

Horace Vernet's 'Orient': photography and the Eastern Mediterranean in 1839, part I: a daguerrean excursion

by MICHÈLE HANNOOSH

HORACE VERNET WAS one of the most frequent, indeed obsessive, of all nineteenth-century French travellers to the 'Orient'. His first visit to Algeria in 1833 inspired, over the following two decades, a spate of other ones: to Algeria again in 1837, to Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Constantinople in 1839–40, to Algeria and Morocco in 1845 and again in 1853–54. The taste for the 'oriental' acquired on these journeys manifested itself in multiple ways, from Vernet's own oriental dress, memorialised in the famous self-portrait of 1835 (Fig.38), to the design and installation of the 'Chambre turque' in the Villa Medici (Fig.41), to numerous genre paintings such as *The Arab tale-teller* (1833; Fig.39), *Rebecca at the well* (1833; Fig.40),¹ *Hagar banished by Abraham* (1837; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes) or *Judah and Tamar* (1840; Fig.42), and finally to the many battle paintings commemorating French victories in North Africa, of which *The capture of the Smalah of Abd-er Kader* (1845; Versailles) remains the best known.

Unlike other artists who travelled to the region in this period, Delacroix or Fromentin, for example, Vernet left little in the way of drawings or notes relating to his trips.² Vernet's memory was legendary and is usually cited to account for this dearth of material, which contrasts so remarkably with the plethora of paintings.³ The exception to this is his journey to Egypt and the Levant in 1839–40, which left an extraordinarily rich textual and visual legacy, thanks to the young painter Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet who accompanied him and recorded the journey in both text and image. For Goupil-Fesquet had just learned the brand-new daguerreotype process, which had been revealed only two months before. Together he and Vernet photographed the sites they visited and people they encountered, tested exposure, lighting and weather conditions, spent their evenings polishing the metal plates and showed off the process to admiring or perplexed audiences. These included the powerful pasha of Egypt, Mehmet-Ali, the Frenchman Joseph Sève who had organised and trained Mehmet-Ali's army and had taken the name Soliman-Pasha, painted by Vernet (Fig.43), and Archduke Friedrich of Austria.⁴ These daguerreotypes were arguably the first to be made of the Near East and in some ways set the terms



38. *Self-portrait*, by Horace Vernet. 1835. Canvas, 47 by 39 cm. (State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg).

for what was to become the 'photographic Orient', the proliferation of photographs of ancient sites and modern customs of the countries of the Mediterranean basin by Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey, Maxime Du Camp, Francis Frith, Gustave Le Gray, William James Stillman and others.⁵ Although the actual daguerreotypes have not been located, eight of the images were published, by a process of transfer engraving, in Noël-Paymal

¹ For the date, see C. Renaudeau: 'Horace Vernet 1789–1863. Chronologie et catalogue raisonné de l'œuvre peint', unpublished Ph.D. diss. (University of Paris IV, 2000), no. 352 (hereafter cited as Renaudeau).

² Numerous letters are in the Paris Archives des Musées nationaux, P30 Delaroche–Vernet, hereafter cited as AMN P30. Many excerpts were published in A. Durande: *Joseph, Carle et Horace Vernet. Correspondance et biographies*, Paris 1863, and some relating to the Egyptian/Levantine trip in *L'Illustration* (5th and 12th April 1856). Unless noted otherwise, the originals are cited, which frequently differ from the published versions and are more complete; nevertheless, the corresponding references to the published versions are provided.

³ L. de Loménie: 'M. Horace Vernet', *Galerie des contemporains illustres*, IV, Paris 1842, pp. 30–31 of the Vernet section; F. Goupil-Fesquet: *Voyage en Orient fait avec Horace Vernet en 1839 et 1840*, Paris n.d. [1843] (hereafter cited as *Voyage*), p. 116.

⁴ On Sève, see A. Vingtrinier: *Soliman Pacha, colonel Sève, généralissime des armées égyptiennes, ou Histoire des guerres de l'Égypte de 1820 à 1860*, Paris 1886. On Mehmet-Ali, see K. Fahmy: *Mehmed Ali. From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt*, Oxford 2009.

⁵ See N.N. Perez: *Focus East. Early Photography in the Near East 1839–1855*, New York 1988; S. Aubenas and J. Lacarrière: *Le Voyage en Orient*, Paris 1999; K. Jacobson: *Odalisques and Arabesques. Orientalist Photography, 1839–1925*, London 2007.

⁶ N.-P. Lerebours, J.G. Jannin and P. de la Garenne: *Excursions daguerriennes. Vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe*, Paris 1841–42 (hereafter cited as *Excursions daguerriennes*). The work was issued in instalments beginning in 1840 (see note 38).

⁷ Four other daguerreotypes in the Musée de l'homme, Paris, depicting the skull of an Arab, have been attributed to Vernet by M. Frizot: 'Body of Evidence. The Ethnography of Difference', in *idem*, ed.: *A New History of Photography*, Cologne 1998, pp. 259–71, esp. p. 268, but to Henri Jacquart and Deramond in Q. Bajac and D. Planchon-de-Font-Réaulx, eds.: *Le Daguerreotype français. Un objet photographique*, Paris 2003, cat. nos. 334 and 335. The minutes of the meeting of professors of the Musée de l'homme for 3rd June 1845, in *ibid.*, announcing a 'don fait par M. Horace Vernet de la tête d'un Arabe exécutée à Alger', may refer to the daguerreotypes, but the label on the daguerreotypes is ambiguous, suggesting that Vernet's gift was the mummified head itself (also in the Museum).

⁸ P.J. de Lotbinière in J. Desautels, G. Aubin and R. Blanchet, eds.: *Voyage en Orient*



39. *The Arab tale-teller*, by Horace Vernet. 1833. Canvas, 99 by 146.5 cm. (Wallace Collection, London).

Lerebours's famous series produced between 1840 and 1844, *Excursions daguerriennes*, accompanied by texts in which Goupil-Fesquet described the view, the circumstances in which it was taken and anecdotes from the travellers' experiences.⁶ Goupil-Fesquet was the chief agent in executing the daguerreotypes, but he and others made clear that Vernet took part and was adept at the process, a point confirmed by Vernet's letters, as shall be seen.⁷ A traveller and fellow daguerreotypist whom they met on the journey, Gustave Joly de Lotbinière, repeatedly referred in his diary to Vernet's photographic activity.⁸

In addition to the images and texts of the *Excursions*, Goupil-Fesquet wrote a longer account of the trip, *Voyage en Orient fait avec Horace Vernet en 1839 et 1840*, which records, like a travel-diary, the daily experiences and impressions of the travellers, what they said, did and even thought.⁹ The similarity between Goupil-Fesquet's account and passages in Vernet's own letters suggests a collaborative approach to these memoirs too;¹⁰ certainly Goupil-Fesquet sought Vernet's approval to publish the account and he read it to Vernet's wife, Louise, and his son-in-

law, Paul Delaroché.¹¹ Vernet's letters, and the letters and notes of Goupil-Fesquet himself (see Appendix below), provide further information on the trip. Taken together, these visual and verbal accounts present a precious source of material on that 'Orient' which Vernet encountered, experienced and imagined.

This article will explore what these daguerreotypes and travel narratives can tell us about Vernet's 'Orient' and what they may suggest about his paintings of Oriental subjects. Part I will present the circumstances of the journey, the context of the beginnings of photography and the contemporary situation of the eastern Mediterranean. Part II, to appear in the June issue of this Magazine, will discuss the images and texts from the journey, and the kind of 'Orient' they project. If, like much Orientalist painting, Vernet's work ignored the signs of 'real' life in favour of an idealised, in his case biblical, vision, these parallel accounts – photographic and textual – suggest something more.¹² For, from behind the pictorial and ethnographic commonplaces emerges the image of a region more complex. These accounts record an area of multiple ethnicities and languages, riven by

(1839–1840). *Journal d'un voyageur curieux du monde et d'un pionnier de la daguerréotypie*, Quebec 2010, pp.146 and 158. The travellers met on the boat from Syros to Alexandria (ibid., p.138). De Lotbinière had already photographed Athens. He then took photographs with Vernet and Goupil-Fesquet in Alexandria and Cairo, before leaving them to travel up the Nile while they headed overland to Syria and Palestine.

⁹ The first nine chapters were published in *La France littéraire* (5th March–5th August 1843); see E. Bertin: 'Les Sources françaises de l'histoire des premiers pas du daguerréotype en Egypte (1839) et à Malte (1840)', *La Tribune de l'art* (22nd March 2005); <http://www.latribunedelart.com/les-sources-francaises-de-l-histoire-des-premiers-pas-du-daguerréotype-en-egypte-1839-et-a-malte>. The Challamel edition, some with coloured illustrations and others in black and white, appeared in 1843, and a two-volume edition without illustrations was published a year later, *Voyage d'Horace Vernet en Orient*, Brussels and Leipzig 1844.

¹⁰ For Goupil-Fesquet describing Chaft-Amr, see *Voyage*, pp.200–01: 'Le ciel bleu, les gazons verts, une eau limpide, un groupe nombreux de jeunes filles sur une construction vermoulue, un vieux aveugle et des chevaux qui hennissent, voilà des éléments précieux pour l'art; c'est un tableau tout fait. Un beau Syrien, descendu de son coursier qu'il tient par la bride,

s'approche d'une de ces beautés maronites et lui demande à boire; délicieux motif pour l'entrevue d'Elizéer et de Rebecca'; and Vernet's letter to Montfort, 30th November 1839 (AMN P30); see also Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.132: 'Hier encore, en arrivant à Katié [sic], j'aurais voulu vous tenir là, près de ce puits, où toutes ces filles arabes viennent le soir chercher de l'eau. C'étaient les filles de Jethro, Rebecca et ses compagnes, que sais-je? [. . .] Elles [. . .] faisaient] [. . .] le tableau le plus admirable des mœurs si bien décrites dans l'Ecriture. [. . .] Le ciel était bleu, le sable jaune, le sang circulait sous la peau bronzée de ces bras qui soulevaient ces lourdes cruches pour les placer sur l'épaule'.

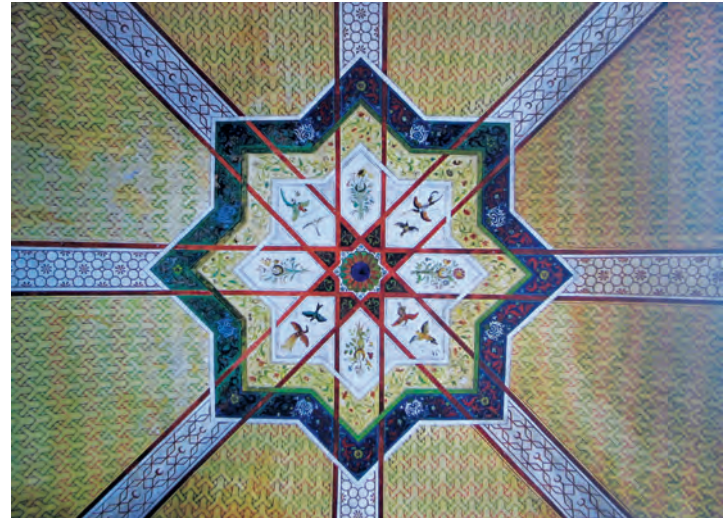
¹¹ Vernet wrote to his wife on 3rd March 1843 (AMN P30): 'J'ai reçu une lettre de Goupil qui veut écrire notre voyage. Dis-lui que, 1) il en est le maître. 2) qu'il a trop bon goût pour ne rien dire qui ne soit convenable, que si j'accepte qu'il le lise à Delaroché et à toi, c'est pour vous procurer le plaisir d'être les premiers à jouir de sa prose, que quant à mon portrait j'aimerais autant qu'il n'y fût pas'.

¹² For the suppression of the 'rough designs of Empire' in Orientalist painting, see R. Kabbani: 'Regarding Orientalist Painting Today', in N. Tromans, ed.: *exh. cat. The Lure of the East. British Orientalist Painting*, New Haven (Yale Center for British Art) and London (Tate Britain) 2008, pp.40–45, esp. p.40.



40. *Rebecca at the well*, by Horace Vernet. 1833. Canvas, 180 by 80 cm. (Location unknown).

conflict between regional powers and between European states, where ordinary life, in its banal detail, continuously mingles the modern and the ancient. Significantly, it is a place that escapes the control of the traveller and artist. The paintings simplify this complexity, converting specific locations into mythical spaces outside time and their inhabitants into characters in biblical stories.¹³ Vernet made this shift deliberately, of course, for aesthetic and probably commercial purposes; he was not seeking to depict his 'real' experiences. But comparing the photographic and textual material with his paintings gives us a fuller picture of these transformations more specifically, and of the relationship between early photography and Orientalist painting more generally. Despite Vernet's claims of 'seeing painting everywhere'



41. Central motif of the vault, Turkish Chamber, designed by Horace Vernet. 1833. (Villa Medici, Rome).

on this journey,¹⁴ the daguerreotypes and accompanying texts provide glimpses of a different 'Orient', more historicised, politicised and individualised.

The Egyptian/Levantine journey was conceived in the immediate aftermath of Vernet's first visit to Algeria in 1833, 'an admirable journey which will remain engraved in my mind as the most wonderful that I ever took'.¹⁵ A letter from his wife, Louise, dated 12th September 1833, just two months after his return from Algeria, states that 'he is already planning another trip to Africa. At the moment it is Egypt that he wants to tap. [. . .] His fertile imagination and his talent gain immeasurably from these trips'.¹⁶ In 1839, reports in the press asserting that Vernet had been invited by Mehmet-Ali to paint a picture on the subject of the Battle of Nezib (24th June 1839), in which the Egyptian forces commanded by Mehmet-Ali's son, Ibrahim Pasha, had defeated those of the Ottoman sultan Mahmoud II, were soon denied.¹⁷ However, Vernet's letters attest that he did agree to paint such a picture, even if ultimately he never produced it.¹⁸

The circumstances in which Goupil-Fesquet joined him are unknown, although Goupil had been Vernet's student (and possibly Delacroix's), and it was common on such trips to take along a travelling companion.¹⁹ Vernet suggests that the journey was an initiation for the twenty-two-year-old: 'M. G[oupil] is the most easy-going and even-tempered of companions. For

¹³ See J. Thompson: 'Mapping the Mind. The Quest for Eastern Metaphors and Meaning', in *idem*: exh. cat. *The East Imagined, Experienced, Remembered. Orientalist Nineteenth-Century Painting*, Liverpool (Walker Art Gallery) 1988, pp.18–35, esp. p.29.

¹⁴ Letter to Montfort, 20th January 1840 (AMN P30); see *L'Illustration* (12th April 1856) and Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.142.

¹⁵ '[. . .] un admirable voyage, qui restera gravé dans ma pensée comme le plus beau que j'aie jamais entrepris'; letter to Atthalin, n.d., cited in Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.102.

¹⁶ 'Il projette encore un voyage en Afrique. C'est l'Egypte à présent qu'il veut exploiter. [. . .] sa fertile imagination et son talent gagnent infiniment à toutes ces courses', Louise Vernet to Pigneux, in F. Fossier et al., eds.: *Correspondance des directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome. Horace Vernet 1829–1834 (Archives de l'art français, nouvelle série, tome V)*, Rome 2010, p.270, no.472. Vernet obtained permission to take the trip but renounced the plan for the duration of his directorship of the Villa Medici; see *ibid.*, p.277, no.494.

¹⁷ See *Moniteur universel* (7th October 1839), quoted in Bertin, *op. cit.* (note 9); *L'Ami de la religion* 3186 (8th October 1839); *Bulletin de la Société de géographie* (18th October 1839), p.223.

¹⁸ '[Méhémet-Ali] a fini par me demander un tableau de la bataille de Nézib'; letter of 6th November 1839 (AMN P30), see *L'Illustration* (5th April 1856); Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.127. Later he gave Soliman Pasha 'l'assurance de lui faire jouer un grand rôle dans la bataille de Nézib, chose toute naturelle, puisqu'il est évident que c'est lui qui l'a gagnée', letter

of 7th February 1840 (AMN P30); see *L'Illustration* (12th April 1856); Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.150.

¹⁹ Goupil-Fesquet repeatedly asked to be designated as 'élève de M. Horace Vernet' (see Appendix 4 below). In a letter of 1858 he indicated that he had long ago been 'entrusted' to Delacroix; see E. Delacroix: *Journal*, ed. M. Hannoosh, Paris 2009, II, pp.1216 and 2212. At another point, Delacroix asked him to daguerreotype a painting; undated letter from Léon Riesener to Goupil-Fesquet, quoted in C. Libebault, ed.: exh. cat. *Delacroix et la photographie*, Paris (Musée National Eugène Delacroix) 2008, pp.145–46. Born in Paris on 8th November 1817, Goupil-Fesquet exhibited genre scenes on Oriental subjects at the Salons of 1841 (no.873, *Femmes syriennes à une fontaine*; no.874, *La poste dans le désert*; no.875, *Route du Caire à Bir-el-Ahd, dans le désert, Egypte*; no.876, *Jeune Odalisque abyssinienne*) and 1842 (no.840, *Portrait de Soliman-Pacha*). In 1843 he executed a copy of the Louvre's *Virgin with a veil* by Raphael for the church of Notre-Dame de l'Assomption in Carnoules (Var). He later worked for the Sèvres porcelain factory. He married the widow of an Italian count, Teresa Sforzosi, and died in Sèvres on 15th September 1881 (Paris, Archives de Paris, V3E/N 1046, and Nanterre, Archives départementales des Hauts de Seine, E-NUM-SEV 286 [1881], no.173; with thanks to M. Gérard Orsel).

²⁰ 'M. Goupil est le plus doux et le plus égal des camarades. Tout est bon, tout lui convient. Je ne connais personne qui se laisse mieux promener que lui. Il se mouche lui-même à présent et pense à

him, everything is fine, he is happy with everything. I don't know anyone who lets himself be led around better than he does. He is taking care of himself now, and he is always prepared. This is progress; one more trip, and he will be able to go off on his own'.²⁰ Although he seems to have fallen on hard times, Goupil-Fesquet came, through his mother, from one of the most important merchant and banking families in France, active in Marseille, Bordeaux, London, Amsterdam, Smyrna and the Levant.²¹ The few scattered remarks in the *Voyage* during the travellers' stay in Smyrna provide only the slightest hint of this illustrious genealogy. His great-grandfather, Pieter van Sanen, had been a Dutch merchant in Smyrna and the Prussian consul-general there.²² His grandfather Casimir Fesquet (c.1748–1821) had been a prosperous merchant and banker in Smyrna, Marseille and London. His aunt Arsène Fesquet had married the banker Frédéric Soehnée, son of a powerful *censeur* (overseer) of the Banque de France, and had held an important Salon for liberals under the Restoration. His mother was the niece of another *censeur* of the Banque de France, Claude-Etienne Martin d'André. These relations may account for his connection with Vernet and his interest in the journey. Completing the party was Vernet's nephew Charles Burton, who had fought in the Algerian campaign and knew Arabic. Based in Constantine, Algeria, in 1837, he had accompanied Vernet during the latter's trip there that same year.²³

The extraordinary idea of daguerreotyping the journey came from Vernet and Goupil-Fesquet themselves. Vernet would have had knowledge of the new process from the deliberations of the Institut of which he was a member. In particular, his son-in-law Paul Delaroche had drafted the report on it for its first public presentation on 19th August 1839.²⁴ Just three weeks later, Goupil-Fesquet asked for lessons from one of its pioneering practitioners, the architect Alphonse-Eugène Hubert, in view of the forthcoming trip.²⁵ He also took advice from Daguerre (see Appendix 2 below). The ambition of this initiative, so soon after the process was made public and with all its attendant difficulties and complications, cannot be overstated. As Ken Jacobson observes, the taking of such views was extremely rare even ten years later, when most professional photographers produced commercial portraiture and few amateurs took outdoor views.²⁶ Lerebours probably supplied the travellers with the daguerreotype apparatus and the darkroom tent, but contrary to what is usually claimed, he did not commission the views as he did for most of those destined for the *Excursions daguerriennes*. He



42. *Judah and Tamar*, by Horace Vernet. 1840. Canvas, 129 by 97.5 cm. (Wallace Collection, London).

implies, rather, that it was a different operation, and that Vernet and Goupil-Fesquet lent him their daguerreotypes: 'M. Lerebours has chosen the images that he has had engraved from his gallery consisting of more than 1200 plates, executed in part by his travellers, and from among the most remarkable images brought back from the Orient by MM. Horace Vernet and Goupil'.²⁷ When he announced the second volume, Lerebours specifically thanked them for entrusting their images to him.²⁸

Goupil-Fesquet later repaid Hubert's instruction by sending him detailed notes on the results of his experience in the field. The novelty of the process and the pioneering nature of the

avoir du papier dans sa poche. Il y a progrès; encore un voyage, et on pourra le laisser aller se coucher tout seul; letter of 5th January 1840 (AMN P30); see *L'Illustration* (12th April 1856).

²¹ Goupil-Fesquet's letter to Delacroix (see note 19) evokes the 'brilliant social position' of his family. On the Fesquet family and their network of relations, see R. Szramkiewicz: *Les Régents et censeurs de la banque de France nommés sous le Consulat et l'Empire*, Geneva 1974, esp. pp.247–51 and pp.391–93.

²² 'Smyrne a pour moi le charme puissant des souvenirs de famille: ma grand'mère et ma tante y sont nées; mon grand-père y fut heureux autrefois! [...] tous les récits qu'on m'en faisait dans mon enfance me reviennent à l'esprit comme des songes qu'on cherche à réaliser en bâtissant des probabilités sur des choses existantes. [...] un bateau où des enfants s'amusaient à remuer l'eau me rappelle si bien certains récits de ma grand'mère, [...] peut-être était-ce là qu'elle jouait avec ses compagnes à l'ombre des grands cyprès noir [...] M. Van Lenep, consul de Hollande, ancien ami de mon grand-père, et que mon arrière-grand-père avait précédé autrefois au même consulat, [nous] reçoit avec empressement'; see *Voyage*, pp.219–20. Jacob van Lenep (1769–1855) was consul-general of the Netherlands at Smyrna between 1825 and 1855 (http://levantineheritage.com/pdf/The_Van_Lenep_Genealogy_Smyrna_Branch.pdf, accessed 2nd May 2014).

²³ Burton (1813–89) was Vernet's nephew by marriage; his mother was Aimée Pujol, the sister of Vernet's wife, Louise. Vernet painted his portrait (private collection; Renaudeau, no.230).

²⁴ François Arago read the report to the meeting of the Académie des Sciences and the Académie des Beaux-Arts; see S. Bann: *Paul Delaroche. History Painted*, London 1997, p.264, note 97.

²⁵ Unpublished letter from the architect Hector Horeau to Hubert, 13th September 1839 (see Appendix 1 below). One of Hubert's daguerreotypes served as an example of the process at a meeting of the Académie des Sciences on 28th October 1839; see B. Newhall: 'A Chronicle of the Birth of Photography', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 6/2 (Spring 1953), pp.208–20, esp. p.217. Hubert was born on 29th July 1797, and died on 16th May 1841; Paris, Archives de Paris, V3E/N 1170 and V3E/D 753.

²⁶ Jacobson, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.5.

²⁷ 'M. Lerebours a choisi les épreuves qu'il fait graver dans sa galerie, composée de plus de 1200 planches, exécutées en partie par ses voyageurs et parmi les épreuves les plus remarquables rapportées d'Orient par MM. Horace Vernet et Goupil' (*Excursions daguerriennes*, vol. I, 'Avis de l'éditeur'). Goupil-Fesquet undoubtedly acquired the equipment from Lerebours, however, since he alludes to 'l'opticien qui [...] a fourni' (*Voyage*, p.46); the other main supplier at this time, Alphonse Giroux, was not an 'opticien'.

²⁸ 'Nous ne saurions, en terminant, témoigner trop de reconnaissance à MM. Horace Vernet, Joly de Lotbinière et Goupil pour les belles épreuves qu'ils ont bien voulu nous confier', in *Derniers Perfectionnements apportés au daguerreotype*, par MM. Gaudin et N.-P. Lerebours, Paris, May 1842, p.14 of Lerebours's catalogue at the back.

trip meant that he had unique information to pass on: technical notes on lighting, aspect, exposure times, weather conditions, materials, equipment and processes (see Appendices 3 and 4 below). Hubert evoked these findings in a pamphlet that he published anonymously, *Le Daguerreotype considéré sous un point de vue artistique, mécanique et pittoresque* (Paris 1840). There he cited Goupil-Fesquet on ways to take pictures in focus even from the deck of a moving ship, on the most advantageous air-humidity and on the superiority, for adequate contrast, of coloured monuments over white houses or snow-capped mountains. Vernet and Goupil-Fesquet also transmitted some of their findings to Daguerre himself, as a letter from Vernet indicates.²⁹

The daguerreotypes seem to have been sent back home periodically, perhaps to cut down on weight. From Alexandria on 6th November 1839, Vernet instructed his wife to ask Théodore Gréterin, director of the customs division at the Ministry of the Interior, to leave the box of daguerreotypes unopened: 'You can imagine that it would be fatal if a customs officer wrecked the pictures'.³⁰ From Cairo on 21st November, he wrote: 'We have been daguerreotyping like mad and you will receive a part of what we have done as a sample. Delaroche should choose the plates that he thinks will be of interest to the Institute'.³¹ On 23rd November, he specified that he wished to send the most interesting plates to the Académie and he asked that they be spared fumigation during quarantine in Malta.³² Whether the plates ever went to the Académie is unclear; only the engravings from the *Excursions* are known today.

The *Excursions daguerriennes*, consisting of one hundred and eleven images representing sites from Europe, the Near East, North Africa, Russia, Saint-Helena and even North America, each with accompanying text, was the first major publication to use the new technology of the daguerreotype. The published images were, in all but three cases, aquatint engravings taken from tracings of the daguerreotypes.³³ The work appeared first in fifteen instalments, each consisting of four images and their texts, beginning in August 1840 and continuing every month or two.³⁴ Four instalments had appeared by the end of December 1840, including Goupil-Fesquet's chapters on Acre, Beirut, Jerusalem and Pompey's Pillar with their corresponding views.³⁵ By mid-February 1841, the seventh instalment had appeared, and by mid-December 1841, the twelfth, which included his *Harem de Méhémet-Ali* and his *Vue de Louqsor*.³⁶ After the enormous success of the first series, in April of 1842 Lerebours announced a second series, concentrated more on France.³⁷ The two series were collected into two volumes dated 1841 and 1842 respectively.³⁸ The eight Vernet/Goupil-Fesquet images appeared entirely in



43. *Portrait of Soliman Pasha*, by Horace Vernet. 1840. Canvas, dimensions unknown. (Location unknown, formerly in the collection of Sherif Sabry Pasha, Cairo). Fig. 6 from J.M. Carré: *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Egypte*, Cairo 1932, II, p.54.

the first series and therefore in volume I: *Colonne de Pompée à Alexandrie, Harem de Méhémet-Ali à Alexandrie, Louqsor, Pyramide de Chéops, Jérusalem, Beyrouth, Saint-Jean-d'Acre and Nazareth*.³⁹

Their images were regularly singled out as particularly striking. The *View of Acre*, which appeared in the first instalment, was praised for its nuance, clarity and variety – the different parts of the city, the peak of Mount Carmel, the citadel with the Turkish flag, the gardens of Abdallah in the plain and the Djezzard aqueduct in the distance.⁴⁰ The view of Mehmet-Ali's harem was admired for its light and its pictorial effect; the same article calls attention to the *View of Luxor*.⁴¹ *Pompey's Pillar*, the *View of Beirut* and the *View of Jerusalem* were cited by the British press for their interest, clarity and beauty.⁴²

²⁹ 'Je le prie [Paul Delaroche] de dire à Daguerre que la planche représentant le sérail du pacha à Alexandrie a été 2 minutes dans la chambre noire à 10h du matin, la colonne de Pompée 4 [minutes] à 2 hres et que nous n'avons rien pu obtenir au Caire ainsi qu'aux Pyramides en plein midi en moins de 9 minutes'; letter of 21st November 1839, appended to that of the 16th (AMN P30).

³⁰ 'J'oubliais de te dire qu'il faudrait que tu passes chez Mr Gréterin lui demander qu'on n'ouvre pas la boîte aux daguerreotypes. Tu juges que ce serait fatal qu'un douanier vienne gâter les épreuves'; letter of 6th November 1839 (AMN P30).

³¹ 'Nous avons daguerrotipifié comme des lions et vous recevrez une partie de ce que nous avons fait comme échantillon. Delaroche choisira les plaques qu'il jugera devoir intéresser l'Institut'; letter of 21st November 1839, appended to that of the 16th (AMN P30).

³² Letter summarised in Bertin, *op. cit.* (note 9).

³³ *Excursions daguerriennes*, II. The three exceptions ('*Un des bas reliefs de Notre-Dame de Paris*', '*Hôtel de Ville de Paris*' and '*Maison élevée rue Saint-Georges par M. Renard*'), none of which was by Goupil-Fesquet and Vernet, followed a new method developed by Hippolyte Fizeau, in which the daguerreotype itself was etched and electroplated so as to form a plate from which prints could be taken. Engravings or lithographs after photographs were common in the first decades of photography: see C. Dutoit: '*L'Œueil de la reproduction mécanique*', in C. Mauron, ed.: exh. cat. *Miroirs d'argent*.

Daguerreotypes de Girault de Prangey, Bulle (Musée gruérien) 2008, p.81; and S. Aubenas: 'The Photograph in Print. Multiplication and Stability of the Image', in M. Frizot, ed.: *A New History of Photography*, Cologne 1998, pp.225–31.

³⁴ The first instalment was announced in the *Bibliographie de la France* of 8th August 1840, no.3878: '*Excursions daguerriennes, collection de 50 [sic] planches représentant les vues et les monuments les plus remarquables du globe: Paris, Milan, Venise, Florence, Rome, etc., etc. 1re livraison. In 4° oblong d'une feuille, plus 4 pl. Imprimerie de Béthune à Paris – A Paris chez Rittner et Goupil, boulevard Montmartre, no. 15; chez Lerebours, place du Pont-Neuf, no. 17; chez H. Bossange. Prix de la livraison 3. –*'. On 20th August 1840 *La Presse* announced that the first instalment was on sale. See B. Newhall and R. Doty: 'The Value of Photography to the Artist', in *Image. The Bulletin of the George Eastman House of Photography*, 11/6 (1962), pp.27–28. A review appeared in the *Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature* (20th September 1840), pp.119–21. Lerebours describes the schedule in his and Gaudin's *Demiers Perfectionnements apportés au daguerreotype* (see note 28).

³⁵ *La France littéraire* 3 (December 1840), pp.445–46, mentions the chapters on Beirut, Acre and Jerusalem. *The Athenaeum* (12th December 1840), p.977, mentions the fourth instalment. *The Art Union* (May 1841), p.92, specifies that the fourth instalment contained the views of Beirut and Pompey's Pillar.

³⁶ *L'Artiste* 7 (1841), no.5, p.81; 8 (1841), no.25, p.400.



44. *Arabs travelling in the desert*, by Horace Vernet. 1843. Canvas, 46.7 by 57.7 cm. (Wallace Collection, London).

The party left Marseille by steamship on 21st October 1839, after Vernet demonstrated the daguerreotype process there on the 20th and, it appears, took the first images ever of the city: two views of the entrance to the Vieux-Port.⁴³ They went via Livorno to Malta, where they boarded a ship for Syria. There they caught another boat for Alexandria, where they shaved their heads and donned Arab dress for the remainder of the trip: this was more convenient for the climate and would allow them easier access to mosques and other sites.⁴⁴ The itinerary included Alexandria, Cairo, Luxor, the Pyramids of Giza, El Arish, Khan Yunis, Gaza, Bethlehem, Hebron and Jerusalem, taking in the Valley of Josaphat, the Jordan river and the Dead Sea, then on to Nablus, Jenin, Nazareth, Mount Tabor, Shefa Amr, Acre, Tyre, Sidon, Damascus, Beirut, Smyrna and Constantinople. From Constantinople they returned by boat to France via Rome, stopping en route in Malta where Vernet executed his *Judah and Tamar*.⁴⁵ They landed in Marseille on 12th April 1840. Vernet later recalled the journey with great nostalgia, especially during

his trip to Russia in 1842–43, longing for ‘my dear Orientals, whom I love more every day’.⁴⁶ His memories of Egypt were literally restorative: ‘I am like a drunkard who stops up a bottle, whenever I am able to reconnect with my memories of a country where the sun is not the way it is here, an orange wrapped in grey paper’. It was not merely the weather: ‘When I remember the evening I spent in Jerusalem writing to you at the table in the convent, after a meal of baccala! I was thin and run down; but the cause was very different from what is turning me pale now! With the Bible and everything I was seeing, I was filling my bag, like the ant who stores food for the future; here, it is the opposite, a void that surrounds me and that I am filling at my expense’.⁴⁷ The 1843 *Arabs travelling in the desert* (Fig.44), depicting Vernet, Burton and Goupil-Fesquet themselves, was the fruit of these memories, a warm and brilliant antidote to the cold, dark Russian winter.⁴⁸

The political situation in the Eastern Mediterranean was very unstable. Since at least the Greek War of Independence in the

³⁷ *La France littéraire* 9 (April 1842), p.40.

³⁸ The copy at the British Library, London, has 1841 for vol.I and 1842 for vol.II. The copy at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, has 1840 for vol.I, but as most of the instalments had not yet appeared, this date must represent that of the first instalment. In any case, the second series extended into 1844, since T. Bettinger’s *Vallée de Saint-Gervais et Le Bonnant* is dated ‘17 juin 1844’.

³⁹ None of the plates in the *Excursions* is attributed to any particular individual; all are marked ‘Daguerreotype Lerebours’. Goupil-Fesquet’s are certainly those for which he signed the accompanying text. He also wrote the text for two views of Paris (*Saint-Germain l’Auxerrois* and *Porte latérale de Notre-Dame de Paris*), suggesting that he may have supplied these daguerreotypes as well.

⁴⁰ *Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature* 2/8 (20th September 1840).

⁴¹ *L’Artiste*, ser.2, 8/25 (December 1841), p.400.

⁴² *The Art Union* (May 1841), p.92; *The Foreign Quarterly Review* 27/53 (April 1841), p.99.

⁴³ A. Brun: ‘La Première Photographie prise à Marseille’, in *Mémoires de l’Institut historique de Provence* 13 (1936), pp.5–9, esp. p.7. The daguerreotypes have not been located.

⁴⁴ *Voyage*, p.79.

⁴⁵ The painting is inscribed ‘H. Vernet. Malte 1840’. While this is not a signature, Vernet mentions working on the painting in a letter of 15th March 1840 to his wife from Malta (AMN P30); see Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.154.

⁴⁶ ‘mes chers Orientaux, que j’aime chaque jour davantage’; letter of 30th September 1842. See *Lettres intimes de M. Horace Vernet de l’Institut pendant son voyage en Russie (1842 et 1843). Fragments inédits d’une Histoire des artistes vivants par Théophile Silvestre*, Paris 1856, p.23.

⁴⁷ ‘Je suis comme un ivrogne qui découvre un bouchon, aussitôt que je vois moyen de me racrocher aux souvenirs d’un pays où le soleil n’est pas comme ici, une orange enveloppée de papier gris’ (*ibid.*, January 1843, p.45). ‘Lorsque je me souviens de la soirée de Jérusalem, où je t’écrivais sur la table du convent, après un repas de Bacala! J’étais maigre, fatigué; mais la cause était bien différente que [sic] celle qui me blémit. Avec la Bible et tout ce que je voyais, je remplissais mon sac, comme la fourmi qui fait provision de nourriture pour l’avenir; ici, c’est le contraire, c’est le vide qui m’entoure que je remplis à mes dépens’ (6th February 1843; AMN P30; see *ibid.*, pp.50–51).

⁴⁸ ‘je fais un tableau de mon voyage d’Egypte où nous figurons tous, Charles, etc., etc’; letter of 7th November 1842 (AMN P30), quoted in Renaudeau, p.448, and partially in Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.212. ‘Je termine un petit tableau sans prétention [. . .]: c’est notre caravane dans le désert’; letter of 26th November 1842 (AMN P30), quoted in Renaudeau, p.448, and partially in Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.215.

1820s, the region had been subject to intense and prolonged conflict between both internal and external forces. In 1832 a weak Ottoman sultan had been challenged by his formidable vassal Mehmet-Ali, the pasha of Egypt, who defeated the sultan's forces in the first Egyptian–Ottoman War. By the terms of the Peace of Kutahya in May 1833 Mehmet-Ali acquired rule over the large territory that was then Syria.⁴⁹ Subsequently, Mehmet-Ali's decisive victory over the Ottoman armies at Nezib on 24th June 1839 strengthened his position and placed the whole of the Levant, and thus the route to the East, within his reach. Sultan Mahmoud II died on 29th June 1839 and was replaced by his inexperienced sixteen-year-old son Abdulmecid. At the same time, the Ottoman fleet defected to Mehmet-Ali, creating an unparalleled naval force. This alarmed Britain and Russia in particular. Both wished to maintain the status quo: Britain so as to protect its routes to India and to contain Russian expansionism; Russia to keep its own foothold in the region, which it had gained at the expense of a weak Mahmoud II but which was threatened by a powerful Mehmet-Ali. Joined by Austria and Prussia, British and Russian forces soon intervened to support the new sultan and drive Mehmet-Ali, who was backed by the French, from Syria. In July of 1840, shortly after the travellers' return to France, the allied powers signed the Convention of London, issuing Mehmet-Ali with an ultimatum; in the autumn, led by the British, they retook Beirut, Sidon and Acre, forcing Mehmet-Ali to renounce all claims to Syria.⁵⁰

Within the Ottoman empire the situation was also extremely tense. Vernet noted the hatred the Syrians and Lebanese had for the Egyptian occupation: 'As for the territory that [Mehmet-Ali] governs, nothing is less certain than that he will retain it, for he is detested there. The land is ruined; the fields lie fallow, abandoned by the peasants who have fled the pasha's agents; insurrections are flaring up everywhere, and just one setback for the army would be the signal for a general uprising, not only in Syria but even in Egypt, where there is unbearable suffering'.⁵¹ He predicted an uprising in Beirut, especially if the French invaded to support the insurgents: 'as soon as we were to land here, revolution would break out everywhere. The emir Bashir, a prince from Mount Lebanon, commands more than a hundred thousand Christians, who are suffering under Egyptian domination'.⁵²

The party encountered reminders of war throughout their journey. On their arrival in Egypt, they were struck by the presence of Mehmet-Ali's warships, which filled the port of Alexandria.⁵³ At their very first meeting with Mehmet-Ali, they received the full force of his sarcasm about the French suggestion

that he restore the Ottoman fleet to the sultan as a gesture of peace: 'Really, my good Sir, I do not understand the French, who are so good at making war and who speak of nothing but peace'.⁵⁴ In January 1840 they spent a week with the commander of the Egyptian army, Soliman Pasha, in Sidon where he had been sent to inspect the fortifications along the coast. While there, Vernet admired the tent and the arms that had been captured from the Turks at Nezib, as well as the horse which Soliman had ridden during the battle. On the return voyage, they met the French navy moored at Smyrna. The travellers were housed aboard the 86-gun warship *Santi Pietri*, the deck and battery of which Vernet daguerretyped;⁵⁵ they were also entertained aboard the 90-gun *Iéna*, where Goupil-Fesquet daguerretyped the deck.⁵⁶ Archduke Friedrich of Austria, to whom they demonstrated the daguerreotype process on board the *Iéna* on 15th February 1840, was the commander of the *Guerriera* which later assisted the British in the shelling of Beirut and Sidon.

Vernet may have been doing a little reconnaissance of his own: 'Tell General Boyer that we have in our bags everything we promised to bring back, and that he can assure the person we went to see together that nothing will escape our observation'.⁵⁷ A former Napoleonic general, Pierre-François-Xavier Boyer (1772–1851) had frequented Vernet's studio in 1820 and is pictured on the far left of the latter's *L'Atelier d'Horace Vernet, rue des Martyrs* (1822; private collection).⁵⁸ From 1824 to 1826 he had led the team of French military advisors sent to reform Mehmet-Ali's army and thus had an interest in, and knowledge of, the political and military situation in the region. It is unclear what information he asked Vernet to obtain, or whom he and Vernet visited – perhaps an official in the War Department? – but traces of this arrangement are found in his memoirs. Boyer recounted how Vernet's nephew Burton secretly made drawings and plans of the military installations at Acre when they passed through in January 1840. When a certain Fiorentino, the *major de place* attached to Mehmet-Ali's army, inadvertently discovered the plans, he reproached Vernet and Burton for compromising him and told them of the dangers they would have incurred if caught.⁵⁹ Burton's plans must have been among the things in Vernet's 'bags' destined for Boyer, as mentioned in the letter cited above.

Vernet's Orientalist genre scenes suggest none of these complexities, and instead project the image of a timeless, mythical world. With their highly finished surface and lavish, minutely rendered detail, they are extremely theatrical and contrived. Paintings such as *Rebecca at the well*, *Hagar banished by Abraham* and *Judah and Tamar* (Figs.40 and 42) have a sugary suaveness

⁴⁹ This encompassed modern-day Syria, Lebanon and part of Israel.

⁵⁰ For this history, see Vingtrinier, *op. cit.* (note 4), and Fahmy, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp.82–98.

⁵¹ 'Quant au pays qu'il gouverne, rien n'est moins certain qu'il le conserve, car il y est exécuté. Le pays est ruiné; les terres sont incultes par l'absence des paysans qui fuient à l'approche des agents du pacha; les insurrections se multiplient de toute part, et un revers éprouvé par l'armée serait le signal non-seulement d'un soulèvement général de la Syrie, mais aussi de l'Égypte, qui souffre des maux insupportables'; letter of 21st January 1840 (AMN P30); see Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.145.

⁵² 'Que nous mettions le pied sur le sol, et tout est en révolution. L'émir Béchir, prince de la montagne, commande à plus de cent mille chrétiens, qui souffrent de la domination égyptienne'; letter of 21st January 1840 (AMN P30). See Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.148. Although Bashir II was an ally of Mehmet-Ali, his Maronite forces revolted in May and June 1840. On the history of this period, see W. Harris: *Lebanon: A History*, 600–2011, Oxford 2012, chapter 3.

⁵³ 'rien n'est plus imposant que ces gros monstres marins à écailles de canons que les Anglais voudraient bien mettre dans la friture'; letter of 6th November 1839 (AMN P30); see *L'Illustration* (5th April 1856); Durande, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.126.

⁵⁴ 'Voici la réponse qu'il a faite au consul qui insistait sur la restitution de la flotte turque comme gage de la paix générale: vraiment, M. le consul, je ne reconnais pas les Français qui savent si bien faire la guerre et qui ne parlent plus que de la paix'; draft of the letter of 6th November

1839 (AMN P30). The passage is crossed out.

⁵⁵ 'J'ai pris la vue du pont et de la batterie au daguerreotype'; letter of 16th February 1840 (AMN P30); see *L'Illustration* (12th April 1856).

⁵⁶ *Voyage*, p.220.

⁵⁷ 'Dis au général Boyer que nous avons dans notre sac tout ce que nous avons promis de rapporter, qu'il peut assurer à la personne chez laquelle nous avons été ensemble que rien ne manquera à nos observations'; letter to his wife of 5th January 1840 (AMN P30).

⁵⁸ Renaudeau (no.139) identifies this figure correctly. The face matches Robert Lefevre's portrait of Pierre-François-Xavier exactly. Boyer had been part of Napoleon's Egyptian and Syrian expeditions in 1798–99. From 1831 to 1833 he had served as military governor of Oran, a post in which he was notorious for his extreme severity. In August 1839 he moved from active service to the army reserve.

⁵⁹ P.-F.-X. Boyer: *Historique de ma vie*, ed. J. Le Gallic-Holleaux and D. Paineau, Paris 1999, I, p.205: 'Fiorentino [...] était major de place à Saint-Jean-d'Acre, lorsque M. Horace Vernet et son neveu le capitaine du génie Burton y sont arrivés en 1840. Celui-ci, curieux de voir avec attention les travaux de tout genre de cette place célèbre dans l'Histoire, faisait de fréquentes tournées sur les remparts et dans tous les ouvrages de fortifications. Il rentrait chez lui et s'occupait de tracer ce qu'il avait observé, lorsque recevant inopinément la visite [de Fiorentino], celui-ci vit sur sa table le travail de ses investigations. Il eût pu faire un mauvais parti au neveu et à son oncle M. Horace Vernet, il se contenta de dire à l'un et à l'autre, combien ils le compromettaient et les

and, under their biblical veneer, an unsubtle eroticism that make them formulaic, even kitschy. In the critical literature they are considered standard examples of the conventions of Orientalism.⁶⁰ Part II of this article will explore the ways in which the

daguerreotypes and texts from the journey inflected this vision, revealing the image of a more complex 'Orient'. This view was more historicised and politicised, and it downplayed, sometimes unwittingly, the picturesque in favour of the real.

Appendix

Letters and notes by Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet and others relating to the 1839 trip to the Mediterranean made by Horace Vernet and Goupil-Fesquet. (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Estampes Réserve Z-88-4).⁶¹

1. Letter from Hector Horeau to Alphonse-Eugène Hubert, 13th September 1839.

[on verso] *M. Hubert, architecte, rue d'Enfer no. 33*
Mon cher Hubert, Tu fais des daguerréotypes avec les amis. Veux-tu permettre que Mr Goupil (qui va partir p[ou]r l'Orient et qui veut se perfectionner dans cette opération chimique) assiste à tes expériences? Tu lui rendras service ainsi qu'à ton vieux camarade. Hector Horeau, 13 7b 1839

2. Letter from Honorine-Zoé Goupil-Fesquet to Alphonse-Eugène Hubert, 14th October 1839.

[on verso] *à Monsieur/Monsieur Hubert, rue d'Enfer no. 33, Paris [postal stamp: 15 octobre 1839]*

*Paris, ce 14 octobre [1839]. Madame Goupil a l'honneur de saluer Monsieur Hubert et le prie de vouloir bien recevoir les excuses de son fils. Le départ de M. Vernet a été si précipité que M. Goupil, au milieu de tous les préparatifs du voyage, n'a pu trouver un instant pour aller jusqu'à chez M. Hubert prendre congé de lui; il a chargé sa mère de lui en témoigner tous ses regrets. Il aurait eu plaisir à causer du Daguerréotype; un des derniers conseils de *///M. Daguerré est d'user du tripoli de Venise pour le polissage des planches. M. Hubert voudra bien s'en rappeler à l'occasion. Rue de Clichy 50.*

3. Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet's notes on the daguerreotype process.

Notes de Goupil sur le Daguerréotype
Le 7 novembre 1839 j'ai fait à Alexandrie devant le pacha d'Égypte Méhémet-Ali, une belle épreuve de son harem en deux minutes ½ de 10 à 11 heures du matin.
 [in the margin] *Ciel parfaitement pur, objets blancs, toits rouges*⁶²
Le 16 du même mois, au Caire voulant opérer de la même manière et le ciel étant aussi pur, je n'obtins rien.
Le 20 j'ai très bien réussi les Pyramides et le sphinx, objets d'un jaune rougeâtre, en 9 minutes ½ à midi. Il faut laisser 10 et 11 [minutes] après midi.
 [in the margin] *Ciel pur, temps sec*⁶³
Le 23 de 7 à 8 h. du matin j'ai obtenu une belle épreuve dans la vallée des Califes aux portes du Caire en 11 m[inu]tes.
 [in the margin] *Ciel bleu, brume légère du matin*
Le 18 décembre à Jérusalem je fis des efforts infructueux, pour obtenir des épreuves, dans le même temps et les mêmes conditions d'atmosphère. J'obtins en 15 minutes à 11 heures une vue générale assez belle quoiqu'un peu sombre à cause de la couleur des objets; la présence de nuages intermittents ne laissait la lumière agir qu'à moitié pendant leur passage. Je réglais la marche de l'opération en bouchant l'objectif avec mon mouchoir pendant le passage des nuages.
Lorsqu'il neige on n'obtient jamais de très beaux résultats à cause des blancs qui sont dévorés de suite par la lumière et tourment en bleu.
*Les fonds éloignés ne viennent jamais très nets, ainsi les montagnes ne laissent qu'une silhouette sans beaucoup de détails. J'ai observé que la valeur de la neige sur un fond de ciel n'est jamais aussi tranchée que dans la nature.*⁶⁴
Lorsqu'il fait du brouillard il faut laisser de 15 à 30 minutes suivant que le soleil le traverse ou non. J'ai obtenu à Malte une vue de brouillard dans 17 minutes à 10 h[eur]es du matin, le soleil répandant

dangers qu'ils eussent courus tous trois si quelques officiers ou soldats de la garnison égyptienne les eût [sic] aperçus'.

⁶⁰ For example, see C. Peltre: *Orientalism in Art*, transl. J. Goodman, New York 1998.

⁶¹ Acquired in 2011. I thank Sylvie Aubenas, Director of the Département des estampes et de la photographie, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, for calling these to my attention.

⁶² See A.-E. Hubert: *Le Daguerréotype considéré sous un point de vue artistique, mécanique et pittoresque*, Paris 1840, p.31: '[Les images] réussissent aussi presque toujours sur les bords de la mer, à la fin des orages et pendant les pluies intermittentes où l'atmosphère n'est pas trop humide. Elles se font moins aisément par un temps trop sec; ainsi, sur le sable brillant de l'Égypte, il a fallu quinze minutes pour faire les pyramides, tandis qu'à Alexandrie, qui est sur le bord de la mer, il ne fallait que deux minutes et demie. Cette dernière vue, que M. Goupil faisait devant le pacha d'Égypte, Méhémet-Ali, le 7 novembre 1839, à 10h et demie du matin, par un ciel parfaitement pur, représente le harem, dont les murs sont blancs et les toits rouges'.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.31–32: 'Les plus belles réussites des épreuves faites en Égypte par cet artiste ont presque toujours lieu dans les copies de statues colossales en granité, ou de monuments colorés; le contraste du blanc se détachant vivement dans la nature sur un fond bleu très intense, disparaît, parce que les bâtiments blancs se font presque aussi vite que le ciel qui est très-lumineux, et l'épreuve devient non-seulement monotone, mais est privée de son caractère et de la teinte locale

*une grande lumière quoique diffuse et les objets étant très éclairés, avec ombres vagues et sans force. A bord du paquebot français le Rhamses, allant de Smyrne à Malte par une mer un peu houleuse, ciel très pur, à 11h ½ j'ai obtenu une magnifique épreuve avec 4 portraits parfaitement réussis sur le premier plan ayant eu soin de fixer préalablement l'instrument sur le pont en l'attachant solidement.*⁶⁵

*J'ai toujours remarqué que les épreuves obtenues au bord de la mer m'avaient partout très bien réussi.*⁶⁶

A Rome où le temps était humide et les nuages intermittents j'ai eu beaucoup de peine. Il fallait laisser agir la lumière plus longtemps; ainsi le matin j'ai obtenu une belle épreuve à 9 h[eu]res, temps gris, en 20 minutes. Les arbres, la verdure se rendant parfaitement par un temps bien calme, il est nécessaire d'ioler plus fortement la plaque pour un paysage et d'éviter un site où les blancs des fabriques soient très éclatants. Le ciel couvert et la fin de la journée vers 3 h[eu]res sont les meilleures conditions pour obtenir des détails très nets et le modelé des masses d'ombre. J'ai obtenu à 4 heures dans 32 minutes, temps couvert, la villa Borghèse parfaitement réussie. J'attribue la beauté des épreuves maritimes à l'action de l'air salin qui détruit l'iode en même temps que la lumière et facilite en ce sens l'opération.

4. Letter from Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet to Alphonse-Eugène Hubert, 8th May 1840.

[on verso] *Monsieur/Monsieur Hubert, architecte, rue d'Enfer no.33, Paris. [Postal stamp: 8 mai 1840]*

*Monsieur, Parmi les petites notes que j'ai eu l'avantage de vous communiquer, j'ai oublié de signaler un léger perfectionnement applicable à la chambre obscure pour vérifier si elle a été bien solidement installée sur un plan fixe et invariable, ce qui est très nécessaire avant d'opérer. N'ayant pas de pied pendant mon voyage, pour braquer mon Daguerréotype je m'installais tant bien que mal par terre en calant l'appareil avec des pierres que le hasard me fournissait; pour juger de sa fixité lorsqu'il faisait du vent, je plaçais dessus un petit flacon plein d'eau dont l'oscillation m'avertissait de la solidité plus ou moins grande de l'appareil. Il faudrait pour bien faire un petit niveau d'eau (ou de mercure) adhérent à la chambre obscure et logé convenablement dans le coulant de la chambre. Ce petit détail n'est pas tout à fait sans importance pour la netteté des épreuves qu'on fait en plein vent. C'est pourquoi, Monsieur, j'ai cru devoir le soumettre à votre bon jugement.*⁶⁷

Je serais bien aise si vous vouliez, dans la brochure que vous allez publier, faire mention de mon nom comme peintre élève d'Horace Vernet et ayant eu l'honneur de l'accompagner dans son voyage en Orient. Ce n'est pas pour moi une affaire d'amour-propre car je n'ai rien fait jusqu'à présent qui fut digne de fixer l'attention du public, mais ma mère en sera heureuse. J'espère donc, Monsieur, que vous me pardonnerez ma démarche.

*Notre célèbre peintre de marine Gudin avait emporté un Daguerréotype, et ni lui ni ses compagnons n'ont eu la patience ou la persévérance de s'en servir pendant leur voyage en Orient, de manière que je puis dire sans me vanter que je suis le premier qui ait fait en Orient des expériences suivies et le premier aussi à signaler l'inconvénient immense des boîtes de bois dans les transports en pays éloignés en mer, en voiture, etc.*⁶⁸ *Il n'y a aucun talent à faire ce que j'ai fait mais il y a eu persévérance et patience, choses assez rares chez les artistes.*

Adieu, Monsieur, excusez, je vous prie, mon indiscretion et veuillez agréer en même temps l'assurance de mon respect et de mon sincère dévouement.

J'ai bien, Monsieur, l'honneur de vous saluer.

Frédéric Goupil

Paris, ce 8 mai 1840

du pays. Il en est de même pour certains effets de neige. Ainsi, dans une vue de Damas, le mont Liban qui servait de fond se détachait de la nature en blanc pur sur un ciel très-bleu, parce qu'il était couvert de neige; tandis que, dans l'épreuve, les tons de la neige et du ciel bleu, ayant agi avec la même intensité de lumière, étaient presque confondus'.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.20–21: 'Il ne faut pas oublier que la condition d'immobilité de la chambre noire pendant qu'elle opère, et par conséquent de la stabilité du pied sur lequel elle repose, est de la dernière importance pour la netteté des images. [...] Avec une chambre noire solidement fixée sur le pont d'un bâtiment en marche, on peut, malgré le mouvement, reproduire avec exactitude les détails si compliqués des agrès et de la mâture. C'est ainsi que M. Goupil, élève de M. Horace Vernet, qui accompagnait cet artiste dans son voyage en Orient, est parvenu, dans la traversée de Smyrne à Malte, sur le navire français le Ramsès, à faire, un peu avant midi, une vue du pont dans laquelle se trouvent quatre portraits en pied, dont deux d'une réussite parfaite'.

⁶⁶ See note 62.

⁶⁷ See note 65.

⁶⁸ Théodore Gudin had travelled to Persia via Greece and Constantinople in 1839. To my knowledge, it was not previously known that he had taken along daguerreotype equipment. Goupil-Fesquet did not mention de Lotbinière, who shared with him the honour of being first (see note 8). As for the 'immense drawback' of wooden daguerreotype boxes, de Lotbinière stated that it took two camels to carry the travellers' equipment; Joly de Lotbinière, *op. cit.* (note 8) pp.155–56.