, *Au Bonheur des Dames*, Paris, G. Charpentier, 1883.
- 11 Théophile Gautier, « l’Inde à l’Exposition universelle de Londres », *L’Orient*, Tome I, Paris, G. Charpentier, 1882, p. 299-344.
- 12 Jean-François Luneau, « Les textiles orientaux à l’Exposition universelle de Londres (1851), vus par les auteurs français » dans Alain Montandon (dir.), *Op. Cit.*, 2015, p. 147-157.
- 13 Théophile Gautier, *Op. Cit.*, p. 331.



the late 19<sup>th</sup> century undermined reality and brought criticism to it by the presence of a mineralized, deadly substratum: the jewel.

### FATEFUL PROSE AND FATAL METAL

In addition to the unnecessary luxury and the quest for the superfluous that illustrate the behavior of the rising class of the time, the themes of fatality and death are also present. Through the lines, the gemstones are transformed into sinister objects. Marked by negativity, the jewels are positioned in a real «economic counter-discourse<sup>14</sup>». This sickly hybridization is celebrated in Joris-Karl Huysmans. The turtle<sup>15</sup> of *À Rebours*, a true work of art adorned with precious stones by his anti-hero, the aesthete and eccentric of the Esseintes, ends up dying<sup>16</sup> [FIG. 2]. This conversion of the jewel<sup>17</sup> into a sumptuous shell is also invited in the work of Jean Lorrain where a Noronsoff is revealed whose «entire fabric of the dress is woven of moonstones, opals and sardonix<sup>18</sup>». The jewel becomes the symbol par excellence of increased superficiality and deadly luxury. The small dying Claribel of Élémer Bourges exercises a last will, wishing to be covered with «satin, brocade, lace, jewels, gorgets of stones, muslin...<sup>19</sup>». Mary Barbe at Rachilde's tries to adorn her victim with jewels and lace before tying her up<sup>20</sup>. While the ring of Monsieur de Phocas<sup>21</sup> «precious and fascinating contains a poison that leads to violence and death<sup>22</sup>».

Through the lines of the Symbolist and decadent authors, the jewels then take a satanic and even provocative turn. In search of a more artistic world, refusing a society that they perceive as a real straitjacket, the *fin-de-siècle* authors criticize reality. Within the text, the luxury of jewelry diverted from its primary essence translates the torments of the characters. Jean Lorrain thus describes the obsessions of the Duke of Fréneuse known as M. de Phocas<sup>23</sup>. Pursued by several monomanias, the quest of this pretentious hero revolves entirely around noxious jewels. Through the lines of the novel *l'Aryenne*, Lorrain exhibits another deadly jewel: a ring by René Lalique (1860-1945)<sup>24</sup>. By trying on this jewel originally belonging to her lover, the Countess Illhatieff then undergoes its murderous power:

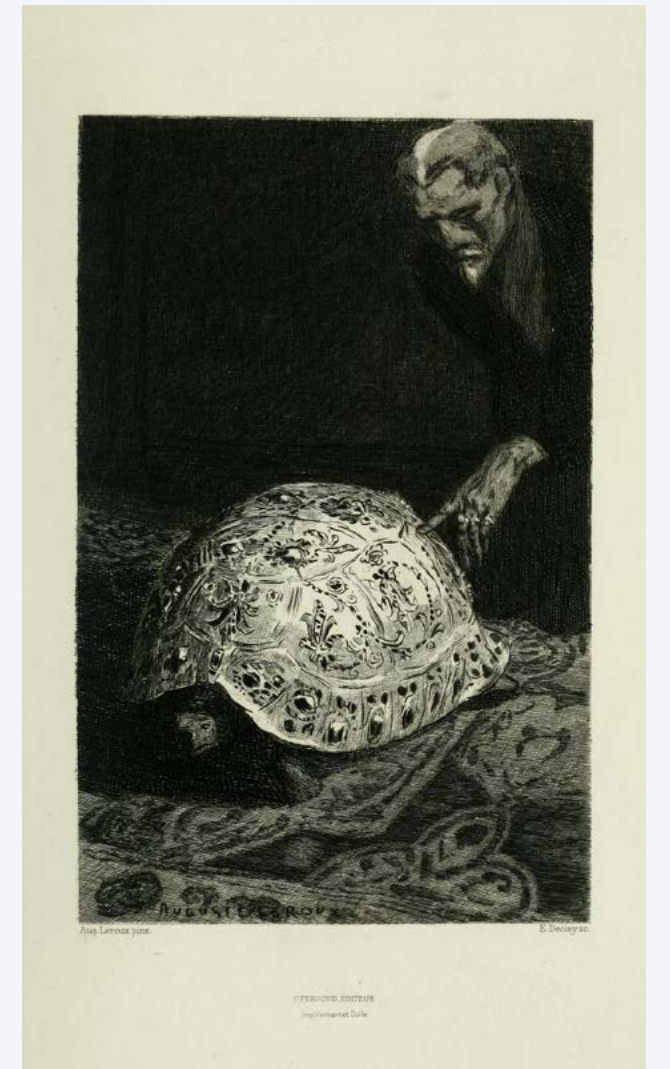
Je l'avais deviné ; cette bague est maudite, il y a comme un sortilège en elle. Je n'ai pas pu encore l'ôter de mon doigt, j'ai passé toute la journée d'hier à tenter l'impossible. Maintenant ma phalange gonflée et meurtrie déborde des deux côtés de la bague et j'ai les émaux translucides de Lalique incrustés dans ma chair, j'ai toute la main douloureuse et brûlante et j'ai passé la nuit dans la fièvre. Un cauchemar affreux m'a torturée ; le serpent d'émail m'étreignait à me faire crier, le masque de cristal violâtre ricanait et de mordait jusqu'au sang, ses dents féroces entamaient jusqu'à l'os<sup>25</sup>.

Isn't the jewel the attribute of a decadent and morbid prose? Harmful and poisonous commodity, it is the whole symbol of degeneration to which came to be added a perverted sexuality. The obsession of death correlated to the image of woman place «Eros and Thanatos» at the center of the artistic sphere of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In response to the anxieties of its time, literature invites predators, criminals, murderers through its lines, who often, very often are...adorned. Is jewelry their weapon<sup>26</sup>? From the evil and exotic woman sketched by the Esmeralda of *Notre Dame de Paris* to the charming and bloody Cleopatra<sup>27</sup>, the woman is a real praying mantis. During the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, men of letters created carnal muses with very determined attributes. To the predominance of their sensual curves, of their naked bodies chased, poetic and narrated was mixed the abundance of the theme of hair. True emblem of the *femme fatale*, object of obsession for Guy de Maupassant<sup>28</sup>, carnal and sensual like for Charles Baudelaire<sup>29</sup>, this golden or ebony fleece is bait that tends to attract men in a fatal trap. To this fatal mane is added the wearing of jewels that brilliantly supplant the graceful shapes of the female body to become, in themselves, true objects of desire. Added to the bodies of these mortal nymphs: «And the heavy gold necklaces lifted by her breasts<sup>30</sup>», «a marvelous jewel darts lightning into the furrow of her two

- 14 Geneviève Sicotte, *Op. Cit.*, 2011, p. 27-40.
- 15 The name "tortue" from latin "Tartaruca" meaning "who belongs to hell, to evil", it symbolizes darkness and death. s.v "tortue" dans Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue française, PUF, 1975 (6<sup>e</sup> édition).
- 16 Joris Karl Huysmans, *À Rebours*, Paris, Collection Folio Classique, Éditions Gallimard, 2011 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1884), Chapitre IV, p. 139.
- 17 Françoise Court-Perez, « Étoffes décadentes dans l'œuvre de Jean Lorrain » dans MONTANDON Alain (dir.), *Op. Cit.*, 2015, p. 169-185.
- 18 Jean Lorrain, *Le Vice Errant*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1926 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1901), p. 306.
- 19 Élémer Bourges, *Le Crépuscule des dieux*, Paris, librairie Stock, 1950 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1901), p. 72-73.
- 20 Rachilde, *La marquise de Sade*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1887.
- 21 Jean Lorrain, *Monsieur de Phocas*, Paris, P. Ollendorf, 1901.
- 22 Geneviève Sicotte, *Op. Cit.*, 2011, p. 27-40.1
- 23 Jean Lorrain, *Op. Cit.*, p.9.
- 24 Jean Lorrain, *L'Aryenne*, Paris, Société d'éditions littéraires et artistiques, 1907, p. 51.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- 26 Sophie Pelletier, *Le Roman du bijou fin de siècle : Esthétique et Société*, Thèse de Doctorat en Littérature française, sous la direction de Michel Pierssens et Patrick Wald-Lasowski Faculté des Arts et des Sciences, Université de Montréal et Université de Paris VIII, 2011, Chapitre IV, p. 216
- 27 Théophile Gautier, « Une nuit de Cléopâtre », dans *Nouvelles*, Paris, Éd. Lemerre, 1897.
- 28 Guy De Maupassant, *La Chevelure*, nouvelle parue dans le recueil *Toine*, Paris, Éditions Marpon-Flammarion, 1886.
- 29 Charles Baudelaire, « La Chevelure », *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Paris, Édition Poulet-Malassis et de Broise Éditeur, 1861 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1857).
- 30 Albert Samain, « Cléopâtre », *Au Jardin de l'Infante augmenté de plusieurs poèmes*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1911.



[FIG. 1] Victor Prouve, binding for *Les Poèmes barbares*, Morocco leather from the Cap Noir, copper plates copper plates, 1896, 29 x 21 cm. Gift of Jean-Baptiste Eugene Corbin, 1935, Nancy, Musée de l'École de Nancy



[FIG. 2] Auguste Leroux, illustration in Joris-Karl Huysmans, *À rebours*, Paris, A. Ferroud-F. Ferroud Edition, 1920, p. 47

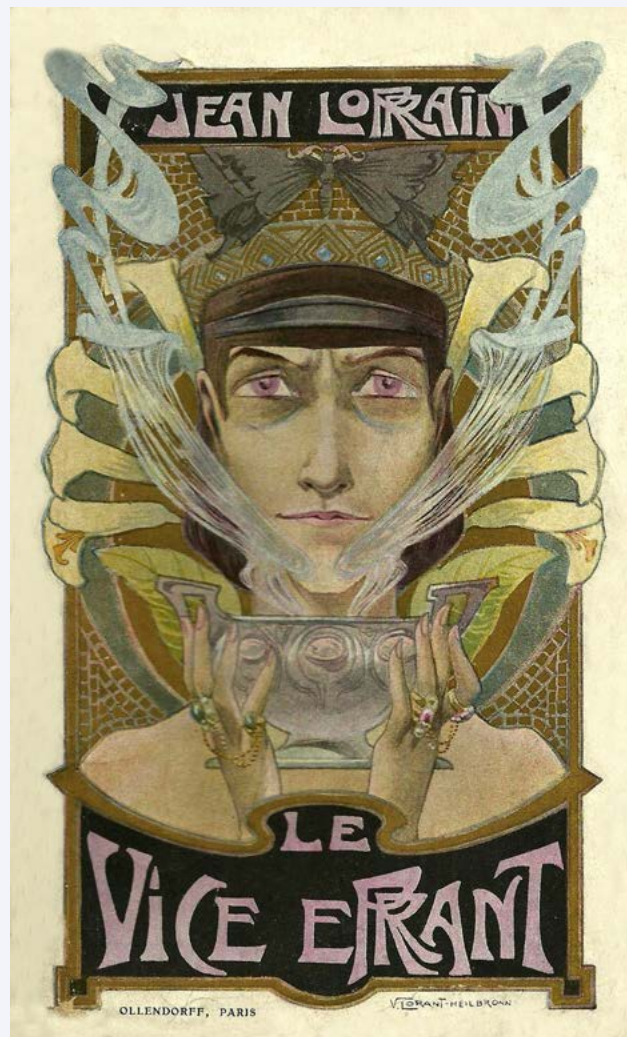




[FIG. 3] René Lalique, Salomé pendant/brooch or Salammbô, gold, translucent enamel and glass, circa 1904-1905, sold at the auction « Magnificent Jewels » at Christie's, New York, October 15, 2002



[FIG. 4] Jean Lorrain, *Le Vice errant*, Paris, Librairie Paul Ollendorff, 1902, illustrated cover by Vincent Lorant-Heilbronn



[FIG. 5] René Lalique, *Necklace of a Dog the Princess at the Sabbath*, profile of woman among frogs, gold, translucent enamel on gold, 32 strands of pearls, 1899, Richmond, Virginia Fine Art Museum

breasts<sup>31</sup>», «The very dear was naked, and, knowing my heart / She had kept only her noisy jewels<sup>32</sup>» the jewels are at the origin of the sensual dimension of the text. They depict a bewitching dance similar to that of Salomé described by Joris-Karl Huysmans [FIG. 3] and are a call to charm and pleasure, before the morbid denouement: «[...] Naked among the stones / her body was the enchanted dream [...] So, Jean will be decapitated.<sup>33</sup>»:

Her face is meditative, solemn, almost august, as she commences the lascivious dance that will awaken the slumbering senses of old Herod. Diamonds scintillate against her glistening skin. Her bracelets, her girdles, her rings flash. On her triumphal robe, seamed with pearls, flowered with silver and laminated with gold, the breastplate of jewels, each link of which is a precious stone, flashes serpents of fire against the pallid flesh, delicate as a tea-rose: its jewels like splendid insects with dazzling elytra, veined with carmine, dotted with yellow gold, diapered with blue steel, speckled with peacock green<sup>34</sup>.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century poems, the woman with jewels is often evoked by a metonymic process. This figure of speech that uses one term to signify another allows the very birth of the concept of the woman-jewel. This idea is expressed in Baudelaire's work by a mineralization of the woman's body<sup>35</sup>. This contamination is his poetic manifesto. Her decomposed amoral beauty is «crazy and adorned<sup>36</sup>». These eyes «are made of charming minerals<sup>37</sup>», of «diamond fires<sup>38</sup>»; the crystallization affects the intimate parts of the female body: «You will find at the end of two beautiful heavy breasts / two large bronze medals<sup>39</sup>» even in hair: «Long! always! my hand in your heavy mane / Will sow the ruby, the pearl and the sapphire, / So that you will never be deaf to my desire!<sup>40</sup>»

In literary text where they pose a mortal danger to the male population, it is always while adorned with their most faithful attributes, jewels, that women of ink and paper commit their faults. By hiding their cruelty under a veil of sumptuous jewels, vicious and perverse seduction takes root. Object of domination but also of depravity, accompanying the woman in her murderous actions until becoming the author of death, the jewel participates in the obscure sensuality of the woman and in the expression of her deadly power in the text as well as in society. Provocative and morbid like the woman, the jewel recounts itself as a literary and disastrous material: «The true, the great 1900 jewel is a tragic, evil and barbaric jewel where reigns medusa with terrible opal eyes<sup>41</sup>.»

#### JEWELERS AND POETS, A FRATERNITY CHASED IN METAL

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many artists honored themselves through the use of artistic correspondence and resonance. In *Les perles rouges et les paroles diaprées*, Robert de Montesquiou dedicated some verses to the jeweler Henri Vever (1854-1942)<sup>42</sup>. He also praised the art of René Lalique, whose work he admired. In his set of poems of 1901, the cover of which is moreover illustrated with a drawing by the jeweler, the poet celebrated the work and the love of this artist for stones<sup>43</sup>. If the relations between poet and jeweler are obvious, they clearly merge with the character of Alphonse Fouquet (1828-1911). This master jeweler better known under the pseudonym of Jules Dragon composed many verses devoted mainly to gems and the art of his colleagues<sup>44</sup>. Through his double practice of enameled and poet Claudius Popelin (1825-1892) also represented the creative duality which animates jewelry and poetry. He gifted his verses with «the splendor of enamels<sup>45</sup>» and chased them in order to glorify his lively literary friendships with Gautier<sup>46</sup> and de Banville who in turn paid tribute to his work as an enameled<sup>47</sup>.

Men of letters and jewelers fraternize and inspire one another. Linked by a friendly and inventive exchange, Jean Lorrain adorned many of the protagonists of René Lalique's

- 31 Albert Samain, « Cléopâtre », *Au Jardin de l'Infante augmenté de plusieurs poèmes*, Paris, Mercure de France, 1911.
- 32 Charles Baudelaire, « Les Bijoux », *Op. Cit.*, 1861.
- 33 Catulle Mendès, « La Gloire de Salomé », *Les Braises du Cendrier*, Paris, Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1900, p. 44.
- 34 Joris Karl Huysmans, *Op. Cit.*, 2011 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1884) p.143. Translated by John Howard
- 35 Laura Pondea, « Le bijou dans l'œuvre de Baudelaire : une mutilation symbolique », *Paroles Gelées*, French Studies, Volume 20.2, 2003.
- 36 Charles Baudelaire, « Le Vampire », *Op. Cit.*, 1857 p.87.
- 37 Charles Baudelaire, « Poème XXV », *Op. Cit.*, 1857 p.77.
- 38 Charles Baudelaire, « Le Flambeau vivant », *Op. Cit.*, 1857 p.105.
- 39 Charles Baudelaire, « Les promesses d'un visage », *Les Epaves*, Paris, Édition Concordance, 1866, p.75.
- 40 Charles Baudelaire, « La Chevelure », *Op. Cit.*, 1861, p.55-56.
- 41 Claude Quiguer, *Femmes et machines de 1900, lecture d'une obsession modern style*, Paris Klincksieck, 1979.
- 42 Robert De Montesquiou, « À Henri Vever » *Les perles rouges et les paroles diaprées*, Paris G. Richard, 1910, p. 211.
- 43 Robert De Montesquiou, « Je sais un bijoutier... », *Les Paons*, 1908, p. 447 et « Le poète vous offre un anneau... », *Ibid.*, p. 273.
- 44 Jules Dragon, « Le Rubis », *Revue de la bijouterie, joaillerie, orfèvrerie*, Novembre 1901, p. 223-224 et « L'Opale », *Ibid.*, Août 1902, p.141.
- 45 Claudius Popelin, « Chatons modestement », *Un Livre de Sonnets*, Paris, Charpentier, 1888, p. 222.
- 46 Théophile Gautier, « À Claudius Popelin », *Poésies*, Éd. Lemerre, Vol. 2, 1890, p. 243.
- 47 José-Maria Hérédia, « À Claudius Popelin », *Les Trophées*, Paris, Éd. Lemerre, 1893, p. 103.



pieces. In *Le Vice Errant*, Noronsoff offers various pieces of Lalique jewelry to those who attend his dinners at the Café de la Paix [FIG. 4]: «Each guest always found a priceless gift under his briefcase, a gold cigar holder starred with rubies, monstrous pearls in tie pins, opal bracelets, sapphire rings or some of Lalique's goldwork: no gender was forgotten<sup>48</sup>». In Mr. Phocas, the novelist pays homage to his friend through the character of the master chaser Barruchini<sup>49</sup>. In *Maison pour Dames*, Noirmont appears in opera dress with his hands covered with the jeweler's rings<sup>50</sup>. In the *Aryenne*, Count Simon de Ragon d'Helyeuse wears one of the jeweler's rings on his finger, offered by his wife:

Ce sont les trois mille francs des six premières éditions de *l'Ardeur des nuits*, un très beau Lalique d'ailleurs. Comme cela lui ressemble, hein ! de me passer au doigt le gain de ses livres ! Je sers d'affiche à son succès d'écrivain. Ces six mille volumes, je les porte à mon doigt.<sup>51</sup>

Here, Mélisande's success as a writer correlates to Jean Lorrain. Didn't the author use the figure of the jeweler so idolized by the critics of the time to establish his style and achieve notoriety? Isn't Lalique within the literary framework the very emblem of chased writing? The two men continued to stimulate each other artistically. The necklace *Profil de femme parmi des grenouilles* (Profile of a woman among frogs) made by Lalique around 1899 [FIG. 5] was inspired by the tale *La Princesse au Sabbat*<sup>52</sup> of which Lorrain gave a poetic reproduction<sup>53</sup>, an opportunity for him to show his artistic prose. The jeweler's work then becomes a foil for the writer's work.

The exchanges between the poet and the jeweler continue. Jean Lorrain dedicated the story of *Narkiss* to his friend. In this fable, the lexical field of goldsmithing and gems perfectly integrates the literary framework<sup>54</sup>. We can observe a veritable mineralization of the text. This tale from the famous 1902<sup>55</sup> collection where the author sets the princesses with ivory, amber and the princes with mother-of-pearl reveals a crystallized landscape:

Narkiss enivré descendait vers l'eau. Autour de Narkiss la fragilité des iris, la féminité des lotus et l'obscénité des arums, phallus d'ambre dardés dans des cornets d'ivoire, éclairaient comme des flammes, tour à tour de jade, d'opale ou de beryl. Sous le reflet de la lune les lampyres semblaient des pierreries errantes par la nuit, des reptiles luisaient comme autant d'émaux sur les feuilles. Au loin, c'était le resplendissement métallique du Nil [...]<sup>56</sup>.

Narkiss, «glittering with jewels», is depicted as a gem. The gemstones covering the lines in abundance engulf the character, who becomes a true work of art. The use of jewelry vocabulary and the presence within the literary work of jewelry by renowned artists allows the writer-poet to position his discourse. The jewel can then be seen as a precious element in the implementation of a discursive strategy. The poet, finely mastering his art, would question the language of the jewel to complete the intentionality granted to his work.

The jewel is material of poetry, literary material, which must thus be seen as an avatar of a chased word. A lyrical mediator, the jewel is a precious resource of the writer's imagination. Mirrored in the text, gems and metals allow the construction, the idealization but also the criticism of social practices. Attracting the reader's attention, jewels capture as much impressions as they produce them, thus playing a role in the narrative development. Luxuriously and evilly consumed, the jewelry contributes to the moral construction of the characters. It reflects the perversions and hallucinations of the heroes who wear it. It gives life to these paper beings, sublimates them, transposes them, bewitches them, upsets them and sometimes

48 Jean Lorrain, *Op. Cit.*, 1926, p. 139.

49 *Ibid.*, p.9.

50 Jean Lorrain, *Maison pour Dames*, Paris, Editions Paul Ollendorf, 1908.

51 Jean Lorrain, *Op. Cit.*, 1907, p. 50

52 Jean Lorrain, « La Princesse au Sabbat », *Le Journal*, 22 octobre 1895.

53 Jean Lorrain, « Pall Mall Semaine », *Ibid.*, 2 Mai 1899, p.2.

54 Cyril Barde, « Poète, même en verre, poésie et poétique du conte-bibelot autour de 1900 », *Féeries*, n°14, 2017.

55 Jean Lorrain, *Princesses d'ivoires et d'ivresses*, Paris, Collection motifs, Ed. Le Rocher, 2007 (1<sup>ère</sup> éd. 1902).

56 Jean Lorrain, *Ibid.*, p. 76.

even assassinates them. Within the novel as well as within the poem, the jewel becomes the subject of rich rambling, epithetical combinations and vast detailed enumerations. A true dialogue is established. An artistic brotherhood is born. The poet chases his verb in the manner of a goldsmith: texturizing it by the use of a specialized lexicon, setting it with details, he thus gives it all its material aspect. By the presence of various associations and metamorphoses, we understand how the poet inscribed himself in a mineralized prose, thus crossing the limits of his art.

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## Creative Dialogues Between Dance and Jewelry: Van Cleef & Arpels Ballerinas and Their Choreographic Context

Each creative act responds to a primary intent, materialized by an action obeying a rhythm defined by the creator. The act of creation is thus conceived as an artistic work, produced, unified and directed by intelligence. It responds to a primary intent, materialized by an action, or a series of actions, according to a rhythm. The rhythm is defined by the creator, unless it is inherent to the very matter he is working on, or results from the meeting of thought and matter.

In the biblical tradition, God, the creator, shapes the rhythm as much as the rhythm is subject to Him. The rhythm of creation is then merged and intimately linked to the rhythm of time.

This rhythm, «order of movement»<sup>1</sup>, is by nature linked to time and the way bodies interact with it. The term rhythm (rhythmos), makes the notions of order (cabs) and movement (kinèsis) interact. Thus, order and movement<sup>2</sup> unite for a specific end.

The parallel with dance is obvious. Defined as «a rhythmic and harmonious sequence of gestures and steps practiced in couples or groups»<sup>3</sup>, dance, «which is above all a matter of tempo and space», according to Balanchine<sup>4</sup>, illustrates «the order manifested by the body in movement»<sup>5</sup>. This definition can be applied to jewelry creation, where orderly and meticulous gestures, shared between masters and apprentices, gives birth to a unique creation. Jewelry intervenes in a decisive way on the state of the worked material, the metal, which must be heated, shaped, like dance which shapes, from the inside as well as from the outside, the body of the dancer, its own «material». The Ballerinas of Van Cleef & Arpels unify this double universe, in a creative dialogue between dance and jewelry.

Rhythm seems to animate these two arts, both in the final result, delivered to sight, and in the creative stages. The choice of a particular theme, a gesture, specific techniques or a precise stylistic element, the orderly distribution of work and the constant dialogue between tradition and innovation, implicitly respond to a rhythm, a score without which there would be no harmony, unity, beauty: «a whole is beautiful when it is one»<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, whether it is a question of dance or jewelry creation, transmission holds an essential place.

The representation of dance in the jewelry arts is rare. Yet the Maison Van Cleef & Arpels, founded in 1906, has made it an emblematic theme since the 1940s in New York<sup>7</sup>. Like the notes of a score, the various creations of these jewelry-micro-sculptures, made of gems and precious metals, have followed one another and continue to do so. They consistently combine the heritage of the past with the technical innovation of the present. They follow an orderly rhythm, in the image of the *savoir-faire* that gave birth to them. It is then possible to make an analogy between these two arts, namely High Jewelry and dance moved by music: the tools evoke the instruments, the craftsmen the musicians. Each tool produces a singular percussion on the object, creating an identifiable sound evoking the movements and countermovements of the dancer's own body, which, although silent, are nevertheless created by the music.

### TECHNIQUE AND CREATION

The relationship between technique and creation leads first of all to consider the role of the craftsman in the creative process. The artist devoted himself to his *savoir-faire*, a technique subject to strict rules, while having the ability to seduce the spectator. The technique allows him to give a new dimension to his model. In classical and medieval thought, art was also conceived as an intellectual virtue which, having the purpose of imprinting a creative idea in a material, was inherent to the personality of the artist and the craftsman<sup>8</sup>.

Art crafts<sup>9</sup> or «Artisanat d'art», like jewelry and performing arts, group together activities that are as creative as they are technical. Their respective goals are only achieved by an equal mastery of the creative idea, gestures and tools both traditional and innovative. The latter, sometimes created by the craftsman himself, such as the workbench peg shaped by the hand of the jeweler or the dance shoe molded by the dancer's foot, are certainly only a means to achieve a project but an essential means to its realization.

- 1 Platon, Lois, 665a, in *Œuvres complètes*, coll. « Bibliothèque de la Pléiade », t. II, 1941, p. 691.
- 2 Pierre Sauvanet, *Le Rythme grec : d'Héraclite à Aristote*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1999, pp. 6-7. The author studies the philosophical importance of rhythm in Greek thought. His introduction presents this notion, the meaning that philosophers have attributed to it and the questions it raises, pp. 5-10.
- 3 Alain Montandon, dir., *Ecrire la danse*, Clermont-Ferrand, Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 1999, p.4, quote from the Grand Dictionnaire encyclopédique, t. IV, « Danse », 1989.
- 4 Philippe Le Moal (dir.), *Dictionnaire de la danse*, « George Balanchine, [Balanchivadze Georgi Melitonovitch, dit] (1904-1983) », Paris, Larousse, 2008 (nouvelle édition).
- 5 Pierre Sauvanet, *Le Rythme grec : d'Héraclite à Aristote*, op. cit., p. 5.
- 6 Denis Diderot, *Lettres à Sophie Volland*, Texte établi par J. Assézat et M. Tourneux, Paris, Garnier, p. 376.
- 7 Between 1939-1940, the jeweler's family fled France and took refuge in the United States. A Van Cleef & Arpels office was founded in New York, allowing them to conquer this new territory, continuing the creation and manufacture of pieces, but also to satisfy a French clientele in exile. The first Ballerinas appeared, supervised by the Rubel Brothers, French-American jewelers, and Maurice Duvalet, a French draftsman and designer based in New York. Cf. Évelyne Possémé (dir.), *Van Cleef & Arpels, L'art de la Haute Joaillerie*, cat. exp., September 20, 2012-February 10, 2013, Paris, Les Arts Décoratifs, 2012, pp. 23, 255; Collectif, *The Spirit of Beauty, Van Cleef & Arpels*, cat. exp., Tokyo, Mori Arts Center Gallery, October 31, 2009-January 17, 2010, Paris, Éditions Xavier Barral, 2009, p. 175.
- 8 Thomas d'Aquin, *Somme de théologie*, Ia IIae q. 57, art. 3 ; Ia IIae q. 93, art. See also related articles in: M. Zink, Cl. Gauvard, A. de Libera, *Dictionnaire du Moyen Âge*, Paris, PUF, 2004 for the evolving meaning of the notion "art" et "artiste" in the Middle Ages
- 9 Defined and legally protected (art. 22, L. n° 2014-626 of 18/06/2014 ; L. n° 2016-925 of 07/07/2016).



Thus, the creative intent is served by tools, put into action by a hand that extends the mind, that of the craftsman and the designer. The creator of the work conceives it through his intelligence, and this is his art; the craftsman enters into his creative intent, makes it his own and gives it shape by his mastery of materials, and this is his own art. Art is unified between them by a shared creative thought. In the end, the work produced, offered to the admiration of others, inseparably bears their double imprint [FIG. 1].

The jewelry arts express this unity. They bring together, in the service of creation of excellence, various trades where the gesture occupies a central role. The mastery of the gesture, a key element of savoir-faire, is essential to the perfection sought. If the jewelry professions are clearly defined and specific, so are the gestures. It is a new possible meeting place with dance, where the perfection and fluidity of a dancer's movement, at the service of a choreographic/musical work, requires long years of technical perfection. Balanchine claimed to be more of a craftsman than a creator and intended to give form to music, which he did not create<sup>10</sup>.

### TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE

Moreover, without the transmission or passing on of these gestures, the multiple skills required by these trades, jewelry and ballet, would disappear. Alongside the archives, both historical and creative sources, the jewelry craftsmen have a mission of memory. They perpetuate an art, by word and especially by practice in workshops. Thus, «knowledge gains in value as it is transmitted»<sup>11</sup>. Each Maison has its own secrets of manufacture and excellence, which only the learning of gestures and uses in the workshop is likely to transmit, as each dance school forges, preserves and perpetuates its tradition. The older members of the family pass on their rich knowledge to the younger apprentices, just as the latter bring a fresh perspective. A constant movement, sharing of knowledge is established, to the rhythm of the work in the workshop. Just as dancers essentially contribute to the reputation of a particular school or company, so too do the artisan jewelers, passers of memory and gestures, forge in their own way the names of the great jewelry Maisons [FIG. 2].

The jewelry professions are part of our heritage, but look to the future: they do not intend to remain compartmentalized in the past. Traditions are in dialogue with innovations, always focused on excellence<sup>12</sup>. These innovations allow us to renew and perfect the precise and rigorous gestures inherited from the past, while being nourished by them. The craftsman adapts the movement of his gesture, according to the type of challenge, so that it reveals new ways of expressing beauty<sup>13</sup>. As if a new instrument was added to the score without loss of rhythm: the whole must remain harmonious, there is no room for dissonance. This is another parallel with the world of dance, which is also constantly renewing its approaches to movement to allow the audience, in Balanchine's words, to «see the music and hear the dance»<sup>14</sup>.

This renewal of gestures accompanies that of the dance-inspired collections, which constitute the heritage of the Maison Van Cleef & Arpels. These collections, notably *Ballet Précieux*, in 2007 and 2013, and *Bals de Légendes*, in 2011, have been enriched over time. They echo both current choreographic trends, through partnerships and collaborations, and new performances of *Jewels*, a ballet born of the meeting between Claude Arpels and George Balanchine in 1961.

### RHYTHM IN THE WORKSHOP

The organization of the various tasks also responds to a search for order, turned towards excellence: «Each of these things, in order to possess the fullness of its faculty, must be neither too small nor too great in excess; otherwise, it will sometimes be deprived of its own nature, and sometimes it will possess it only to a lesser degree»<sup>15</sup>. The observation of a piece of jewelry reveals the presence and succession of various craftsmen with specific gestures, whose instruments are adapted to each task. Their technique follows a particular rhythm, the same score with orderly and precise notes, like that of dance, which obeys the rhythm of its own laws. The sound of the instruments on the metal is their musicality: white notes, black notes.

- 10 Serge July, *Dictionnaire amoureux de New York*, « George Balanchine », Paris, Plon, 2019. Original quote from George Balanchine, *Choreography by George Balanchine, a catalog of works*, New York, Viking, 1984.
- 11 Collectif, *Un Exercice de Style*, Van Cleef & Arpels, « Transmission », Paris, éditions Gallimard, 2015.
- 12 Guillaume Glorieux, *Les Arts Joailliers. Métiers d'excellence*, Paris, Éditions Gallimard/L'École des Arts Joailliers, coll. Hors-série Découvertes, 2019, pp. 9-10
- 13 The capacity of the human mind and of the hand to transform matter in spite of the constraints imposed by its very nature are analyzed, in a generic way, among others by A. Leroi-Gourhan in his works *L'homme et la matière* and *Le geste et la parole*, Paris, Albin-Michel, respectively 1943 and 1964.
- 14 Agnès Izrine, « Balanchine George (1904-1983) », Encyclopædia Universalis ; Cf. also : Documentaire « Balanchine : «je suis un chorégraphe classique» », 15 February 1977, archives of l'Ina, Réf. 00970.
- 15 Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, 4, 10.



[FIG. 1] Van Cleef & Arpels workshops. Photo: Anne de Pontonx

[FIG. 2] Product card of a Ballerina clip. 1945. Van Cleef & Arpels Archives.



[FIG. 3] Van Cleef & Arpels



[FIG. 4] Pas de deux clip, Feminine Figures Collection, 2015. Van Cleef & Arpels.

[FIG. 5] Heloise Ballerina clip, Ballet Précieux Collection, 2007. Van Cleef & Arpels.

The piece of jewelry circulates between the hands of different craftsmen. It comes to life, thanks to the imagination of the designer and the draftsman, on a «gouaché», a drawing on a scale of 1, made with gouache. A work in its own right, it is the first step in the visualization of volume, colors and materiality. When reading it, the jeweler must be able to visualize the structure of the future piece, anticipate its manufacture and identify the nature of the stones, their colors, shadows, volume and the reflection of light on the facets<sup>16</sup>.

For certain prestigious pieces, a craftsman makes a pewter mock-up precisely imitating the future piece and the future placement of the stones. It allows a preview of the stages of manufacture, the stone cutting and the possible technical difficulties. The ballerinas, pieces made in volume, are first carved in wax, intended for casting [FIG. 3].

The precious metal structures are then handed over to the jeweler, one of whose talents is to bring to life a material that is inert by nature. In the case of ballerinas, the expression of the danced movement is at the heart of this work. By gestures of extreme meticulousness, she manages to pierce the metal to make it disappear in favor of the stones which will thus be able to make dance their brilliance.

Finally, the stone setter creates a dialogue between the metal and the stones: he gives a new dimension to the piece, which becomes a complete work of art; his intervention requires very great precision, a balance between firm hold and lightness. An adequacy without which the original creative intent could not appear. From the drawing to the final realization, each passage from hand to hand is scrupulously respected to reveal the beauty of the piece as well as possible: «Beauty consists all together in number and grandeur. ...] There is a measure of greatness for all other things [...]»<sup>17</sup>. This rhythm respected by the jewelry craftsmen is transposed to the Ballerina clips they make and manage to animate. Balanchine said that if a ballet can contain a story, the visual spectacle is the essential element, because the choreographer and the dancer touch the audience through their eyes. It is the visual illusion created,» he said, «that convinces the audience even more than if it were the work of a magician<sup>18</sup>. The same is true of the history of jewelry creation.

#### THE EXPRESSION OF THE DANCED MOVEMENT

The image of permanent movement is the essence of dance. Here seems to reside one of the main challenges of jewelry creation: how to manifest it through an inert material? The representation of dance in jewelry, as in other art forms, begins with observation, an understanding of gestures. It continues with the description of the body, movement, clothing. Each dance has its language, which must be translated. While the first ballerinas were rather static, their representation has been refined, under the influence of technical and creative progress, to the point of moving away from simple reproduction to an authentic mimetic, that of the spirit of dance, of its essence. As if, inspired by it, the craftsmen and creators of the Maison Van Cleef & Arpels managed to transcribe the danced movement by transposing it into their own gestures animating the metal.

Dance, with its precise technical rules, is an art that captures the beauty of action to magnify it. The jeweler's gesture follows this idea: it must be precise, meticulous, orderly in order to capture a moment, an emotion. By his intelligence, he gives life to the material: «it is by speed and slowness that we slip between things, that we conjugate with something else : [...] one slips in between, one enters in the middle, one espouses or imposes rhythms»<sup>19</sup>. Dance inspires jewelry in form and substance, particularly through «rhythm». The jeweler executes a rhythmic movement, an orderly, choreographed movement, like the order of the body in movement in dance. This creative rhythm, always linked to corporeality, materiality and sensitivity, is in a way a «temporalized spatial form»: the Ballerinas are created through the work of the jewelers who animate the material.

[FIG. 4] At Van Cleef & Arpels, Ballerinas have always expressed movement and life. Geometry, volume, proportions and creativity are the essential ingredients that interact to express beauty, create exceptional pieces and generate magic, the

<sup>16</sup> Information gathered from an interview at Van Cleef & Arpels, Place Vendôme, le 7 juillet 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Agnès Izrine, « Balanchine George - (1904-1983) », *Encyclopædia Universalis*, op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> G. Deleuze, Spinoza, Philosophie pratique, Editions de Minuit, Londrai, coll. « Reprise », 2003, p. 166.



ultimate goal of ballet. All these elements are present in the *Ballerinas*, through a precise, rigorous movement anchored in the rhythmic tempo of the dance. They express lightness, finesse and fragility, creating enchantment in which the refraction of light on the gems participates. These pieces reflect a desire for perfection, notably through a passionate study of space, angles, lines, curves and materials. Through the use of raw materials, the jewelers succeed in celebrating the grace inherent in the world of dance. This mastery of materials is that of artists whose talent transforms metal into an objet d'art and contemplation. This concern for perfection and detail extends to the reverse of the *Ballerina*, where one can distinguish, on several of them, a hair bun set with diamonds, carried by a neck that is both fragile and energetic. The technical difficulties seem to fade in front of the lightness, spontaneity, «a natural sophistication, elegance that is not borrowed and where effort never shows through»<sup>20</sup>. Thus, the jewel comes to life as if it were following precisely crafted choreography.

### A TECHNIQUE OF EXCELLENCE AT THE SERVICE OF CHOREOGRAPHIC EXPRESSION

The *Ballerinas* created by Van Cleef & Arpels manage, through the techniques used, to express the marriage of jewelry and dance in an exceptional object.

The expression of their movement and twirling tutu was a major challenge requiring a new surface treatment, and «the opportunity for new prowess»<sup>21</sup>. Stone setting is one of the main tools that helped to meet this challenge, to animate these small gem sculptures. Innovation has expanded the creative field.

The *Bouton d'Or* technique, first known as the «*Paillettes*» or «*Pastilles*» motif, introduced on necklaces and clips in 1939, was one of the first to be used to decorate *Ballerina* tutus from 1945<sup>22</sup>. The large number of models and re-editions of these clips is proof of their success. This technique, contrary to the early creations, gives special importance to the metal working, hand polished yellow gold. The pattern is composed of small concave or bombé discs, carefully matched and enhanced with small stones, diamonds or colored stones in closed settings at their center. It is an elegant play of composition, volume and colors, both graphic and innovative, which outlines and decorates the skirts in a harmonious way. It requires a high level of precision, exigency and technicality: polishing, for example, requires a great mastery of gesture because, if badly executed, can deform the piece.

The *Mystery Set* technique is an innovation in the art of setting gemstones. It allows the stones to be set without any apparent metal, favoring structures from below. Its genesis is part of a context of technical research that could be found in several large jewelry Maisons at the time, such as Chaumet<sup>23</sup> and Cartier<sup>24</sup>. Unlike the «*paillettes*» motif, this technique seeks to hide the gold or metal in favor of the stones, which are increasingly tighter and tighter. Unlike diamonds, colored stones cannot be enhanced by a metal of the same hue. The Maison Van Cleef & Arpels published its own patent on May 31, 1934<sup>25</sup>, entitled: «Dispositif pour monter les pierres précieuses». Since then, the *Mystery Set* has been one of the Maison's signature skills, which it continues to enhance<sup>26</sup>.

This technique is, by its very nature, complex to grasp. It requires a very precise mastery, known only to a few rare master jewelers, the «*Mains d'Or*». This complexity, which requires between an hour and a half and four hours of work per stone, more than 300 hours per piece, the hand of the same jeweler and lapidary (stone cutter) for the same piece, explains why only a few are produced each year. The final piece of jewelry reveals this combined virtuosity and technical complexity<sup>27</sup>.

Whereas the *Mystery Set*, in 1933, only concerned flat surfaces, it was very quickly perfected to adapt to the volume and curves of the other creations of the Maison, which explains the filing of numerous patents in 1936<sup>28</sup>. Since the 1970s and 1980s, faceted stones have been embedded in a fine gold mesh «less than two tenths of a millimeter thick»<sup>29</sup>. Each stone, cut to the nearest micron, slides on to these rails - closed with screws - to fit perfectly with the others. Ruby is the most common gem used for the *Mystery Set*, but emeralds and sapphires are also used.

[FIG. 5] *Mystery Set* is most often applied to clips. It allows the perfect

20 Au nom de la danse, L'Histoire, Van Cleef & Arpels, Paris, 2013, p.11.

21 Collectif, Un Exercice de Style, Van Cleef & Arpels, «Mains d'Or», Paris, éditions Gallimard, 2015.

22 Catherine Cariou, «The Paillette motif», Van Cleef & Arpels, <https://www.vancleefarpels.com/eu/fr/la-maison/spirit-of-creation/inspiration/Paillette-motif.html?55click=Highlight>, consulté le 10 mai 2019.

23 Patent N°345.614, Jean-Baptiste Chaumet, published on December 6, 1904.

24 Patent N°753.508, Cartier, published on October 18, 1933.

25 Patent N°764.966.

26 *Mystery Set Navette and Vitrail* have been in use since the beginning of the 21st century. See Van Cleef & Arpels, «Innovation: The *Mystery Set*», <https://www.vancleefarpels.com/eu/fr/la-maison/spirit-of-creation/innovation/the-mystery-set.html?55click=Highlight>, accessed December 5, 2018.

27 Information gathered during a class in Art History of Jewelry, "Entering the Van Cleef & Arpels Universe", at L'École School of Jewelry Arts July 3rd 2019.

28 Three patents, N°801.863, N°802.367, N°805.549 were published respectively August 20, September 3 and Novembre 21 1936.

29 Van Cleef & Arpels, «Innovation: The *Mystery Set*», *op. cit.*

rendering of the curves, dynamism and volume of the jewels, and hence reveals the radiance of nature through the gems that are used. Through its different collections, Van Cleef & Arpels emphasizes the dialogue between the visible and the invisible, a theme that is in harmony with the world of ballerinas. While the *Mystery Set* is not present on the first models of dancers, the latest creations of the Maison employ it, such as certain dancers in the *Ballet Précieux* collection, a tribute to ballet *Jewels*.

For the Ancients, the purpose of art was to «imitate» nature. Not to copy its appearance, but to reproduce its organicity, movement, breath and life. This tradition is perpetuated by any artist who does not make himself the subject of his work<sup>30</sup>. It is at the heart of the meeting between jewelry and dance, between the material brought to its excellence and the spirit of music transformed into movement. The *Ballerinas* of Van Cleef & Arpels, thanks to an exceptional savoir-faire transmitted through successive enrichments, are the result of this creative concordance which unites two worlds of creation, with rhythm as the guiding thread, combining order and movement, controlled rigor and freedom of expression.

The Maison has infused this spirit into the collections that have illustrated - and even embodied - dance. It returned this homage with the ballet *Jewels* by Georges Balanchine. With this ballet, created in 1961 and composed of three «acts» - Emeralds, Rubies and Diamonds - the choreographer sought to bring the jewelry pieces to life through the costumes, jewelry and movement of the dancers. Thus a common language between jewelry and ballet was created, a dialogue between «body and soul»<sup>31</sup>. Listening to this dialogue, which shows the existence of a genetic filiation between the two worlds, by mutual inspiration, reveals in a singular way the fruitfulness of jewelry in its tireless search for excellence in the service of art<sup>32</sup>.

30 See Jean Lebrun's critique in Jean Brun, Boris Lejeune, *Qu'est-ce que la beauté*, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 2014, pp. 90-92, 195-202.

31 Collectif, Un Exercice de Style, Van Cleef & Arpels, «Danse», *op. cit.*

32 This study does not lead to definitive conclusions or firm assertions. The questions and elements of research it raises, this genetic dialogue between dance and jewelry, manifested by the Van Cleef & Arpels ballerina and *Jewels* of Balanchine, are the subject of my Master 2 thesis.

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