

**A passion for drapery?**

**Situating Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault's photographs from Morocco**

**(1919)**

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Elisabeth Schneider

School of Philosophy and Art History

University of Essex

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## Abstract

This thesis explores the corpus of photographs produced by French psychiatrist Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault in Morocco in 1919. Best known in Western academia for his "De Clérambault Syndrome," also known as "Erotomania," and for being the only recognized 'master' of Jacques Lacan, Clérambault's character has fascinated scholars as much for his psychiatric *Oeuvre* and his methods at the Paris police's Special Infirmary, as for his non-medical activities, including the courses he delivered on drapery at the Ecole National Supérieur des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Due to his connection to Lacan and his psychiatric research, especially *Passion érotique chez la femme* (1908), Clérambault and his images have primarily been studied within the context of psychoanalysis and fetishism, and exhibited with little critical commentary. In contrast to this existing body of work, my thesis aims to rectify the misinterpreted facets of Clérambault's life, which are tightly linked to the interpretation of his corpus of photographs. By providing, an accurate account of Clérambault's life, era, and influences, this thesis will re-situate the images within their histories, and initial purposes and, in turn reveal how they should be understood. Structured in three clear sections – the Orientalist discourse, drapery, and art history, and 20th century psychiatry – this thesis offers a new perceptive and thorough analysis of Clérambault's Morocco photographs and places this corpus within the wider canon of the history of art and of photography.

## **Covid-19 Impact Statement**

While the bulk of my research was carried out before the outbreak of the pandemic, the final stage of this project was significantly disrupted by the lack of access to resources. This was due to the closure of libraries and limitations of online access to the relevant materials. Furthermore, the Europe-wide travel restrictions meant that my final trip to the Clérambault archives in Paris had to be cancelled.

## **Acknowledgements**

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To my dearest parents and sister, without whom none of this would have been possible, I am forever grateful for everything you have done and still continue to do! Finally, the biggest thank you goes to my amazing husband, for always believing in me and standing by my side during the ups and the downs of this project.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction, Method and General Discussion

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I first stumbled across the work of Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault when flicking through *Images of Women: the portrayal of women in photography of the Middle East, 1860-1950*, written by Sarah Graham-Brown.<sup>1</sup> At the time, my research was centred on the disparity between early and contemporary depictions of veiled women in photographs. Clérambault's images appeared amongst a sea of colonial photographs captured by Western photographers during their visits to the Middle East. Though clearly belonging to the body of Orientalist photography of the 20th Century, the images stunned me as being completely different from anything I had ever come across before.

*Le costume drapé* (see figure 1.1) particularly caught my attention. Set amidst Orientalist décor with floors and walls made of earthenware tile, a completely veiled woman stands next to a metal teapot and tray leaning against the wall. She is standing in contrapposto, slightly tilting her head towards the wall, her right hand hidden by the veil which she holds towards her chin. She is looking directly into the camera in a seductive or perhaps even provocative manner, more resonant of Western nudes than other representations of the demure of veiled women familiar to modern eyes. This image is strange, surprising and beguiling. It seems to defy conventional expectations of images of the Oriental woman completely. The veiled subject is engaging and charming the viewer with her enticing pose while remaining entirely hidden under a large and all-encompassing white veil. What is the story behind this bizarre and compelling image? The more I researched Clérambault's photographs and his life, the more intriguing and fascinating he became.

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<sup>1</sup> S. Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950* (London: Quartet Books, 1988), 134-135.

Clérambault is perhaps best known to Western academics for his description of the so-called "De Clérambault Syndrome," also known as "Erotomania," – a rare psychological condition in that occurs when a person becomes fixated on the fact that another person is madly in love with them – but he is also well known for being one of the major influences and only recognized "master" of the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901-1981).<sup>2</sup> Clérambault's character has fascinated scholars as much for his psychiatric Oeuvre and his methods at the Paris police's Special Infirmary, as for his non-medical activities, including the courses he gave on drapery at the Ecole National Supérieur des Beaux-Art in Paris.<sup>3</sup>

On 17 November 1934, Gaëtan de Clérambault, at age 62, took his own life in his home in Malakoff by shooting himself in the mouth. Poetically for the psychiatrist who taught Lacan, he did so while sitting on an armchair and facing a mirrored wardrobe. Clérambault was surrounded by what the press described as "a strange collection of wax figures that he enjoyed dressing in rare fabric" or "little plaster statues that he looked after with a jealous tenderness."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed analysis of Erotomania can be found in Chapter 4; J. Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966).

<sup>3</sup> Most of the studies were published by *Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond* and *Le Plessis-Robinson; Institut Synthélabo* in the 1990s and 2000s. G. G. de Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2002).; G. G. Clérambault, *L'Érotomanie* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2002).; G. G. de Clérambault, *Souvenirs d'un médecin opéré de la cataracte* (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, Laboratoires Delagrangé, 1992).; G. G. de Clérambault, *Oeuvres psychiatriques* (Paris: Frénésies, 1987).; S. Tisseron, *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: psychiatre et photographe* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1990); E. Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)* (Paris: Les Laboratoires Delagrangé/Synthiabo, 1992); A. Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]* (Paris: Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, 1998).; M. Girard, H. Maurel, P. Moron and S. Tisseron, *Clérambault maître de Lacan* (Paris: Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> "Étrange collection de mannequins de cire qu'il se plaisait à habiller avec des étoffes rares."; "Statuettes de plâtre qu'il entretenait avec une tendresse jalouse." *Excelsior* (20th November 1934), 1. Unless noted otherwise, all translation have been completed by me.



The event was a scandal that raised many questions and filled the French newspapers for over two weeks. The *Figaro* wondered if madness was contagious.<sup>5</sup> The *Oeuvre* focused on his evident mental distress and speculated whether Clérambault's proximity to madness at the Special Infirmary drove him to his mysterious death.<sup>6</sup> The circumstances of Clérambault's passing paved the way for the most outrageous and often disgraceful speculations. No serious investigation was ever conducted, but people were convinced that the psychiatrist indulged in bizarre and lewd practices.

Scholarship on Clérambault has tended to accentuate the sensational features of his biography rather than carefully consider his life and work. The medical thesis of Elizabeth Renard, for example, written in 1942 entitled *Le Docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, sa vie son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, was at the origin of many of the myths surrounding Clérambault. Whilst Renard does seek to paint a sympathetic image of the psychiatrist, her work is also full of embellishment.<sup>7</sup> Since its publication, a significant number of Renard's claims have been questioned due to the dubiousness of her sources, as her account is primarily built on oral accounts of Clérambault's surroundings and testimony from the last living members of his family. For example, Renard was at the origin of the claim that Clérambault supposedly captured "forty thousand photographs" during a "convalescing" stay in Morocco.<sup>8</sup> However, this claim is not true – Clérambault announced having taken around 5'000 photographs in his *Introduction à l'Étude des costumes drapes indigènes (Introduction to the study of Indigenous*

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<sup>5</sup> “Le docteur Clérambault médecin chef de l’infirmerie spéciale du Dépôt s’est donné la mort.” In *Le Figaro* (20th November 1934): 1-2.

<sup>6</sup> “M. de Clérambault médecin-chef du Dépôt s’est donné la mort dans des circonstances fort étranges.” in *L’Œuvre* (20th November 1934): 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> The thesis was republished after the surge of interest for Clérambault – his work and life - following the “rediscovery” of his photographs.

<sup>8</sup> E. Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)* (Paris: Les Laboratoires Delagrang/Synthiabo, 1992), 90.

*draperies*), which he presented at the second Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art in 1921. Today, only 1000 images constitute the Clérambault collection of the musée du quai Branly- Jacques Chirac in Paris. Even though many of the misinformed statements have been refuted since, namely by Clérambault's second biographer Alain Rubens in *Le maîtres des insensés, Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault (1998)*, the misconceptions about Clérambault have persisted throughout time. Renard's claim of the forty thousand photographs but especially the reason for the psychiatrist's presence in Morocco is still occasionally mentioned in current medical journals.<sup>9</sup>

Clérambault's intriguing and unusual occupations and what have been termed "fascinations for the cloth" (*fascination de l'étoffe*) have even inspired Yvon Marciano to produce his 1996 film: *Le cri de la soie*. The main character of the film, Dr. Gabriel de Willemer – clearly modelled after Clérambault – tells the story of a police psychiatrist who convalesced in Morocco, took photographs, was fascinated by draperies, and ultimately ended his life by committing suicide due to his blindness. The film revolves around the doctor's sexual relationship with one of his female patients, a 28-years-old seamstress who shoplifts and masturbates with stolen silken fabric. The poster of the film shows Dr. de Willemer and his patient, Marie, interlinked on a bed surrounded by silken draperies and cloths, with the dramatic lighting accentuating the deep blue, gold, and white in a manner that is reminiscent of a Baroque oil painting (see Figure 1.2).

In contrast to this existing body of work, my thesis aims to rectify the misinformed knowledge on Clérambault's life, which is tightly linked to the interpretation of his corpus of photographs created in Morocco in 1919. By providing – as far as we know – an accurate account of

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<sup>9</sup> Most recently Lerner, V. and E. Witztum in "Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, 1872–1934." *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 197, no. 5 (2018): 442, claimed that Clérambault took approximately 30'000 photographs as part of a research project in hysteria.

Clérambault's life, era, and influences, this thesis will re-situate the images within its historical background and suggest new ways in which they should be understood.

## 1.1 Introduction to the corpus

This thesis focuses solely upon the enigmatic photographs taken by Clérambault in Morocco in 1919, and which are currently conserved at the Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac in Paris. The corpus of images comprises over 1000 prints systematically documenting the haik - a form of traditional Moroccan drapery – through photographs of men and women posing inside Clérambault's Moroccan home and snapshots taken in Moroccan streets. Clérambault's photographs stun as being appealing yet in a way disturbing, documentary but also remarkably aestheticized – perhaps even beautiful.

By way of introduction to the images themselves, I want to first briefly look closely at some of Clérambault's photographs in order to make my opening case for the strangeness and uniqueness of this corpus of images. There are several visual themes that recur throughout – the portrayal of completely veiled and partly veiled figures both as individual prints or as part of a series. The analysis of three images will guide us through them. The first photograph, worth discussing here, is entitled *Silhouette drape* [draped silhouette] (see Figure 1.3). The image is representative of a large part of the aesthetic of Clérambault's photographs.<sup>10</sup> It shows an unknown figure whose body is largely invisible and almost entirely wrapped in a large white cloth. Though the viewer might not be able to identify this silhouette, it appears to be staring straight at us through the eye-opening. The brightness of the veil clearly separates the figure from its surroundings, which in this case is a large wooden door embellished with mosaic

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<sup>10</sup> Most of Clérambault's photographs are entitled *Untitled* and generally followed by a brief description of the images. Though some images carry a little, it is difficult to pinpoint whether they were given by Clérambault or by the institutions that archived them.

squares. The photograph is soft in focus and seems to prioritise the beauty of the subject matter and the perfection of composition over its documentation, emanating pictorialism aesthetics and principles. This image belongs to the many individual images of the corpus portraying figures completely covered by a white, all-encompassing cloth and striking various poses.

In turning another photograph by Clérambault, we are introduced to the second set of individual images – those where the face of the model is visible. Immediately, we note how different the photographic representations appear when the face of the subject is visible. For instance, *Sans Titre (femme drapée) [Untitled, Veiled woman]* (see Figure 1.4) shows a woman once again looking at the camera. Here a whole new reading opens up, the exotic female body is hidden away from all sight – except that of the photographer and the viewer – as she offers herself to the European male gaze by unveiling herself. However, if we look closer at her bodily gesture, her concentrated facial expression suggests a different story: namely, that this photograph does not show the unveiling of the female subject's body – as is a common theme within other Orientalist photography depicting women – as I will discuss later, but rather, the veiling of her body. In short, this photograph demonstrates the difficult manoeuvre required by the hands, arms, and head involved in assembling the haik on the body. Furthermore, this photograph was taken out of its original context. In its original form, it belongs to a pair showing how the haik is fastened around the head (see Figure 1.5). However, when seeing these photographs as a diptych, we start to question Clérambault's control of the medium. This pair aimed at showcasing a progression in veiling might indeed do so but it is visually exemplified by two very different images: the photograph on the left is overexposed, unfocused and photographed from the left and at a distance whereas the image on the right is in soft focus, closer to the model and photographed from the right. The model on the other hand appears to remain at the same place.

Following the general trend established by Renard and others of viewing Clérambault as a fetishist and as a victim of madness, these photographs have been seen as fetish images, providing evidence of Clérambault's fixation upon the cloth. However, we might begin to challenge this supposition by noting the systematic nature of Clérambault's photography. Christian Metz has argued that a single photograph has far more potential to be seen in a fetishist way than an image in a film sequence.<sup>11</sup> While Clérambault's photographic series are not truly cinematic, they do nonetheless attempt to represent a process occurring in time, rather than a frozen moment to be viewed on its own.

Though the largest part of corpus is dedicated photographs of women, Clérambault capture men, women and children wearing the North African haik. The photographs demonstrate how to put the haik on, while also showing how the clothes work once, they are correctly assembled on the body, indicating on Clérambault's part interest in trying to understand the movements and structures of this drapery, and to understand its being, in a manner that appears to transcend or go beyond what we commonly understand to be characteristic of a fetishist fixation on the cloth. For instance, *Homme Drapé* [drapped man] is one of the many examples of Clérambault's collection intended to show drapery and the gestures required to assemble it as part of a *sequence* (see Figure 1.6). The series of five photographs mounted together present this time a man, face unveiled and set against a dark sheet used as background for the photograph, showing different moments in the process of putting on and wearing the haik. This time, the photographs appeared to be taken only seconds from each other in order to provide a rigorous recording of the precise step-by-step required to fasten the haik on the body. The

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<sup>11</sup> C. Metz, "Photography and the Fetish," *The critical images*, ed. C. Squiers (Seattle: Bay Press, 1990), 155-164.

exposure and lighting appear to be more controlled and the gestures as well as the fold are in clear focus.

This serial set provides us with the final recurrent visual themes that can be found throughout the corpus: the series of images showing the covering or veiling of the body with the haik. Thinking of Clérambault's photography as sequential, and his depictions of the veil as illustrative of the act of assembling the haik. is immediately indicative, in line with Metz's analysis, that an interpretation of the photographs as straightforwardly fetishist perhaps misses something in the attempt to understand what motivated them.

As it turns out, Clérambault's photographic Oeuvre has already been a source of fascination for its viewers, both researchers and visitors alike.<sup>12</sup> However, the literature is limited and oftentimes only focuses on the photographs as singular images and not as belonging to a series or a corpus of images, and even less as being an integral part of Clérambault's lifelong work.<sup>13</sup> Thus, it quickly emerged from my research that a comprehensive study of Clérambault's entire

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<sup>12</sup> S. Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950* (London: Quartet Books, 1988); *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault : Psychiatre et Photographe*, Edited by S. Tisseron (Paris : Laboratoires Delagrangé, 1990), Exhibition catalogue.; Y. Papetti, F. Valier, B. De Freminville and S. Tisseron, *La passion des étoffes chez un neuro-psychiatre. Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault* (Paris: Solin, 1981).; *Veil, Veiling, Representation, and Contemporary Art*, Edited by D. A. Bailey and F. Tawadros, (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, Modern Art Oxford, 2003), Exhibition Catalogue.; *Sous le drap, le Temps des plis*, Edited by E. D. Allemand, C. Buci-Glucksmann, C., and Y. Courbès (Tourcoing: Musée des beaux-arts de Toucoing, 2002), Exhibiton catalogue.; T. B. Jelloun, A. d'Hooghe, and M. Sijelmassi, eds., *Le désir du Maroc* (Paris: Marval, 2000); C. Örmén, ed., *Corps drapés autour de la Méditerranée*, (Marseille : Musée de Marseille, 1994).; G. Doy, *Drapery, Classicism and Barbarism in Visual Culture* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002); A. Lacour, "Documenter la "draperie vivante". Pour une réévaluation des photographies marocaines de Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault (1918-1919)," *Transbordeur. Photographie histoire société*, no.3, (2019): 146-159.; N. Vasseur, *Les plis* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2002). ; *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* Edited by E. Pagliano and S. Ramond, Paris : Lienart, 2019. Exhibiton Catalogue.

<sup>13</sup> Applies to the publications cited in footnote 3 and 12.

body of photographic work was missing. The aim of this thesis is, therefore, to situate the corpus of images realized by Clérambault in Morocco in context, and in turn to develop a more thorough critical analysis of them, in the process offering a deeper explanation for his interest in the veil beyond those that dominate existing criticism. There are also lessons to be learned from this analysis for wider histories of Orientalist photography and its link to the contexts of the intersecting spheres of colonial administration, medical education, and art in the period. In the following section of this introductory chapter, a brief overview will be offered.

## **1.2 Structural introduction: Reinscribing ‘permeability’ in Clérambault**

The main object of this thesis is to understand Clérambault’s life, the influences that shaped him, his own professed outlook, and how each of these considerations may be seen to have shaped his photographic practice. In order to do so, this thesis will concentrate its analysis on three discursive contexts that, more than any other, shaped his approach to photography: the context of Orientalist discourse, the art historical context, and the context of his psychiatric work. This thesis will thus divide into three parts that will explore each of these domains.

The exploration of two main archives in Paris – the Musée du Quai Branly- Jacques Chirac for Clérambault's photographs and the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle for Clérambault's writings and collectibles – has provided the archive and, in turn the primary basis for the analysis to be developed in this study. At the end of the 1980s, at the occasion of a collective publication, a group of psychiatrists rediscovered the existence of Clérambault’s photographs of Moroccan veils at the Musée de l’Homme in Paris.<sup>14</sup> Amongst them, Serge Tisseron recognised the alarming condition of Clérambault’s prints. With the help of the Bibliothèque Publique

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<sup>14</sup>Y. Papetti, F. Valier, B. De Freminville and S. Tisseron, *La passion des étoffes chez un neuropsychiatre. Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault* (Paris: Solin, 1981).

d'Information (BIP) in Beaubourg and of the Laboratoire Delagrangé, Clérambault's photographs were restored and publicly shown in an exhibition entitled *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographe* in 1990 at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.<sup>15</sup> In the published materials and press content accompanying this exhibition, it was suggested that the collection of photography had been kept secret by Clérambault, adding another layer of mystery to the images. This, then, provides an explanation for the assemblage of the Clérambault archive and how his work has come to light. Reflecting on the *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographe* exhibition also, however, gives us an opportunity to reflect upon how Clérambault's work has been received, and in a sense, therefore, of the general reaction to Clérambault's work against which this thesis is defined.

In the postscript to Renard's thesis, Philippe Pignarre stressed the awaiting difficulties for all those who in the future might seek to assemble the fragmented work of Clérambault and spoke of an "impermeability between the psychiatry activities of Clérambault, the photographic work [...] and his activities as a Professor at the Beaux-Arts."<sup>16</sup> Clearly, in order to understand these photographs, it is necessary to be able to establish the link between Clérambault's multiple different identities and activities. Simultaneously, it is necessary to refrain from abstracting the images from their historical context and attempt to situate them in the context in which they were born, as without doing so, Clérambault's photographs can easily be subjected to interpretation far removed from the original intentions of their author. Instead, therefore, of immediately assuming that these photographs are the by-product of a fetishist's secret fixation, we might ask ourselves: Whom were they made for? And what was their purpose? These, then,

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<sup>15</sup> *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault : Psychiatre et Photographe*, Edited by S. Tisseron (Paris : Laboratoires Delagrangé, 1990), Exhibition catalogue.

<sup>16</sup> "Étanchéité entre l'activité de psychiatre, celle de photographe [...], celle de professeur des Beaux-Arts" in P. Pignarre, "L'actualité de de Clérambault." in Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 196.



are the questions that have informed the decision to develop a thesis that takes an archival and a historicist approach, challenging critical assumptions about Clérambault in order to develop a sense of the contextual factors that shaped his work and to challenge the assumption that his interest in the veil is the by-product of a simple fetish. To be clear: I do not propose a strictly instrumentalist reading of his photographs, but rather, that the intersecting instrumental contexts of their initial production challenges more limited analyses in which these beguiling pictures are untethered from their historical, institutional and material contexts.

The remainder of this chapter present the primary themes of this thesis and situating the contextual factors that this thesis will be exploring. Clérambault's biography looms large over the project and creates an important narrative that is suggestive of the chosen methodology. Thus, the first section will explore Clérambault's life and, in particular, the circumstances surrounding his time in North Africa and his decision to document the North African haik using photography. This analysis will begin with a passage offering an outline of Clérambault's life, drawing on existing biographical studies and Clérambault's own account in his written materials. This section will, in particular, focus on the conditions that led the young Clérambault to pursue a medical career, having previously been interested in becoming an artist. Following this, Clérambault's experiences in North Africa will be documented. His military postings in Morocco and Tunisia will be accounted for, together with efforts to determine how he came first to use photography in these localities to document veiled culture. In the course of this analysis, Clérambault's status as a representative of colonial forces will be acknowledged, along with an account of how he complied with this wider imperialist agenda. Having thus situated Clérambault's work within the context of his visits to North Africa, this introductory essay will then proceed to place Clérambault within the context of Orientalism, in

the process outlining the argument that will be developed in Chapter Two of this thesis, in which Clérambault's relation to Orientalist discourse will be more fully considered.

The following section of this introductory essay will establish Clérambault's interest in art history and how his work might be situated within this context. It will provide the key themes that will be explored in Chapter Three of this thesis focusing on Clérambault's exploration of draperies within the context of art history.

The second part of this introductory chapter will focus on the analysis of the existing literature as well as on the various critical responses to Clérambault's photography. Above all, this will be achieved by considering four exhibitions of Clérambault's photography that have presented his work: namely, *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* at the musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon., *Sous le drap, le temps des plis* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Tourcoing, the *Le désir du Maroc* exhibition at the Hôtel de Sully in Paris and the *Corps drapés autour de la Méditerranée* exhibition held at the Musée de la Mode in Marseille. In the investigation of these four exhibitions, it will be suggested that the exhibitions are indicative of how Clérambault's photography is generally viewed, as they embody a broad inclination to pathologize Clérambault's interest in the drapery by depicting it as the by-product of a fetish. Having considered four exhibitions of Clérambault's, this section will be followed by a section that will analyse efforts to interpret Clérambault's photographic work in relation to this role as a psychoanalyst, and his relation to Jacques Lacan, in particular by exploring Joan Copjec's essay "The Sartorial Superego," found in her book on *Read My Desire, Lacan against the Historicist*<sup>17</sup>. Here it will be argued that although Copjec goes some way to drawing attention

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<sup>17</sup> J. Copjec, *Read my Desire, Lacan against the Historicist* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1995), 65-116.

towards discursive influences that shaped Clérambault's image making practice, her analysis fails to move beyond a determination to pathologize Clérambault's photography rather than accepting that it may have been the by-product of an array of discursive influences.

Following this, a more detailed analysis will be offered of the relationship between Clérambault's psychiatric practice and his photographic practice, which will be explored in Chapter Four of this thesis. In particular, this section will aim to illustrate the cause of Clérambault's influence on Jacques Lacan while also proposing that the underlying principle behind the idea of mental automatism has been seen by critics to be reflected in Clérambault's photographic practice. Against this, I will argue that the privileging of Clérambault's psychiatric practice over and above his photographic practice is unwarranted, because his photographic practice and his psychiatric practice are, in fact, part of a single unified whole. The final section will consider Gilles Deleuze's *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* and his suggestion that Clérambault's work can be interpreted as indicating a through-line to a conception of the interconnectedness of reality attributable to the Baroque period and to the philosophy of Leibniz.

Finally, the remaining sections of this chapter will provide a detailed account of my methodology and overview of the chapters. Moreover, it will lay out the contribution to the existing field of knowledge by representing a new approach to understanding the work of Clérambault.

### **1.3 The Life of Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault**

This section aims to provide an understanding of the persona of Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault partly by way of an introduction to this study, but also in order to help us ascertain the specific

areas we must look into if we are to develop a contextual analysis of his work. Some anecdotes will help provide a snapshot into the mind of the man that will later create the corpus of images at the heart of the study.

Gaëtan Henri Alfred Edouard Léon Marie Gatian de Clérambault was born on the 2nd of July 1872 in Bourges, France where his father Édouard de Clérambault fulfilled the duties of registration inspector. The Clérambault family was not related to the Marshal Philippe de Clérambault (1606-1665) nor to the musician and composer Louis-Nicolas Clérambault (1676-1749), both distinguished figures in seventeenth-century France. However, Gaëtan de Clérambault's family were direct relatives of Renée Descartes (1596-1650) through the philosopher's mother<sup>18</sup>. In 1868, Édouard married a young lady from the upper echelons of the aristocracy: Valentine de Saint Chaman, a distant relative to both the French Romantic writer, poet, and novelist Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863) and the dramatist and poet Alfred de Musset (1810-1857). Together, the couple had three children: the eldest, Marie (was two years older than Gaëtan and tragically died at the age of seven years old), Gaëtan, and eight years later, Roger.

The young Clérambault was no prodigy. Nonetheless, according to Alain Rubens, he was a lively and mischievous little boy, thirsty for knowledge and competent at most things he put his mind to.<sup>19</sup> Already at the age of two, Clérambault was able to speak flawless French with a wide vocabulary. Enthusiastic and hardworking, he begged his mother to teach him how to read. In only one month, the young boy not only knew all the letters and numbers but could

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<sup>18</sup> A. Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]* (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo, 1999), 24-25.

<sup>19</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 29.

also assemble them without much difficulty.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, his rapid progress was abruptly interrupted by his declining health. From relatively harmless illnesses that most children suffered to the terrible eye, heart, and stomach pains, Clérambault's mother recalled "the doctor was continuously consulted" about his health.<sup>21</sup> The reason for his suffering, argued Rubens, was activated by the sudden loss of his beloved eldest sister, Marie. Following this traumatic incident, Clérambault suffered from a succession of physical and psychological episodes (with unknown duration and frequency) over a period of two years. Renard suggested that Clérambault's torments must have been of neurotic order because hydrotherapy seems to have eradicated his symptoms.<sup>22</sup> Another and certainly more plausible cause for his recovery was the passing of time.<sup>23</sup> Life resumed its course with Clérambault now assuming the role of the eldest child and now old enough to read and write, discovering a passion for drawing and exhibiting a vigorous interest in religion. Clérambault excelled in his catechisms, which gave him the privilege of being allowed to wear the red toga granted to altar boys.<sup>24</sup> During the ceremonies, there is some suggestion that Clérambault seemed to be troubled. For example, in her doctoral thesis, Elizabeth Renard recounted the day of Corpus-Christi, pointing out that the little boy attracted all the attention of the congregation with his severe and concentrated face: totally absorbed by the slow and rhythmic oscillation of the religious procession.<sup>25</sup>

For Gaëtan's secondary education, the Clérambault's spared no expense by enrolling their boy at the distinguished Collège Stanislas in Paris, where he focused on humanities until studying

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<sup>20</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 30.

<sup>21</sup> Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 36.

<sup>22</sup> Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault (1872-1934)*, 36.

<sup>23</sup> J. Postel, "Deuil" in *Dictionnaire de Psychiatrie et de psychopathologie Clinique* (Paris: Larousse, 1993). The pathologic grief is defined by the inability to work through grief despite the passage of time and by can last several years.

<sup>24</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 34.

<sup>25</sup> Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 38.

for his Baccalaureate. During his time at the Stanislas, Clérambault struggled with his conduct and, at times, failed to live up to the standard expected by his teachers. Nonetheless, the gifted yet intractable youth obtained a diploma with flying colours. With uncertainties concerning his future taking hold of him, Clérambault took a long time deliberating over what he wished to do with his life. At this time in the young man's life, art seemed to have taken over all his time and energy. Literature fascinated him: he ceaselessly wrote and learned verses. However, it was a painting that truly captured the young Clérambault's imagination. He, therefore, decided to enrol at the École National des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he worked under the direction of the French painter and illustrator Luc-Olivier Merson (1846-1920).<sup>26</sup> One of Clérambault's closest friends, the painter M. de L. who knew the young Clérambault when he was at the Beaux-Arts, recalled with admiration the artistic gifts of his classmate: "He drew wonderfully and had a true sense of colour and shapes. He made an admirable art critic".<sup>27</sup> Although brilliantly succeeding in the study of drawing, Clérambault abruptly interrupted his artistic training upon the advice of his father, who believed the time had come for his son to start a *real* career. Clérambault always had a great admiration for his father and so followed his advice by entering into law school. There, he obtained his license to practice in 1892. He was then just twenty years old when before even being able to embark on a professional career as a lawyer, he was called upon to join the army. Clérambault joined the 51st infantry regiment station in Beauvais, northern France, in the same year. He subsequently completed his military service

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<sup>26</sup> Rubens noted that since the publication of Elizabeth Renard's thesis, it has been established that Clérambault attended the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs. However, Rubens' extended research found no trace of Merson's class in this establishment. Clérambault must have therefore not been taught at the Beaux-Arts where the painter spent his entire career. Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 43-45.

<sup>27</sup> "Il dessinait à merveille et il avait le sens juste de la couleur et de la forme. Il fut un critique d'art admirable." In Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 42. There are no speculations on who M. de L. could be.

with ease, and the required obedience did not seem to bother him. In fact, his exemplary behaviour saw that he was rewarded with a certificate of good conduct.<sup>28</sup>

In the meantime, Clérambault's chosen vocation had finally become clear: he was to be a doctor. There was undoubtedly a central theme linking his drawing lessons at the Beaux-Arts and his transition to medicine: anatomy. From the very beginning of his academic career, Clérambault had exhibited the desire to know more about the surfaces and the volumes that made the human body.<sup>29</sup> Just as he later became obsessed with the workings of the drapery, so the young Clérambault had an appetite for knowledge about the layout, the functioning and the mechanisms behind the human body.

#### 1.4 Clérambault and North Africa

Having achieved a certain status within the medical profession, he decided to allow himself a break and embarked upon a journey to Tunisia. Edouard Gatian de Cléramabault, Gaëtan's father, had family in Tunisia and, following a postal correspondence with his cousin, Dr. Guéguan, who was director of health for the French protectorate, convinced him to keep track of his son. Dr. Guéguan mentioned the presence of Gaëtan in the city Tunis in a correspondence dated April 1913,<sup>30</sup> However, also noted, are the psychiatrist's absences, suggesting that Clérambault explored the country extensively. It is thus fair to assume that it was in Tunisia that Clérambault discovered North Africa and the beauty of what he called the "draperie actuellement vivante"<sup>31</sup> (currently living drapery), words used by Clérambault to describe the contemporary use of the veil in several regions of the world as it appeared to him for the first

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<sup>28</sup> "Dossier Clérambault, 84W74," Archive de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, Paris.

<sup>29</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 47.

<sup>30</sup> "Dossier Clérambault," Archives of the Archaeological Society de Touraine, Tour.

<sup>31</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," 2AP3, Box 1, Folder A, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, np.

time. Clérambault most certainly contemplated exploring drapery culture in greater depth while in Tunisia, as he asserts: “we started our study on the drapery in Tunisia [1910]. We pushed it much further in Morocco [1918-1919]”.<sup>32</sup> During this period in Tunisia, Clérambault drew sketches and presumably also took photographs. However, as far as our research could find, none of the latter remain. Clérambault filled his notebooks with seductive and folkloric drawings but without paying much discernible attention to the dynamics of the fold. It was in Morocco that the essence Clérambault’s method of observation of drapery was born. At this point is important to note that Clérambault did not draw a distinction between the terms “drapery”, “veil” and “haik” in his research into the “living drapery”. Though the three terms hold different social, political and geographical meanings especially in the context of Orientalism, the psychiatrist slipped from one term to other as if they were synonyms of one another. This interchangeability between these terms, I believe, stood from Clérambault’s wish to not limited the discursive fields in which his study could potentially be used and published. As this thesis will later reveal, Clérambault was keen to present but also gift his research and photographs to various French institutions on account of their importance in both art and science.

In 1914, when the First World War broke out, Clérambault joined the military medical service of the French army. Clérambault was extremely athletic, loved exercising and sport. At 42 years old, the exceptional horseback rider and jiu-jitsu master courageously welcomed the opportunity to serve his country. In 1916, he joined the Oriental Army to fight in Serbia, where his leg was injured by a piece of shrapnel. Clérambault returned to France and recovered in the military hospitals of Nice and Paris.<sup>33</sup> Once back on his feet, the Minister of War ordered

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<sup>32</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

<sup>33</sup> 150740/N, “Dossier Clérambault,” *Archive de l’Armée Française, Paris*.



Clérambault to serve in Morocco under the supervision of a subdivision of Fez.<sup>34</sup> The North-African country had only recently been annexed to France in 1912 with the signature of the Treaty of Fez and was under the rule of Resident-General Lyautey. Lyautey was an old-fashioned authoritarian and paternalistic colonialist who wished to train the Moroccan French-speaking élite to administer the country alongside the French and invited French companies to invest in the country. Lyautey did have some respect for Moroccan culture and attempted to preserve the character of the old town and build new buildings outside the city.<sup>35</sup> Clérambault arrived in 1917 to complete his mission as an officer of medical services, following which he started his photographic endeavours in 1919. It was in Fès that Clérambault first analyzed and fixed a sense of the drapery in movement. More specifically, it was in his residence on Dob er Koum Street in Fez that Clérambault brought his photographic project to fruition. In this residence, around the patio, the long and tall rooms decorated with earthenware are surrounding by thick, windowless walls and massive wooden doors, discouraging any possible indiscretion. The second floor had galleries running around the inner courtyard patio (see Figure 1.7) The residence was cool, calm, and silent: the perfect place for Clérambault to set up a tripod and camera and commence his photographic journey through which he would document the haik. The photographs themselves routinely play on the contrast of the whiteness of the fabric and the sepia background, accentuating the prominence and the visual effects of the fabric. This technique allows the viewers of these images to focus on the haik and to avoid being distracted by the scenery.

As an officer in the French protectorate of Morocco, later to become the chief of psychiatry of the Paris Police Prefecture's Special Infirmary for the Insane, we must observe the relationship

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<sup>34</sup> 150740/N, "Dossier Clérambault," Archive de l'Armée Française, Paris.

<sup>35</sup> A. Williams, *Britain and France in the Middle East and North Africa*, (London, and St Martin's Press, New York: MacMillan, 1968), 70.

between Clérambault's photographs and his status as an agent of the state. The level of Clérambault's participation in the oppressive practices of imperialism must be noted. While in Morocco, Clérambault was sometimes called upon to advise the colonial governor, General Lyautey, to make military decisions regarding France's North African population. While it is true that French colonizers attempted to give medical care to the Moroccan people, they would routinely undermine the existing practices of indigenous medicine, which was regarded as uncivilized. When asked by Lyautey if Senegalese troops could be trusted to remain with the French against the Arabs – Clérambault reported back in a manner that exemplifies the bluntly racist overtones of colonial discourse:

The Negro is the appointed policeman of the Arab. The Negro will always march alongside the European against the Arab just as the dog accompanies the man against the world and the fox. This is because of: 1) the profound feeling of European superiority; 2) the traditional scorn of the Arab for the Negro (however, less so in Morocco than in other regions).<sup>36</sup>

In summary, then, Clérambault's time in North Africa as an army officer in the French protectorate of Morocco was what first enabled him to come into contact with and to document drapery culture in North Africa, while it was in his residence on Dob er Koum Street in Fez that Clérambault was able to create the studio conditions that led to his idiosyncratic depictions of the haik. At the same time, in exploring his work in the French army as a medical officer, it becomes clear that Clérambault was complicit in its imperial practice, as his own remarks on Arab culture reveal a degree of prejudice that highlights his status as a colonizer.

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<sup>36</sup> “Le nègre est le gendarme attiré de l’Arabe. Le nègre marchera toujours avec l’Européen contre l’Arabe comme le chien avec l’homme contre le loup et le renard. Ceci en raison: 1) du sentiment profond de la supériorité européenne; 2) du mépris traditionnel de l’Arabe contre le Nègre (moins cependant au Maroc qu’en d’autres régions)” in D. Rivet, *Lyautey et l’institution du protectorat français au Maroc (1912-1925)*, Vol. 2, (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1987), 18.

## 1.5 The Moroccan Haik

Upon his arrival in Morocco, Clérambault's eye was immediately drawn to what he again referred to as the *living drapery*, which was embodied by the North African garment called the *haik*. The Moroccan haik, more than any other type of drapery, caught Clérambault's attention in part because its general appearance and whiteness reminded him of antique drapery<sup>37</sup>. Much like any other dress, the Moroccan haik had its very own history and may be seen to have reflected the history of its country of origin. Unlike fashion today, often used as a tool for personal expression, the Moroccan garment was intimately connected to the geographical and social environment in which it was created. It was the product of the Moroccan economy, of its artisanal activity and its unique secular weaving techniques, both of which had an impact upon its aesthetics but also its function.

The name *haik or hayque* originates from the verb *haaka*, meaning to weave.<sup>38</sup> The haik was made from a large veil draped around the body of the wearer before going outside. Up until the 20th century, in fact, people from this region would almost never venture outside without draping their bodies in the haik. The haik was the final garment that completed the traditional clothing of North Africa. Today, however, the haik has lost its everyday use and become more of a ceremonial dress, commonly worn at weddings and other such formal occasions.<sup>39</sup>

Regarding its physical properties: the rectangular veil that makes up the haik is approximately five to six meters long and one and a half-meter wide, but its quality could differ drastically from one haik to another. The traditional dress was skilfully draped around the body using a

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<sup>37</sup> This topic will be covered in length in the third chapter of this thesis.

<sup>38</sup> R. P. A. Dozy, *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes* (Amsterdam: Jean Müller, 1845), 147.

<sup>39</sup> J. Condra, ed., *Encyclopedia of National Dress: Traditional clothing around the world* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 502.

method that dates back well into North African history. The haik is usually white, but some could be in a light brown wool colour, called *haik daraa*. The *haik daraa* was used to reject the rays of the sun and to protect the wearer from the oppressive heat. Clérambault, who very likely wore the garment while in Morocco, given its ubiquitousness during this period, pointed to the functional aspect of the outer garment and argued it was “an ornamental effect with a practical function.”<sup>40</sup> He further highlighted a sense of the practical uses of the veil by revealing that face veils were used to ensure two types of protection: firstly, against the sun; and secondly, to conceal and disguise the individuality of the person wearing it.

It is important to note that the veil was not exclusive to women and that both men and women took advantage of the protective and functional role of the haik. Leyla Belkaïd, for instance, draws attention to observations made by Thomas Pellow, who revealed that since the 18th century, both men and women would leave the house dressed almost identically due to their use of the haik “which covered their heads and faces until their eyes.”<sup>41</sup> The haik also had a social origin dating long before the emergence of Islam in the region. The garment was, in fact, first used to differentiate the city from rural dwellers and nobles from peasants. This social function is, according to Leyla Belkaïd, the true reason for the haik’s expansion around the Mediterranean. Belkaïd has based her conclusions on Germaine Tillon's argument that the haik is actually a practice linked to urbanization, as it was apparently the case that women in the countryside freely venture outside with unveiled faces.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>41</sup> M. Morsy cited in L. Belkaïd, *Algéroises, histoire d’un costume méditerranéen* (Aix-en-Provence: Édisud, 1998), 143.

<sup>42</sup> Belkaïd, *Algéroises, histoire d’un costume Méditerranéen*, 143.

The traditional characteristics of the haik just described are unique to North African culture. Clérambault, just like many other Westerners, noticed and was intrigued by its presence because of its foreignness. At the same time, it is important to note that several regional variations of the garment exist, each representing another geographic location. For instance, the haik from Rabbat only allowed one eye to be seen. The different attributes of haik culture help neighbouring groups distinguish and identify one another.<sup>43</sup> The differences in the various forms of the drapery were even noticeable from behind, through the elegance of the veil, the shapes of the folds, and the way the fabric hugged the body of its model. Every aspect of the haik was coded, from the gestures used to construct it to the materials and the weaving techniques used to fashion it.

The garment is also traditionally modified for different life events: for example, the festive and celebratory haik is traditionally different from the everyday haik. For the *derreza del hlou* (the weaver of thin wool and cotton fabrics), there were several different distinctions drawn regarding the wearing of and the attributes of the traditional dress. There was, for instance, the *haik fidah* or *fidahi*, made with white fabric – relatively thick cotton or wool – with its extremities embellished with stripes made out of silk. Next, there was the *haik hlou* or *halla*, a more elegant drape woven in thin yet opaque wool. There was also the *haik del mharbel* or *del habba*, a form of drapery in curled cotton or wool. Lastly, there was the *haik sda fi sda* or KSA, which was transparent and made with extremely thin wool and finished by a meter of striped silk, entitled *sabra*. In addition to this, the *KSA* was the traditional haik exclusively used by sultans during official ceremonies, although this form was also worn by the men of the palace and by some senior officials. Lastly, the haik was also used as a signifier of the age or status of the person who wore it, something that was highlighted by variations in the way it was draped.

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<sup>43</sup> Belkaïd, *Algéroises, histoire d'un costume Méditerranéen*, 145.

For instance, the rich Arabs would traditionally wear intricate drapery without support: their haik easily adhered to their under-garments, and the gestures involved in fixing the falling auxiliary portion became an elegant automatism.<sup>44</sup>

The haik in Morocco was first described in detail in the European literature by the Danish explorer Georg Horst in the 18th century: “Men in Morocco and in Fez, wear the *hayque* that consists of a piece of white linen cloth, ordinarily of seven ell [an ancient measure of length used for measuring cloth] in length and three ell in width; everyone wears this coat, from the king up to the lesser Moor, and it is worn following a diverse array of different protocols: the most common is, however, to lay the hayque on the head and through the end of the cloth over the left shoulder. When the king is present, the headdress must be removed, and a knot must be made. This is called *khat er-rowa*”.<sup>45</sup>

Although both men and women wore the traditional outer garment, there were still major differences in the various ways in which it was wrapped around the body depending upon gender. The drape was first wrapped around the waist to create a sort of skirt. To maintain the haik on the shoulder, women used a four-to-five-centimetre-long ribbon, made out of silk or cotton, that they tied around the neck and fixed the front of the haik with two clips called *bzim*. The thin fabric allowed the wearer of the haik to pleat the belt, while the thicker fabrics

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<sup>44</sup> “Archive du Congrès,” 2AP3, Box 1, Folder A, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d’Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>45</sup> “Les hommes au Maroc et à Fès portent sur le caftan, un hayque qui consiste en une pièce d’étoffe de laine blanche, longue ordinairement de sept aunes et large de trois aunes; tous s’enveloppent dans ce manteau, depuis le roi jusqu’au moindre Maure, et ceci se pratique de diverses manières: la plus commune cependant est de mettre ce hayque sur la tête et d’en jeter les bouts sur l’épaule gauche. En présence du roi, on doit l’ôter de la tête, et y pratiquer un nœud, ce qu’on appelle *khat er-rowa*.” in Dozy, *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes*, 150-151.; An ell was an ancient measure of length mostly used for measuring cloth.

prevented the creation of knots. By placing it over the head, the haik would carefully cover the forehead without hiding it. The drapery was then wrapped around the bust or left hanging arm. The haik needed to be held under the chin by at least one hand, which could either stay visible or hidden. The haik slowly evolved with the pressure of modern life for women. Thus, it became shorter and stopped at ankle height instead of hovering above the feet. The modifications in the clothing system are also a consequence of this acculturation. When studying the costume worn by Algerian women, Belkaïd noticed that important mutations happened during colonialism.<sup>46</sup> Clérambault, was conscious of the gradual extinction of the Arabic drape during this period and actively started thoroughly document and record the garment before its looming disappearance. The efforts to modernize the haik were redundant as it was completely abandoned, and the jellaba instead become a commonly worn garment. More practical, the jellaba is described by Edmon Doutté in the following terms in his 1905 book *Merrâkech*:

The haik remains the most gracious of the Muslim items of clothing; it is a contrast to the awful jellaba, a garment without any taste. In fact, in cities, no elegant [person] would not wear the haik. Not only is it a mark of notables of all types, but it is specifically worn by scholars and pious people.<sup>47</sup>

Here we might make a note of two tendencies: first, to attribute the haik to Muslim culture: in fact, though Muslims commonly wore the haik, its prevalence in a region that had a diverse range of faith practices suggests that this is something of an inaccurate representation of it;

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<sup>46</sup> Belkaïd, *Algéroises, histoire d'un costume Méditerranéen*, 141.

<sup>47</sup> "Le haik est resté le plus gracieux des habillements musulmans; il contraste sous ce rapport avec l'affreuse jellaba, vêtement sans aucune espèce de goût. D'ailleurs, dans les villes, il n'y a pas d'élégant qui ne revêt le haik. Non seulement il est la marque des notables de tout espèce, mais il est spécialement porté par les savants et par les gens pieux..." in E. Doutté, *Merrâkech* (Paris: Comité du Maroc, 1905), 261.

second, Doutté proposes that the haik was something of a status symbol, while also writing dismissively of the jellaba's apparent commonness.

The folds of cloth have been an inexhaustible artistic theme for centuries, and Clérambault saw the ability to study this subject during his time through the haik as an immense opportunity. Much to his despair – and as will be considered in more detail in the second chapter of this study – the possibilities to study drapery at the beginning of the 20th Century did not catch the attention of Orientalist painters who were Clérambault 's contemporaries. Clérambault condemns this mistake:

The polychrome fabric, which in the dress rarely presents itself in draped forms, was almost exclusively chosen by Orientalist painters for studies and sources for effects, whereas the white drapes, which play a great role in the spectacle of Arabic crowds, were never the subject of a study. Due to its simplicity, the burnous alone was understood and dealt with; however, the beautiful complex arrangements of long draperies, the harmonious whites, and the special expressions inherent to the various fabrics never appeared in any paintings either as a principal focus point or as secondary focus point until now.<sup>48</sup>

In order to try and compensate for this disregard on the part of his contemporaries, Clérambault took it upon himself to embark on the study of the Moroccan haik. This research was by no means an isolated phenomenon but as a matter of fact, belonged to the larger colonial practice

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<sup>48</sup> “En effet, l'étoffe polychrome, qui, dans l'habillement se présente rarement sous forme drapée, a été presque exclusivement choisie par les peintres orientalistes comme but d'études et de sources d'effets, tandis que les drapés blancs, qui jouent un si grand rôle dans le spectacle des foules arabes, n'ont jamais fait l'objet que d'un rendu sommaire, n'utilisant qu'une faible partie de leurs qualités. Les burnous seul, en raison de sa simplicité a été compris et traité ; mais les beaux agencement complexes des longues draperies, les harmonies des blancs entre eux, et les expressions toutes spéciales inhérentes au tissus divers, n'ont jamais paru, jusqu'ici dans un tableau ni comme objectif principal, ni comme objectif secondaire.” in “Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l'École des Beaux-Arts,” 2AP2, Box 1, Folder B, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.



of the time. Roger Benjamin points out that as early as 1913 the Algeria and Moroccan governments, had embarked on a “revival” campaign aimed at preserving local decorative arts traditions, and reversing, or at least limiting the damage caused by the European presence.<sup>49</sup> In Morocco most specifically, the Office of Indigenous Arts Industries was founded to address the problems facing the arts industries and its ways of operating can be best exemplified by the carpet industry described as “the principal and most widely practiced of the Moroccan art industries.”<sup>50</sup> The office appointed inspectors, provided weavers with relevant materials and directed their activities by calling upon older women who still knew the original technics, thus assuring the preservation and avoiding its complete disappearance. A little later, Prosper Ricard (head of the Service of Indigenous Arts) and his staff undertook the documentation of all the known kinds of Moroccan rugs arranged by regions, much like Clérambault did in his research of the haik, and published them in the illustrated *Corpus de tapis marocains*, composed of four volumes and created between 1923 and 1934.<sup>51</sup>

## 1.6 Exhibiting Clérambault's work

This section will attempt to situate critical receptions of Clérambault's photography by exploring how it has been represented in four exhibitions: namely, *Corps drapés autour de la Méditerranée* exhibition held at the Musée de la Mode in Marseille, *Le désir du Maroc* exhibition at the Hôtel de Sully in Paris, *Sous le drap, le temps des plis* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Tourcoing, and most recently *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray*,

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<sup>49</sup> R. Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics : Art, Colonialism and French North Africa, 1880-1930* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 2003) 191.

<sup>50</sup> Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics : Art, Colonialism and French North Africa, 1880-1930*, 205.

<sup>51</sup> P. Ricard, *Corpus de tapis marocains* (Paris : Gouvernement chérifien, Protectorat de la République Française au Maroc, et Librairie orientaliste Paul Geunther), vol. 1, *Tapis de Rabat* (1923) ; vol. 2, *Tapis du moyen Atlas* (1926), vol. 3, *Tapis de haut Atlas et du Haouz de Marrakech* (1927) ; and vol. 4, *Tapis divers* (1934).

*Dürer*... at the musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. In exploring these four exhibitions, a survey will be offered of how Clérambault's photography has generally been viewed, in an analysis that will affirm the contention that there is a tendency to offer an appraisal of work that fails to fully take into account discursive and contextual factors that shaped his influence in the veil, and that there is instead a broad inclination to pathologize Clérambault's interest in the drapery by depicting it as the by-product of a fetish or the Western male on the Oriental body.

The first exhibition following the rediscovery of Clérambault's images went to great lengths to archive the objective of offering a fuller account and contextual analysis of the photography of Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault is an exhibition held at the Musée de la Mode in Marseille in 1994. The title of the exhibition, *Corps drapés Autour de la Méditerranée* evokes an ethnographic and aesthetic approach, while at the same time affirming the geography of Clérambault's Morocco. Bernard Blistère, director of Museums in Marseille, wished to propose "an exhibition that, making use of established aesthetic categories and classifications, follows over time, with the Mediterranean world as its sole framework, a unique form, its constancy, and its metamorphoses, in short, its history."<sup>52</sup>

The motivation to study Clérambault's photography in the context of the "metamorphoses" of drapery culture in the Mediterranean and to study the origins of the garment offers a broad conception of Clérambault's photography. Apart from exhibiting photographic representations of draped figures executed by the French psychiatrist in 1919, the exhibition also featured Antique Greek and Roman sculptures, as well as other stylistic approaches, such as French

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<sup>52</sup> "Une exposition qui, hors des catégories et des classement esthétiques convenus, suit au fil du temps, avec pour seule trame le monde méditerranéen, une forme unique, sa constance et ses métamorphoses, bref son histoire." in C. Örmén *Corps drapés autour de la Méditerranée* (Marseille: Musée de Marseille, 1994), 5.

folkloric costumes and haute couture. For this project, two institutions – the Musée d’Archeologie Méditerranéenne of Marseille and Musée de la Mode – combined forces in order to provide and highlight the variations in formal and visual aspects of drapery culture.

In addition to this, in her introduction to the exhibition catalogue Catherine Örmén, curator of the Musée de la Mode de Marseille, presents an account of the various different classifications of draped costumes that Clérambault established in his writings. Additional biographical information is given a little later by Roland Léthier. The latter situated the photographs in their historic and geographical context, and established a connection between Clérambault’s different fields of study by emphasising that “the study of drape and the dialogue with the patients leads to a formulation that reveals structural homologies.”<sup>53</sup>

In sum, *Corps drapés Autour de la Méditerranée* exhibition can be seen to have gone to significant lengths to offer a broader conception of Clérambault's work by aiming to situate his work within a wider reflection on drapery culture, together with its place and its evolution in society. However, it may be viewed to be limited in terms of the extent to which it is willing to engage with Clérambault’s own writing about the drapery. For instance, Léthier refuses to associate Clérambault’s photographs of the haik to his *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*. For Léthier, there is no further interpretation needed beyond what arises from a recognition of the immediate context and a close reading of the imagery itself. As he writes:

The ghostly strangeness of the drapery photos would easily lead to an erotic or religious interpretation of what they are hiding. The life in the folds forces us to

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<sup>53</sup> “L’étude des drapés et le dialogue avec les malades le conduisent à des formulations qui relèvent des homologies de structure.” in R. Léthier, “La vie dans le plis” in *C Corps drapés autour de la Méditerranée*, Edited by C. Örmén (Marseille: Musées de Marseille, 1994), Exhibition catalogue, 31.

follow movements, lines, to search for fulcrums. The folds do not fall from the sky, they advance from the mechanical effect of the disposition of the cloth. They depend on its arrangement, on its pose, on the frame. The apprehension through the perception maintains a specular illusion, and it feeds the myth of the presence of a “being” under the veil.<sup>54</sup>

Here L  thier ultimately remains tied to a speculative reading of Cl  rambault's photography that places weight upon the idea that the veil functions as a fetish for Cl  rambault, signifying a frustrated desire that points towards a deeper underlying and obscures meaning and framework of desire. Thus, in short, while *Corps drap  s Autour de la M  diterran  e* goes to significantly greater lengths than the other next two exhibitions considered in this section, to identify contextual factors behind the photographic productions of Cl  rambault, it still ultimately remains tied to the same notions of the preoccupation with the veil signifying a kind of mental aberration on Cl  rambault's part, in turn not heeding in sufficient detail the idea that perhaps Cl  rambault's interest in the veil was justified by and motivated by other external factors.

The presence of the Cl  rambault's photographs in the exhibition *Le d  sir du Maroc* between 1999 and 2000 at the H  tel de Sully in Paris offered an alternative critical framework for comprehending and analysing Cl  rambault's photographs. This time, the images of draped figures were shown as a historic testimony of Morocco during the period in which they were taken. Here, the photographs were shown alongside other occidental depictions of the North African country over time. In this light, the images were viewed as presenting a “vision of

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<sup>54</sup> “L’  tranget   fantomatique des photos de drap  s porterait facilement vers une interpr  tation   rotisante ou religieuse de ce qu’ils cachent. La vie dans le pli pousse    suivre les mouvements, les lignes,    rechercher les points d’appui et d’attache. Les plis ne tombent pas du ciel, ils tiennent    l’effet m  canique de la disposition de l’  toffe. Ils d  pendent de son agencement, de sa pose sur la carcasse. L’appr  hension par le regard reste une illusion spectaculaire, elle vient alimenter le mythe d’une pr  sence d’un “  tant” sous le voile.” in L  thier, “La vie dans le plis,” 31.

Morocco” in a typically Orientalist fashion, emphasizing the exoticism and allure in the images.<sup>55</sup> Here, Clérambault’s photographs were presented as a testament to the way “Occidentals,” or Westerners, viewed the Middle East, its traditions, and its dress.<sup>56</sup>

The exhibition of Clérambault’s images in *Le désir du Maroc* tends to ground the body of work in a historical context as an example of an attempt to capture “authentic” Moroccan life. However, in the book released with the exhibition, one finds the authors asking similar questions to those asked by Renard and previous underlying exhibitions: “Did he also succumb to the passion of the cloth?”<sup>57</sup> Clearly, the recurrence of this line of inquiry may be seen to indicate the persistence of the myth around the psychiatrist, with exhibitions such as the *Corps drapés Autour de la Méditerranée* in Marseille and *Le désir du Maroc* in Paris both emphasizing a sense in which Clérambault’s practice can be read in light of suppositions about his own private fixations.

The exhibition entitled *Sous le drap, le temps des plis* at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Tourcoing between 2001 and 2002 investigated the theme of the drapery by showing one hundred and eighty-four artworks in a wide range of mediums, including painting, sculpture, drawing, and photography. Clérambault’s photographic body of work depicting the Arab drapery could therefore be found at *Sous le drap* among a Greek Pelike dating back to the fourth century B.C. and alongside works of the contemporary artists. Yannick Courbès, the curator of the exhibition, invited visitors to travel through different manifestations of drapery culture, focusing exclusively on the theme of the fold by insisting: “the fold is an expression

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<sup>55</sup> *Le désir du Maroc*, Edited by T.B Jelloun, A. d’Hooghe, and M. Sijelmassi (Paris: Marval, 2000), Exhibition catalogue, 23.

<sup>56</sup> *Le désir du Maroc*, 23.

<sup>57</sup> “Aurait-il succombé à la passion du tissu?” in *Le désir du Maroc*, 13.

of art."<sup>58</sup> The exhibition displayed thirty-seven of Clérambault's photographs, including one of his series. However, the exhibition did not comment on the instructive value or the educational role that Clérambault's photographs had to play in his lectures at the Beaux-Arts in Paris, or generally do much to situate the photographs within their wider context. Much like other artworks shown in the exhibition, Clérambault's photographs became autonomous artistic objects, divorced from their initial surroundings and from the specific purpose that the given artist had in photographing them. The description of the photographs in the exhibition placed emphasis on the sitter and the impact the work may be seen to have on its viewer. For instance:

Beyond the science of the folds, a certain dread resides in these photographs. The bodies, suffocating under the shrouds that cover them, seem absent. The dramatization, the *mise en scène* of the fold, is anguishing. An impression of absence stings the unconscious. The serial character of the development of the fold creates a disturbing strangeness.<sup>59</sup>

This feeling of strangeness was used to conclude Serge Tisseron's segment on Clérambault's photographs in his book, *Le mystère de la chambre claire*.<sup>60</sup> The photographs depicting Moroccan women in an austere space or performing artificial poses can understandably be interpreted as discomfiting. However, against this, we might argue that these photographs and the possibly misleading initial impression that the obscuring of the female figure conveys only start to make sense when we read them in the context of Clérambault's photographic practice:

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<sup>58</sup> *Sous le drap, le Temps des plis*, Edited by E. D. Allemand, C. Buci-Glucksmann, C., and Y. Courbès (Tourcoing: Musée des beaux-arts de Toucoing, 2002), Exhibiton catalogue.

<sup>59</sup> "Au-delà de la science des plis, réside dans ces photographies une certaine hantise. Les corps, sous les étouffant suaires qui les recouvrent semblent absent. La théâtralisation, la mise en scène des plis est angoissante. Une impression d'absence pique l'inconscient- le caractère sériel de ces plans d'opérations du plis amène une inquiétante étrangeté." Y. Courbès, *Sous le drap, le temps des plis*, 78.

<sup>60</sup> S. Tisseron, *Le mystère de la chambre Claire. Photographie et inconscient* (Paris: Flammarion, 2013), 103-106.

for instance, by ascertaining how these images differ from other works of Orientalist photography, Clérambault's lecturing at the Beaux-Arts, and Clérambault's writing on discourse relating to the relationship between the drapery and psychiatry. Focusing on this third example, in his *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés Indigènes*, (*Introduction to the study of Indigenous draperies*), Clérambault explicitly reflects on the subject of drapery in a manner that may force us to challenge the assumptions underlining the claims made in the exhibition.<sup>61</sup>

Most recently, the musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon presented seventeen of Clérambault's photographs in its 2019 to 2020 exhibition entitled *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* The exhibition aimed to provide a new way of looking and thinking about draperies since the Renaissance. Curators Eric Pagliano and Slybie Ramond explained in the introduction that the exhibition aimed to investigate drapery "not in its completed form, but rather by focusing on the way it develops." Such an axis of analysis favoring practices, procedural forms, and types of studies resulted in chronology abandonment. The oeuvres were shown according to a temporality corresponding to the progressive conception of an artwork. Clérambault's photographs belonged to the second to last categories, entitled "Anatomie de la draperies" (Anatomy of the Drapery), and had its very own sub-section: "Corps orientaux – Clérambault" (Oriental bodies – Clérambault).

Compared to the presentation mentioned above of Clérambault's images, this exhibition is certainly the most complete. It showed a range of both of his indoor and outdoor images but also provided a range of individual images, series, and even two sketches. Though none of the images exhibited portrayed men, the subsection's description indicated "[Clérambault] photographed groups of women in outdoor markets, and had both masculine and feminine

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<sup>61</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

models pose for him." For the first time, since their re-discovery, Clérambault's work was presented along with the following explanation:

Based on his observation and an exhaustive study of archaeologists and ethnologists' work on the costume, [Clérambault] understood a comparative typology of draperies. [He] had the ambition to classify, just like experimental and human science did at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His objective was to describe and categorize the various form that the draperies produced.<sup>62</sup>

With the introduction to Clérambault's corpus, viewers approach the images in a very different way than they might have previously. Here, we are told that Clérambault's images are based and aim to contribute to an ethnographic and archeologic investigation of the drapery that aims to define and classify the forms produced by the fold. There is no mention of Clérambault's possible fetishism or passion for the cloth.

The exhibition catalogue provided another very important source of information on Clérambault's and the corpus of photographs taken in Morocco in 1919. *Grammaire du pli, Photographies et conférences de Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault* written by Christian Joschke, explores the photographs in relation to the psychiatrist's lecture at the Beaux-Art, concluding that Clérambault's interest in the drapery has nothing to do with a secret passion for the cloth, nor was it a psychoanalytical projection but stem from a strict and rational project aiming to the classification of the forms of draperies.<sup>63</sup> This idea was built on Annabelle Lacour's

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<sup>62</sup> "A partir de ses observations et d'une étude exhaustive des travaux des archéologues et ethnologues sur les costumes, il entreprend une typologie comparative du drapé. Clérambault avait en effet une ambition de classification, comme l'étaient encore les sciences expérimentale et humaines au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Son objectif était de décrire et de catégoriser les formes que le drapé produit." in *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* Edited by E. Pagliano and S. Ramond, Paris: Lienart, 2019. Exhibiton Catalogue, 236.

<sup>63</sup> C. Joschke, "Grammaire du pli. Photographies et conférences de Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault," *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...*, 66-75.



questioning of Clérambault's cloth fetishism and purely arguing for Clérambault's "scholarly interest" in the drapery.<sup>64</sup>

*Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel-Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* coupled with Christian Jocke exhibition catalog essay and the article of Annabelle Lacour article mentioned by the latter are the closest analysis to the thesis. Although they touch upon a broader view of Clérambault life's work – the research is only limited to the size of an article – they lack a well-rounded understanding of the corpus in relation to Clérambault, his life, and his time. Were Clérambault and his images part of the psychiatrist's zeitgeist? How can we situate these images within the production of images executed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

### 1.7 “The Sartorial Superego”

It would be difficult to conduct an examination of Clérambault, his life, and his work without discussing psychoanalysis, not least because Clérambault was a significant, if not a primary, influence upon the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. However, this detour will remain brief because the aim of this thesis is not to draw a psychoanalytical exposé of Clérambault but rather to situate his photographic corpus within the context of Orientalist, art historical, and psychiatric discourse, in other words, it is less to focus upon Clérambault's contribution in the field of psychoanalysis, and more to offer an art historical analysis of his photographic practice that takes into account various discursive influences that shaped him. Nonetheless, Joan Copjec's essay "The Sartorial Superego," found in her book on Lacan *Read My Desire*,<sup>65</sup> is one

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<sup>64</sup> A. Lacour, “Documenter la “draperie vivante”. Pour une réévaluation des photographies marocaines de Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault (1918-1919),” *Transbordeur. Photographie histoire société*, no.3 (2019): 146-159.

<sup>65</sup> J. Copjec, “The Sartorial Superego” in *Read my Desire: Lacan against the Historicists* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: MIT Press, 1994).

of the most extensive and insightful existing analyses of Clérambault's work in English and thus is worthy of consideration.

In her analysis, Copjec analyses Clérambault's images in relation to a broader consideration of the themes of colonialism and utilitarianism, as well as a consideration of the relation between Clérambault and Lacan, in terms of the function of the superego and the mechanics of the fetish, supporting her claim that the photographs represent both Clérambault's fantasy and his fetishization of the cloth. To begin with, Copjec argues that Clérambault's ego is split since he positioned himself both "as the colonial subject confronted with an objectified image of his own loss" and also "as the gaze of the Moroccan Other."<sup>66</sup> By photographing the cloth to meet the gaze of the Other, Copjec argues that Clérambault turned himself into an instrument of the Other's enjoyment.<sup>67</sup> Copjec suggests that the cloth in the photographs is presented as a material that is physically present: "a solid presence, a barrier against any recognition of loss."<sup>68</sup> However, Copjec also argues that since, as a fetishist photographer, Clérambault refused to recognize the division in his ego (between acknowledging his loss and covering it up), the photographs may be read as a representation of this dividing tension. She concludes that the authorities who terminated Clérambault's lectures on drapery "saw only too clearly what Clérambault meant, that his doubling and splitting of his project into a consideration of cloth's usefulness and his fetishization of its useless, overbearing present were precisely the problem."<sup>69</sup> As Gen Dozy has argued that it was highly unlikely that those who attended these lectures – namely, "a group of old-fashioned bureaucrats" – had much of a clue about the

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<sup>66</sup> Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," 111.

<sup>67</sup> Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," 111.

<sup>68</sup> Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," 92.

<sup>69</sup> Copjec, "The Sartorial Superego," 116.

psychoanalytic aspect of the photographs, this reading may be seen to be somewhat dubious.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, as we will see later in Chapter Three of this thesis, Archeologist Léon Heuzey (1831-1922) had been teaching a similar course at the Beaux-Arts for decades in which drapery, photography, and medical knowledge had also been linked. On both of these grounds, it is clearly questionable whether we can characterize Clérambault's interest in the drapery as an indicator of a pathology or a fetishist impulse, just as they may cause us to doubt Copiec's claim that the lecture would have been interpreted in this manner by those who attended it. Thus, although Copiec goes some way to drawing attention towards discursive influences that shaped Clérambault's creative practice, we are again forced to admit that the analysis fails to move beyond a determination to pathologize Clérambault's photography rather than accepting that it may have been the by-product of an array of discursive influences.

Clérambault's most significant contribution to psychiatry was, according to Jacques Lacan, the creation of his concept of "mental automatism." Clérambault theorized that "mental automatism" is a primary mechanism present in which in all types of psychosis or indeed delusional state takes its roots. This was particularly important in the development of psychoanalysis and, most specifically, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory because disputed Freud's claims that psychosis was untreatable.

This section aims to illustrate the cause of Clérambault's influence on Jacques Lacan and, in the process, suggest that the underlying principle behind the idea of mental automatism has been seen by critics to be reflected in Clérambault's photographic practice. Against this, it will be argued that the privileging of Clérambault's psychiatric practice over and above his

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<sup>70</sup>G. Doy, *Drapery, Classicism and Barbarism in Visual Culture* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2002), 126.

photographic practice is unwarranted, and it will be advocated that the photographic practice and the psychiatric practice are in fact part of a single unified whole than in the context of this thesis can be understood by tracing the discursive and contextual factors that influenced and shaped Clérambault's creative practice. This section will also offer an explanation of the approach behind the final chapter of this thesis, in which the psychiatry of Clérambault will be considered alongside an analysis of his photography, seeking to explain how in doing so, the objective is not so much to indicate how the creative practice can be seen to illustrate or elucidate Clérambault's creative practice, but rather to indicate how the creative practice was shaped and directly interlinked with his psychiatric research.

From his first psychiatric studies to his later work, Clérambault had one aim: to decipher the nature of delusional psychosis.<sup>71</sup> It is important to note, as Copjec does, that although Clérambault published his definitive work on mental automatism in 1924, he, in fact, had already started working on it in the context of his 1919 teaching.<sup>72</sup> This is significant in the context of this thesis primarily because it indicates that Clérambault implemented this concept to his clinical practice and instruction directly after his return from Morocco, meaning that the emergence of the idea of mental automatism coincided with his most productive period as a photographer. On this basis, we may begin to form the hypothesis that in photographing the drapery in Morocco, Clérambault found the same mechanisms he was looking for in his research on delusional psychosis. The psychiatrist's relentless observation of Moroccan draperies made him realize that though the formation of the haik on the body can be ever so slightly different from one person to another, and that even the slightest change presents new configurations in the garment – it remains the same piece of clothing.

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<sup>71</sup> Lerner and Witztum. "Gaétan Gatian de Clérambault, 1872–1934."442.

<sup>72</sup> Copjec, "The Sartorial Supergo,"115.

In her description of mental automatism, Martine Girard indicates that there are structural links and methodical similarities between the vocabulary used by Clérambault to describe drapery and his account of mental automatism. She argues that his search for common "structures" when exploring the subject of the drapery is comparable to his search for a single explanatory factor or syndrome to account for all mental illnesses. Girard thus suggests a formal correspondence between Clérambault's systematic methods used in the documentation and establishment of the theory of mental automatism and that of the documentation of the Moroccan haik. This thesis suggests that this correspondence should not be interpreted as suggesting that Clérambault's photography and writing on draperies can be seen to illustrate his psychiatric theories and to help us more fully understand his theory of mental automatism and its genesis. On the contrary, it challenges the priorities underlying this assumption that the psychiatric theories take primacy and suggests instead that we view the correspondence as indicative of how the wider project in Clérambault – both his written and photographic documentation of the drapery through the Moroccan haik, and his psychiatric research, may be seen to have been informed by the same logic, or the same tendency to uncover a universal cause or driving impetus, and that they can thus be seen to constitute a single body of work.

### **1.8 “The Fold” and Gilles Deleuze**

Outside of his connection with Lacan, if scholars have encountered Clérambault's name at all, it is often in the context of mentions by Gilles Deleuze. As with psychoanalysis, I do not propose to undertake an explicitly Deleuzian reading of the photography, but it is useful here to briefly account for the intersections between the works of Clérambault and that of Deleuze. In his text, *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque*, Gilles Deleuze focuses on the thought of the German Pre-Enlightenment philosopher Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716), seeing him as a key figure within the historical period of the Baroque, as a philosopher, an artist and as a scientist,

and in particular exploring his conceptualization of the world as a “body of infinite folds that weave through compressed time and space”<sup>73</sup>. Deleuze begins his book by stating:

The baroque refers not to an essence but rather to an operative function, to a trait. It endlessly produces folds... Yet the baroque twists and turns its fold, pushing them to infinity, fold over fold, one upon the other. The baroque unfurls all the way to infinity.<sup>74</sup>

Here it is clear to see that Deleuze defined the Baroque and the conceptualization of the world in the thinking of Leibniz, in relation to an element that can be found everywhere: in the natural world, in human culture, and even in the soul, namely, the fold. According to Deleuze, the fold was a way of constructing as well as perceiving the universe. As is the case for many others, for Deleuze, Clérambault represented a sort of extension of the Baroque era and of a Baroque conceptualization of the world. At the end of the chapter "What is Baroque," Deleuze makes his first reference to Clérambault and writes:

The psychiatrist Clérambault's taste for the fold of Islamic origin, and his extraordinary photographs of veiled women [...] amounts, despite what has been said, to much more than a simple personal perversion.<sup>75</sup>

For Deleuze, Clérambault's fascination with drapery does not testify to a perversion but is the testament and product of a formal research – as well as the legacy of a way of thinking about the world that can be traced back to Leibniz. For Deleuze, folds are made and undone to infinity – while the light and movements are characteristic of the Baroque period. For him,

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<sup>73</sup> G. Deleuze, *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque*, Tom Conley trans. (London: Continuum, 2006), 5.

<sup>74</sup> Deleuze, *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque*, 3.

<sup>75</sup> Deleuze, *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque*, 43.

Clérambault's research into the form of the drapery on the body, into the sunlight modifying its fold according to its intensity, and into the movement of these folds which can be seen captured in photography represented a way of seeing the interconnectedness of the material world that could be arrived at scientifically, artistically and philosophically.

Clearly, given the range of critical approaches to Gaëtan Gatien de Clérambault's photographic corpus – from the critical frameworks developed in gallery exhibitions to the analysis developed by those seeking to situate his photographic work within the context of psychoanalysis to a Deleuzian analysis seeking to situate Clérambault within the context of a wider philosophical development – there is a clear need to clarify the critical approach to be adopted in this study and to distinguish it apart from existing studies. The analysis above has already begun to indicate some of the key ways in which the proposed analysis may be seen to differ from certain established critical consensuses. In particular, what should already be apparent is three key points being insisted upon. The first concerns the desire not to immediately write off Clérambault as a fetishist, whose view of the drapery represents the fixation of a deviant and nothing more. The second concerns the determination not to view Clérambault's photographic practice as subordinate to his work as a psychiatrist: rather than seeing any given parallels as indicating how the photography might be seen to illustrate themes within the creative practice, it is proposed that we should see the two fields as complementing one another and that we should not privilege a consideration of psychoanalysis by proposing that Clérambault's work in this domain may be perceived to be of interest for how it shaped his creative practice, rather than the other way around. The third is; if we are to develop such an analysis, in which we are sympathetic towards Clérambault's interest in the drapery, and also insist on not considering his photographic practice as somehow secondary or subordinate to his work as a psychiatrist, then in reflecting on the significance of the drapery in his work,

we must also seek a more grounded analysis that, rather than say drawing parallels with Leibniz as Deleuze does, establishes a clear idea of the discursive conditions that shaped Clérambault's interest in the drapery.

However, this survey of existing critical responses to Clérambault's photography cannot be seen to be sufficient in terms of providing us with a clear indication of the direction of travel for this thesis. Questions still remain if we are to develop a sympathetic appraisal of Clérambault's work grounded in an understanding of the discursive influences that shaped him. In particular, it is crucial to concede that there are multiple different ways in which we might characterize Clérambault. We might therefore ask ourselves the question: who was Clérambault? A colonial serviceman? A psychiatrist? An artist? Why did you systematically document the drapery? How do they fit with his life work? In other words: in what context should his Moroccan photographs be understood?

Before considering these questions in subsequent chapters, it is necessary to provide the context in which these images first came to see the light. The close examination of the corpus of photographs coupled with Clérambault's manuscripts and his collected documents housed at the central bibliothèque of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris – as well as a brief account of the psychiatrist's life – serve as a basis for a better understanding of his intentions and may be seen to indicate that the volumes of images produced as well as the systematic nature of the photographs were motivated by the ambition of an encyclopaedic project of the study of the drapery with ethnologic and artistic views, in perfect harmony with the concerns of the psychiatrist. The analysis of his life and professional approach within the domains of both psychiatry and photography support the idea that a better understanding of his work can be achieved by attending to the contextual basis within which it was produced, while at the same



time giving us a clear idea of the shape that a contextual analysis of Clérambault's writing might take. This chapter has introduced this thesis on Clérambault initially by offering an overview of existing critical interpretations of his work, and subsequently by giving an account of Clérambault's life that helps us to understand why I have decided to focus on the three areas that will form the focus of the thesis as part of my decision to focus on contextual factors in order to understand the photographic corpus better. In short, we will be exploring Clérambault's relationship to Orientalist discourse, his relation to discourse within the domain of art history, and the relationship between his work and his own psychiatric practice in order to enable a fuller recognition of the discursive influences that shaped him, so that we can begin to develop an analysis of the photographs that progresses beyond the assumption that his interest in the drapery merely reflects a private fetish. The following sections will provide a preview of the chapters to come.

### **1.9 Clérambault within the context of Orientalism**

Chapter Two of the thesis will situate the photographs within the context of twentieth-century Orientalism and evaluate how the psychiatrist fits within this wider context and practice. In asking how Clérambault's corpus of photographs may be seen to fit within a wider Oriental discourse, this chapter evaluates how he fits within this wider discursive practice.

As such, the first half of this chapter will begin by positioning Clérambault's photography in this context by offering an account of the emergence of Orientalist discourse and the Orientalist tradition of photographing women from "the Orient." This chapter will thus begin with a definition of the term "Orientalism" and a brief overview of existing debates (primarily within the domain of postcolonial studies) oriented around Edward Said's original use of the term. In particular, it will consider how Ali Behdad and Ziauddin Sardar's critiques of the limitations of

Said's binary conception of a divide between East and West (or Orient and Occident) elides ambiguities and the capacity for resistance. This chapter will then move on to consider the specific development of Orientalism in France: in particular, reflecting on how the idea of the "*mission civilisatrice*" (or civilizing mission) was especially strong in France, as well as drawing on Margaret Majumdar's analysis of how this civilizing dimension of the French colonial project reflects an ideology rooted in Enlightenment thinking. The section following this analysis of Orientalism in France then focusses on the specific question of photography within Orientalist discourse, exploring how photographers such as Maxime du Camp, who were associated with the Orientalist institution Société Orientale, toured "the Orient" (for instance, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria) often with governmental or non-governmental financial backing in order to document the lives of those living there. This section also explores how Orientalist photography used studios to reconstruct or invent scenarios associated with "the Orient." Having thus established how photography was developed as an aspect of French colonial activities and how we might begin to conceptualize this as a manifestation of a wider Orientalist agenda, this chapter then proceeds to narrow the focus onto how photographers (and specifically French photographers) exhibited a particular interest in foregrounding women in their photographic documentation of the subaltern condition of those living in "the Orient." In particular, it will be argued that gendered representation coalesced around Orientalist representation resulting in a two-pronged subjugation process. More specifically, it will be argued that photography enabled Orientalist discourse. The female subaltern subject is doubly oppressed through representations that other them on the grounds of their gender and their ethnic identities by lending an air of veracity to the representations in question.

Furthermore, it will be suggested that the commodification of othering depictions of "Oriental" women through the studio process and the transformation of the photograph into a saleable

commodity linked to the tourism industry heightened the impact of this Orientalist and, at times, misogynistic discourse. In developing this analysis, particular emphasis will be placed upon the significance of the veil. The role of the veil within Islamic culture will be explored, and it will be proposed (drawing upon Malek Alloula's study *The Colonial Harem*) that the act of representing unveiled women can be interpreted as a symbolic act of unveiling the protection and disguise of individual identity to expose the "Oriental" female and bring them into the domain of colonial and patriarchal control through the establishment of an intimate knowledge base.

Having established a sense of the discursive preconditions that led to the popularity of representations of non-Western female subjects within photography – and in particular veiled subjects – the second half of this chapter will then move on to develop an analysis of how Clérambault may be configured within all of this. This analysis will basically compare Clérambault's photography to the works of other contemporary photographers and artists who similarly represented non-Western female subjects and attempting to situate Clérambault's photographic practice within other related discursive trends. In the process, we will be asking: how did Clérambault's practice differ from that of his contemporaries? Furthermore, what can be ascertained in terms of his approach in relation to the theory of Orientalism established in the introduction to this chapter, and in particular in relation to the role between Orientalist discourse and gender?

### **1.10 Clérambault within the context art history and drapery**

In addition to the influence of Orientalist discourse, a number of considerations may be seen to offer an explanation for Clérambault's wider interest in drapery. First and foremost, his artistic studies may be seen to suggest an appreciation for art, and that this may have been a

driving force behind his interest in the haik. Drapery has been a long-standing subject for artists, and its representation in art spans throughout the history of art: from Antique, Greek, or Roman depictions of drapery on vases and in sculpture to the naturalistic portrayal of folds and fabrics in Renaissance paintings and sculptures. Clérambault was well aware of the important status of the drapery, and when he introduced his lecture at the Beaux-Arts in 1923, he insisted on its significance:

The subject of my class is the draped costume as it exists in populations with a traditional mentality, specifically in North African. Such a study follows that of antique art. I do not believe it only to be interesting for Orientalists. By exercising analytical and observational work, it can largely contribute to the general education of any artist.<sup>76</sup>

Here Clérambault explicitly states that his interest in drapery can be seen to be grounded in Orientalist discourse, but that it also extends beyond it. Long before Clérambault, or before the phenomenon of Orientalism, artists had tried to study the movement of the fold and had written an elaborate treatise on the subject.<sup>77</sup> Chapter Three of this study will provide an overview of the existing discourse on the drapery culture by exploring the existing creative practices and literature from the late Medieval period onwards. The naturalistic representation of the drapery was traditionally recognized as a technical achievement that required not only skills but also practice. Much like any other artist studying the folds of the cloth on the body, Clérambault produced numerous studies and sketches in old diaries that he used as sketchbooks (see Figures

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<sup>76</sup> “L’objet de mon cours est le costume drapé tel qu’il existe chez les populations à mentalité traditionnelle, spécialement dans l’Afrique du Nord. Une telle étude fait suite à celle de l’art antique. Je ne la crois pas intéressante seulement pour les orientalistes. En exerçant tout spécialement a un travail d’observation et d’analyse, elle peut contribuer largement à l’éducation général de tout artiste.” in “Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l’École des Beaux-Arts,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>77</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

1.8 and 1.9). In one particular diary that Clérambault named "Musée," one finds other drawings, including sketches of Egyptian statues with a particular focus on the loincloth, Greek sculpture, and even figures from neoclassical painting (see Figures 1.10 & 1.11). Clérambault seemed to have looked through the various periods of art history in order to isolate and study only those in which the subject of drapery was represented with virtuosity. In the Bibliothèque central du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Clérambault's archive also includes clippings from newspapers, articles, and reproductions of works representing draped figures, from all civilizations and times combined. For the first time, this thesis will reassemble, analyse and link together this entire collection of documents within Clérambault's photographic corpus, as well as his known psychiatric research. However, it must be stressed there is a clear predominance of Roman draperies, which can perhaps be explained by the large interest in images from antiquity during Clérambault's time, something that will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Three. Nonetheless, for the psychiatrist, drapery was an essential theme in art that had relevance during all period, as he explained in his own words:

We drew the attention of artists on the diverse forms of folds: folds in garland, in godets, in nest, in flute, fan-shaped, in whirlwind, dropping folds and ascending folds, active folds, and passive folds; jet fold and slot fold, traction fold and repression fold. [...] We have indicated the schematic bending of large fabrics, the transparency or the soft hue of thin fabrics, the indoor or outdoor backlights, the wind effects, the associations of spiral shapes to movements of the body, at last, the gestures, unconsciously regulated, the construction of the drape, as inexhaustible artistic themes.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> "Nous avons attiré l'attention des artistes sur les formes diverses des plis : plis en guirlandes, en godets, en nids, en cannelures, en éventail, en tourbillons, plis tombants et plis ascendants, plis actifs et plis passifs ; plis en kets et plis emboîtés ; plis de traction et plis de refoulement. [...] Nous avons signalé les flexions schématiques de grosses étoffes, les transparences ou teintes moelleuses des étoffes minces, les contre-jour à l'intérieur ou en plein air, les effets de vent, l'association des formes spirales aux grands mouvement du corps humain, enfin les gestes, inconsciemment réglementés de la construction du drapé, comme des thèmes d'art

In other words, if the drape is an inexhaustible and crucial theme in art, Clérambault deemed it a great opportunity to be able to study it in living history by exploring representations of the Moroccan haik. Clérambault's archive – located at the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris – has proven a vital resource in seeking to understand his research project and the art history dimension of his work. As it turns out, the psychiatrist seemed to have a big interest in antique drapery and amassed considerable knowledge on the subject throughout his career. Not only did he conduct extensive research, but drew a great number of sketches as well as collecting postcards representing draped figure within various civilizations and during various different eras.

The third chapter of the thesis will be dedicated to adding another layer of analysis to the corpus of images, chiefly by analysing Clérambault's own writing, primarily the *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés Indigènes*. An analysis of Clérambault's notebooks and various assembled notes belonging to his personal archive will also be included in order to help to determine whether these may be seen to offer further insights into his photography. In analysing these texts, we will find further evidence of how the photographs served the purpose of documenting drapery traditions in order to illustrate the specific habits and traditions relating to drapery culture as an aesthetic practice, and thus to further an understanding of contemporary drapery practice within a broader art-historical context, suggesting that the photographs might, in turn, be understood less as a means of preserving a *culture* and more as a means of preserving an *aesthetic tradition* transcending an ethnographic preoccupation. Clérambault believed that studying what he called "living draperies" would shed light on life during Classical Antiquity. In exploring his writings, we will see that the psychiatrist also deplored existing modes of

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inépuisables” in G. G. de Clérambault, “Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l’École des Beaux-Arts,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

representation of drapery in art and wished to teach his contemporaries how to represent it properly. To do so, he used the work of Léon Heuzey – and in particular his writing on antiquity – as a foundation for this thinking, his writing, and his creative practice. This chapter aims to develop our understanding of the photographic corpus of images realized in Morocco by considering how they should be understood by taking into account Clérambault's views on the significance of drapery within an art historical context.

### **1.11 Clérambault within the context of psychiatry**

Clérambault's failure to articulate the relationship between his psychiatric practice and his creative practice as a photographer and how the two can be seen as part of a wider and unified project can explain the misunderstanding of the creation and the reception of Clérambault's photographs. This thesis aims to correct this shortcoming by explicating the discernible contextual and discursive influences upon Clérambault's creative practice in order to enable us to more fully understand how photography and the psychiatric practice can be understood as a unified whole. By situating the images back in their rightful context, this thesis aims to fill in this gap and to enable us to understand how these images should be read.

The final chapter of this thesis will aim to bring to light the links between Clérambault's medical research and his practice as a photographer. In order to do so, Clérambault's journey as a psychiatrist and the influences that shaped his later research will be discussed. However, this analysis will not only demonstrate that there is a link between Clérambault's photography and his profession, but it will also seek to demonstrate that this dialogue constituted the driving force behind the emergence of Clérambault's artistic creation. Throughout art history, the lines between art and science have been blurred. The two domains interacted and communicated to enrich each other. This thesis will indicate that Clérambault enabled progress in both of these

domains by producing an important and innovative photographic oeuvre. In arguing this, the final chapter of this thesis will attempt to understand Clérambault 's creative practice by studying his photographic work conjointly with his medical research, indicating how they are linked and, in turn, how they should be understood. In the process, this thesis shows how Clérambault's education and own psychiatric research influenced his photographic practice in the sense that the images were created as methodically as his "interrogation certificates," and they were influenced by his own theorization of mental illnesses in both "Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme" (1908) and "Erotomania" (1885).



## Chapter 2: Clérambault, Orientalism and Ethnography

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How does Clérambault's corpus of photographs fit within the Oriental discourse? This chapter aims to situate Clérambault's images within the context of twentieth-century Orientalism and to evaluate how he fits within this wider discursive practice. As such, the first half of this chapter will begin by situating Clérambault's photography in this context by offering an account of the emergence of Orientalist discourse and the Orientalist tradition of photographing women from "the Orient." This chapter will thus begin with a definition of the term "Orientalism" and a brief overview of existing debates (primarily within the domain of postcolonial studies) oriented around Edward Said's original use of the term. In particular, Ali Behdad and Ziauddin Sardar's critiques of the limitations of Said's binary conception of a divide between East and West (or Orient and Occident) elides ambiguities and the capacity for resistance. This chapter will then move on to consider the specific development of Orientalism in France: in particular, reflecting on how the idea of the "*mission civilisatrice*" (or civilizing mission) was especially strong in France, as well as drawing on Margaret Majumdar's analysis of how this civilizing dimension of the French colonial project reflects an ideology rooted in Enlightenment thinking. The section following this analysis of Orientalism in France then focusses on the specific question of photography within Orientalist discourse, exploring how photographers such as Maxime du Camp, who were associated with the Orientalist institution Société Orientale, toured "the Orient" (for instance, Egypt, Palestine, and Syria) often with governmental or non-governmental financial backing in order to document the lives of those living there. This section also explores how Orientalist photography used studios to reconstruct or invent scenarios associated with "the Orient." Having thus established how photography was developed as an aspect of French colonial activities and how we might begin to conceptualize this as a manifestation of a wider Orientalist agenda, this chapter then proceeds to narrow the

focus onto how photographers (and specifically French photographers) exhibited a particular interest in foregrounding women in their photographic documentation of the subaltern condition of those living in "the Orient." In particular, it will be argued that gendered representation coalesced around Orientalist representation resulting in a two-pronged subjugation process. More specifically, it will be argued that photography enabled Orientalist discourse. The female subaltern subject is doubly oppressed through representations that other them on the grounds of their gender and their ethnic identities by lending an air of veracity to the representations in question.

Furthermore, it will be suggested that the commodification of othering depictions of "Oriental" women through the studio process and the transformation of the photograph into a saleable commodity linked to the tourism industry heightened the impact of this Orientalist and, at times, misogynistic discourse. In developing this analysis, particular emphasis will be placed upon the significance of the veil. The role of the veil within Islamic culture will be explored, and it will be proposed (drawing upon Malek Alloula's study *The Colonial Harem*) that the act of representing unveiled women can be interpreted as a symbolic act of unveiling the protection and disguise of individual identity to expose the "Oriental" female and bring them into the domain of colonial and patriarchal control through the establishment of an intimate knowledge base.

Having established a sense of the discursive preconditions that led to the popularity of representations of non-Western female subjects within photography – and in particular veiled subjects – the second half of this chapter will then move on to develop an analysis of how Clérambault may be seen to configure within all of this. This analysis will compare Clérambault's photography to the works of other contemporary photographers and artists who similarly represented non-Western female subjects and attempting to situate Clérambault's

photographic practice within other related discursive trends. In the process, we will be asking: how did Clérambault's practice differ from that of his contemporaries? Furthermore, what can be ascertained in terms of his approach in relation to the theory of Orientalism established in the introduction to this chapter, and in particular in relation to the role between Orientalist discourse and gender?

This analysis will commence by comparing Clérambault's photography to the depictions of veiled women and "Oriental" women more generally in a selection of postcards identified by Alloula in his study: in particular, focusing upon the tendency to eroticize the female image and the staged-ness of these studio produced representations compared to Clérambault's photographs. Having thus established key differences between Clérambault's practice and the tradition identified by Alloula, it will be proposed that Clérambault's photography can instead be considered contiguous with a broader practice of "colonial art": reflecting in particular upon the co-founder of the Société des Peintres Orientalistes, Léonce Bénédite's remarks concerning the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture at the turn of the twentieth century so that a key objective became the *documentation* rather than the artistic rendering of the colonial subject. The broader interest in documenting folklore and primitivism is considered in this context, and the argument is developed that the emergence of a preoccupation with ethnography may be explained by a preoccupation with developing originally myths surrounding colonizing cultures, as well as providing a justification for colonization by suggesting that the objective is underlining it is the preservation (rather than the domination) of existing cultures through sophisticated ethnographic techniques. Thus, it will be proposed that rather than being seen to belong to the Orientalist trend of eroticizing and exoticizing the female subject (as in the photographs identified by Alloula), Clérambault's photographs can be interpreted as signaling an ethnographic interest in documenting the lives of the colonized, thus

less obviously serving an Orientalist agenda by subtly demarcating the subaltern's sense of otherness. Having established this, the work of two artists who similarly depicted women in the *haik* (a traditional women's garment worn in the Maghreb region) – namely, Jean Besancenot and Gabriel Rousseau – will be analysed to try and determine the extent to which Clérambault's practice may be seen to be comparable. It will ultimately be proposed that both Besancenot and Rousseau's drawings exhibit a greater deal of attention on the aesthetic dimension of the veil and of Moroccan dress more generally, and that this reinforces a sense that Clérambault was specifically interested in the ethnographic function of the veil. Finally, reinforcing a sense that Clérambault's depictions of veiled women can be seen to have performed an ethnographic function – this chapter will explore the role of the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles at which Clérambault's work was exhibited – making use of archival documents such as the curator Auguste Terrier and the commissaire general of the 1922 exhibition Adrien Artaud's remarks concerning the function of the exhibition. Ultimately, it will be seen that the exhibition served the function of justifying colonization on the grounds of the ability of protectorates and colonizers to preserve and document sensitively given cultures, and that Clérambault's contribution (for which he was awarded) may thus be seen to be contiguous with this agenda. Further archival evidence making use of Clérambault's letters will be provided to support these claims.

## **2.1 Orientalism**

The term "Orientalism" appeared in the French academy's dictionary for the first time in 1838. In essence, Orientalism refers to the practice of representing and reflecting on Oriental civilizations by referring to written materials. As Pierre Bonte puts it, Orientalist discourse may be viewed as followed:

An immense body of work within which the deciphering of texts and languages is considered key to access knowledge and unknown or lost wisdom, collect inventories, translate and comment manuscripts to develop the study of civilizations and cultures from their written sources.<sup>79</sup>

The study of Orientalism was revolutionized in 1978 with Edward Said's study *Orientalism*. In this study, Said redefined Orientalism as "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident.'"<sup>80</sup> In the course of his analysis, Said explains that he has "found it useful [...] to employ [...] Foucault's notion of a discourse, as described by him in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and in *Discipline and Punish*, to identify Orientalism", leading him to the contention that "without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage-and even produce-the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period."<sup>81</sup> Foucault describes the idea of a "discourse" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* as a means of no longer relating the study of texts "to the primary ground of experience, nor to the *a priori* [deductive] authority of knowledge," but instead to "the rules of formation in discourse itself."<sup>82</sup> It is, in other words, an approach in which texts are seen to be a by-product of discourse rather than a straightforward representation of experience or knowledge. The idea that discourse is linked to "systematic discipline" referred to by Said may be seen to refer to Foucault's theory in his text *Discipline and Punish* that

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<sup>79</sup> "Un immense travail de déchiffrement, les textes et les langues étant considérés comme des clés pour accéder à des savoirs et à des sagesses inconnues ou perdues, rassemble inventorie, traduit et commente des manuscrits en vue de développer l'étude des civilisations et des cultures à partir de leurs sources écrites." in P. Bonte, *Dictionnaire de l'ethnologie et de l'anthropologie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2000), 529.

<sup>80</sup> E. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 9-10.

<sup>81</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 11.

<sup>82</sup> M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), 79.

studying discourses as a self-generating phenomenon within a late modern context leads to the conclusion that “discourse” often serves the function of enforcing power structures: for instance by enabling the imposition of “a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity” through disciplinary tactics of subjugation,<sup>83</sup> for instance, in the form of the implementation of strategies of 'normalization.'<sup>84</sup> in the guise of 'gratification.'<sup>85</sup> The relevance of this in relation to Said's conception of Orientalism is that it enables Said to comprehend how Orientalist discourse should not be perceived as the by-product of experience or knowledge on the part of those responsible for it, but should instead be interpreted as one discursive practice among many that within a late-capitalist disciplinary setting perhaps functions to subjugate human behaviour through the dissemination of knowledge. On this basis, Said is able to conceptualize Orientalist discourse as a broad phenomenon involving "a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators" whom all have in common the fact that they have "accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, epics, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, 'mind,' destiny, and so on"<sup>86</sup> and, more than this, that Orientalist discourse is about more than “an elaboration [...] of a basic geographical distinction”, as it instead functions as "a whole series of 'interests' which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description [...] a certain will or intention to understand" is communicated "in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world."<sup>87</sup> Orientalism, thus conceived,

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<sup>83</sup> M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London: Penguin, 1991), 66.

<sup>84</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 307.

<sup>85</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 181.

<sup>86</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 9-10.

<sup>87</sup> Said, *Orientalism*, 20.

is a means of demarcating the East as "other" through a heterogeneous discourse that ultimately functions to separate "us" from "them" through the proliferation of knowledge of the "Orient."

Said's characterization of Orientalist discourse in terms of a series of binary oppositions (Occident and Orient, self and *Other*, we and they, civilized and uncivilized) have, since the publication of *Orientalism*, come under scrutiny from postcolonial scholars for failing to take into account the nuances in the relationship between the colonizer and colonized, the systems responsible for its reinforcement, and the capacity for resistance against these trends.

For example, maintaining that the history of Orientalism is the history of "the Western self, its ideas, doings, concerns, and fashions," Ziauddin Sardar argues for an understanding of Orientalism as a sequence of discourses which, although interconnected by a coherent set of common features, adapt to "changing historic situations, scholarly and literary trends," making possible the existence of 'sites of resistance.'<sup>88</sup> Said's monolithic notion of Orientalism has also been criticized by Ali Behdad, who claims Orientalism reproduces stereotypes of the Orientalist whose power of representation allowed indisputable domination of the victimized Oriental, leaving no space for potential differences among the various modes of Orientalist representation.<sup>89</sup> Instead, Behdad has emphasized Orientalism's ability to incorporate heterogeneity through "dispersive tactics, discursive heterogeneities, strategic irregularities, and historical discontinuities."<sup>90</sup> In late 19<sup>th</sup> century travellers' accounts, which problematize the monolithic conception of Orientalism as a coherent entity.

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<sup>88</sup> Z. Sardar, *Orientalism* (London: Open University Press, 1999), 16.

<sup>89</sup> A. Behdad, *Belated travelers: Orientalism in the age of colonial dissolution* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1994), 11-12.

<sup>90</sup> Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the age of colonial dissolution*, 135.

Taking Western arts as the starting point of his analysis, John MacKenzie also challenges the notion of a monolithic binary discourse of Orientalism through his study of examples of this discourse within creative practice conducted in an imperial context, concluding that "arts of imperial culture have witnessed heterogeneity, change, and instability through seeking renewal and reinvigoration via contacts with other traditions, thus challenging the Orientalist binary established between an essentialized self and its other."<sup>91</sup> The following argumentation will take the position that French colonialism was thus more varied and nuanced than Said's perhaps overly simplistic demarcation between the Occident and Orient, or the colonizer and the colonized, – together with his emphasis on the inflexibility and purely dominating effects of colonial discourse – might be seen to allow.

Having thus established a working definition of Orientalism alongside an account of existing criticism of the limitations of to narrow a binary between East and West, and the general lack of specificity in Said's generalized conception of how Orientalist discourse functions - this section will lay the foundations for all that is to follow by offering an account of Orientalist discourse within a specifically French context. In the process, it will seek to ascertain what specific attributes define French Orientalist discourse, in particular by considering the significance of the "*mission civilisatrice*" (civilizing mission) and the role of the Enlightenment within this specific manifestation of Orientalist discourse.

The period 1680-1880 in Europe (and especially France) was characterized by what Raymond Schwab has referred to as the "Oriental Renaissance", reflecting a renewed interest in anything

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<sup>91</sup> J. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 208-209.



Oriental, from the societies of "the Orient" to its ways of living and its people.<sup>92</sup> However, the notion of the Orient and the geographical region it encompassed as established within the Occidental imagination was relatively vague: for some, it extended as far as India and China, but generally, it referred to the Middle East, which encompassed North Africa, the Ottoman Empire, and Iran.<sup>93</sup> Romanticism developed within Europeans an increased thirst for the exotic that the Orient embodied. These vivid images were impressed upon their consciousness by a wide variety of sources but most significantly stories of the *Thousand and One Nights*, or the popular *Arabian Nights*, which were filled with tales of kings, princesses, magic, and devils from the East.<sup>94</sup> While this interest in the exotic is perhaps suggestive of an at least ostensibly positive characterization of the Orient, as Said's analysis suggests, all this was indissociable from a sense of Western superiority over the Middle East and North Africa. Colonial powers created a series of oppositions to distinguish between European colonial powers and the lands they conquered, sometimes oriented around an idea of the exotic and geographically non-specific East, at other times founded upon firm stereotypes of Arabs as violent and promiscuous. These distinctions provided a rationale for the "*mission civilisatrice*" (civilizing mission) of the colonial power.<sup>95</sup>

Jules Ferry famously claimed in his speech to the Chambre des députés of 28 July 1885 that the civilization "by superior races" of "inferior races" was not just a "right" but also a "duty."<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> R. Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's rediscovery of India and the East, 1680—1880* (US: Columbia University Press, 1984), 1.

<sup>93</sup> V. Hugo, *Les Orientales: Poèmes* (Paris: Charles Gosselin, 1829).

<sup>94</sup> K. Bullock, *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil, Challenging Historical & Modern Stereotypes*, (London: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2002); Maxine Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, translated by R. Venus (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987).

<sup>95</sup> A. L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (US: Stanford University Press, 1997), 13.

<sup>96</sup> M. Majumdar, *Postcoloniality: The French Dimension* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 27.

Just as Michel Foucault argued in his 1978 College de France lecture entitled *Governmentality* that attempts to discipline human behaviour in the late modern period tended to be characterized by efforts to normalize and regulate human behaviour justified on the basis that such regulatory acts are necessary procedures in the art of governing – and concern “the welfare of the population” together with “the increase of its wealth” – so did late modern Orientalist discourse justify itself in terms of a sense of the responsibility of imperial authority and imperial power to civilize and assimilate the Oriental other for the benefit of society as a whole.<sup>97</sup> As Margaret Majumdar puts it In relation to Ferry's 1885 speech: "This was the rationalization of colonial conquest, not for pleasure or to exploit the weak but to raise them to the level of civilization."<sup>98</sup> Ideas concerning the apparent need to civilize the subaltern other" were far from being an invention of Third Republic imperialism (1870-1940). Victor Hugo had already (as far back as 1838) described the conquest of Algeria as the march of civilization against barbarism, characterizing this process as the French fulfilling their mission to bring light to the benighted people.<sup>99</sup> They were, however, consolidated during this period: Majumdar draws attention to the words of the French Prime Minister André Léon Blum in an intervention to the Chambre des deutes on 9 July 1925 for encapsulating the assimilationist position as he remarks: "We love our country too much to dissociate ourselves from the expansion of French thought and civilization. We recognize that there is a right, and even a duty, for superior races to draw to them those races that have not attained the same level of culture and to summon them to progress".<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> M. Foucault, “Governmentality” in *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984 Volume Two*, edited by James Faubion (London: Allen Lane: 2000), 216.

<sup>98</sup> Foucault, “Governmentality”, 216.

<sup>99</sup> V. Hugo, *Choses Vues* (Paris: Huntington, 1996).

<sup>100</sup> Majumdar, *Postcoloniality*, 24.

At the core of this civilizing mission was not just the question of race (and a eugenic sense of racial superiority) but also a sense of the superior values of the Enlightenment. As Majumdar puts it: "In the French case, however, the mission civilisatrice, as taken up by the Republican champions of empire, was not just defined in terms of race; the universal values of the Enlightenment also formed an essential reference point", before continuing: "the archetypal colonist in the French Enlightenment mould took upon himself the mission to bring the light of reason and science to the dark regions of the planet, where primitiveness, obscurantism, and barbarism held sway. It was when, and only when, the "natives" had been sufficiently educated that they could aspire to the full enjoyment of the political rights associated with the Rights of Man."<sup>101</sup>

## 2.2 Orientalism and photography

If, then, as Majumdar attests, French Orientalist discourse was characterized by a clear preoccupation with civilizing colonized cultures – and this can, in turn, be conceptualized as reflecting a broader Enlightenment agenda – we might ask ourselves: what role did photography have to play within these developments? In attempting to answer this question, this section will pay special attention to the role of photography as a means of documentation, focusing on how Orientalist photography can be seen to perform the subjugatory function outlined above as a characteristic of Orientalist discourse by maintaining existing power imbalances between the colonizer and the colonized. At the same time, this section will explore how photographic practices (in particular the evolution of studio spaces) and the commercialization of photography in the period in question may be seen to have heightened the capacity of photography to perform this function.

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<sup>101</sup> Majumdar, *Postcoloniality*, 24.

The Middle East played a critical role in the development of photography both as new technology and as an art form. In fact, the crucial link between the history of photography and Europe's attempt to generate knowledge around the Orient in order to facilitate its subordination has existed since the invention of the daguerreotype in 1839. At the meeting in which Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre's invention was introduced to the Chambre des députés, Dominique Francois Arago commented upon "the extraordinary advantages that could have been derived from so exact and rapid means of reproduction during the expedition to Egypt."<sup>102</sup> Arago recommended that the French government immediately equip institutions of knowledge concerned with the Middle East with this new technology to further the project of Orientalism. Only eight days after this meeting, a group of French painters and scholars led by Horace Vernet, an Orientalist painter, and the daguerreotypist Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet went to Egypt to photograph Egyptian antiquity.<sup>103</sup> Given this, it should not come as a surprise that Daguerre's English counterpart, William Henry Fox Talbot, published a pamphlet entitled "The Talbotype Applied to Hieroglyphics," which was distributed amongst archaeologists and Orientalists.<sup>104</sup> Egypt and Palestine were among the first earliest testing grounds for the new medium, as photographers joined artists on their grand tour of the Orient. Many European photographers, including John Cramb, Francis Frith, Maxime du Camp, and Auguste Salzmann, followed Arago's suggestion and travelled to the Middle East to photograph various places and monuments. From its very beginning, photography thus clearly participated in the discovery of foreign lands, and as Christine Barthe acknowledged: "it allowed those using it to reduce the

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<sup>102</sup> F. Arago, "Report of the Commission of the Chamber of Deputies" in A. Trachtenberg ed., *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven: Leete's Island, 1980), 17.

<sup>103</sup> A. Behdad and L. Gartlan. *Photography's Orientalism New Essays on Colonial Representation* (US: J. Paul Getty Trust, 2013), 14.

<sup>104</sup> N. Perez, *Focus East: Early Photography in the Near East (1839-1885)* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 15.

world to exact, transportable and non-fading images."<sup>105</sup> The fact that the representation of the Orient was so present in the early history of photography, specifically in France and in England, is indicative of the nature of the wider economic and political relations between Western Europe and the Middle East that allowed for such photographic projects to be executed. Indeed, the aforementioned photographic projects in Egypt would never have been realized were it not for Napoleon's 1798 expedition to Egypt and the following establishment of sponsorship from French governmental and non-governmental institutions for such projects.

On the whole, during the first two decades of photography, the Middle East generally appeared to be a world empty of people and full of stark historical monuments.<sup>106</sup> Of course: such works are not without interest from the perspective of someone studying the construction of orientalist discourse, as they are indicative of how a sense of Oriental culture was imagined and mediated. Nonetheless, it is those rare moments in which a human figure appears in the form of a passer-by captured involuntarily by the camera or in which an individual indigenous or connected to the place being documented is asked to pose for the camera that the power balances at play being the Western project of documenting the East becomes most transparent.

We, for instance, find this in one of the best known of the early photographic tours, undertaken by Maxime Du Camp, who visited Egypt, Palestine, and Syria in 1848 and 1849 accompanied by his good friend, the novelist Gustave Flaubert who documented their whole trip. Du Camp belonged to the Orientalist institution Société Orientale, which had a government commission from the Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Commerce to photograph historic monuments in

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<sup>105</sup> "Elle permet de réduire le monde à des images exactes, transportables, sans dépérissement" in C. Barthe, "Photographies d'après nature." in A. Chapman, C. Barthe et P. Revol, eds., *Cap Horn, 1882-1882: Rencontre avec les Indiens Yaghan* (Paris: La Martinière, 1995), 118.

<sup>106</sup> The slow exposure of the photographs meant that moving people would disappear on the image even if they were there.

Egypt, Palestine, and Syria. Prior to his journey to the Middle East, Du Camp received training from Gustave le Gray to produce good quality negatives. Upon his return, he published his photographs, and they became an instant success due to the popular and scholarly interest in Orientalism at the time.<sup>107</sup> Contrary to most early photographs in the orientalist tradition, a large number of Du Camp's images included human figures posing in front of Egypt's ancient monuments. Du Camp, for instance, used one of the Nile steamer's sailors the party travelled on, Hajji Ismail, to pose for him in front of the objects and landmarks he was photographing to establish a sense of scale (Figure 2.1). To persuade the man to remain still for the required length of time, Du Camp transformed the camera into a threatening object. As he himself recalled:

I told him that the brass tube of the lens jutting out from the camera was a cannon, which would vomit a hail of shot if he had the misfortune to move- a story which immobilized him completely.<sup>108</sup>

Hajji Ismail was one of the first in a long line of people whom European photographers would persuade, intimidate, or force to pose in front of their cameras, translating existing power imbalances into a visual image exhibited throughout Europe, a candid representation of the Orient. Sadly, the pursuit of the unwilling subject often added to the excitement of the photographic enterprise. Of course, it would be wrong to suggest that everyone who appeared in European photography of the Middle East did so against their will: rather, we might observe on the basis of this example that the relationship between the photographer and the subject was

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<sup>107</sup> C. Lyons, J. K. Papadopoulos, L. S. Stewart and A. Szegedy-Maszak, *Antiquity & Photography Early Views of Ancient Mediterranean Sites* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2005), 94.

<sup>108</sup> F. Steegmuller. *Flaubert and Madame Bovary* (London: Robert Hale, 1939), 196.

rarely one of equality or spontaneous co-operation. The subject was chosen by the photographer and had little or no control over the resulting photograph.

In the period leading up to the First World War, a large proportion of the photographs taken in the Middle East were commercial studios' products.<sup>109</sup> This commercialism, combined with the photographer's monopoly over the choice of subject, explains the rapid development of a certain range of photographic clichés concerning the Middle East people. These clichés may be seen to have reflected representations of subaltern and 'Oriental' subjects in Orientalist literature and painting, but they also created an archetype of their own. Already by the 1860s, *Orientalist photography* (though not coined that way yet) had become a big business in Europe and the United States. By the 1870s, the major cities of the Middle East had been drawn into the commercial network.<sup>110</sup> Unsurprisingly, the largest demand for the photographs was not generated locally but rather by Western audiences who had never visited the region and wished to see a "true" representation of the Orient. The emerging-market also catered to soldiers, tourists, pilgrims, and European residents of the Middle East.<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, the Middle East's promotion as a must-visit tourist destination also created a high demand for souvenirs to take home, and what better a souvenir of travel, adventure, and exoticism than a photograph? For instance, France recommended Algeria to adventurous tourists only a few years after its colonization.<sup>112</sup> Palestine's first tours began in the 1850s, and Cook's tour first arrived in Egypt in 1868. The Suez Canal opening the following year meant that a constant stream of Europeans

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<sup>109</sup> S. Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*, 39.

<sup>110</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*, 38.

<sup>111</sup> Bullock, *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil, Challenging Historical & Modern Stereotypes*, 15.

<sup>112</sup> R. Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics Art, Colonialism, and French North Africa, 1880-1930* (US: University of California Press, 2003), 37.

passed through and often stopped in Egypt on their way to India. For all of these reasons, the photographic trade spread at an incredible speed, almost as quickly as that within Europe and the United States. Commercial photographic studios produced pictures for purchase in a variety of forms, from postcards to stereoscopic slides mounted on cards, lantern slides, and loose prints ready to be framed or mounted in photo-albums. Stereoscopic slides became all the rage in the 1860s and 1870s: a technique that gave the illusion of a three-dimensional picture when seen through a stereoscope. Simultaneously, postcards made their appearance and quickly became the new, attractive, and fashionable form of postal communication as well as popular items to collect. Many of the photographs destined for the pleasure of European tourists were mostly taken in studios. This was partly due to the difficulty of accessing equipment and models (especially women).<sup>113</sup> Thus, owing largely to the technical difficulties associated with shooting and printing photographs in the early days of the medium, most of the Oriental photographs were taken indoors or in outdoor studio sets, although they were presented as though they were “real-life” scenes, candid snapshots of Middle Eastern life and its people.

### **2.3 Photographing the Oriental woman**

Having thus established how photography was developed as a prop for French colonial activities, and how we might thus begin to conceptualize it as a manifestation of a wider Orientalist agenda, in this section, we will bring the focus closer to a consideration of Clérambault by narrowing our focus onto the question of how photographers (and specifically French photographers) exhibited a particular interest in foregrounding women in their photographic documentation of the subaltern condition of those living in "the Orient." In particular, it will explore how gendered representation coalesce around Orientalist representation through the formation of a two-pronged process of subjugation in which the

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<sup>113</sup> Further discussions can be found in sections 2.3 and 2.6.



female subaltern subject is doubly oppressed through representations that other them on the grounds of their gender and on the grounds of their ethnic identities. In addition to this, this section will consider how photography functions especially effectively in this regard by lending an air of veracity to the representations in question. Furthermore, it will be proposed that the commodification of othering depictions of "Oriental" women through the studio process and through the transformation of the photograph into a saleable commodity linked to the tourism industry heightened the impact of this Orientalist and, at a time, misogynistic discourse.

Despite photography's reputation for presenting an objective vision of the world and despite its aura of authenticity, Orientalist photography can still be seen to construct realities that pertain to the realm of the imagination and dreams.<sup>114</sup> This is immediately discernible in the way that Orientalist painting had a considerable influence on 19<sup>th</sup>-century photography in the Middle East. Common subjects found in Delacroix or Ingres paintings such as the harem or the odalisque were replicated in studio photography. Indeed, reflecting the non-empirical biases of Orientalist photography and its tendency to be a projection of the male imagination (or as Laura Mulvey would put it, the "male gaze."<sup>115</sup>) no other figure was as frequent a topic in Orientalist photography as the Oriental woman. The representation of Middle Easterners and particularly Middle Eastern women did not differ dramatically from similar types of photographic images created by Westerners of women in other parts of the world. The female is objectified: frequently dehumanized and frequently depicted as a sexual object. At the same time, however, the subordination project that female representation may be seen to enact is compounded in Orientalist depictions with a double bind of oppression, as efforts to subordinate on the grounds of cultural difference coalesce around gendered ways of seeing. In his study, *The Colonial*

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<sup>114</sup> M. Khemir, *L'Orientalisme, L'Orient des photographes au XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle* (Paris: Nathan, 2001).

<sup>115</sup> L. Mulvey. *Visual and Other Pleasures* (London: Palgrave, 2019), 22.

*Harem*, Malek Alloula, for instance, considers French postcards of women in Algeria, describing what he terms the "pseudo-knowledge" generated around "stereotypes" that serve as a "fertilizer" for a nationalistic pro-Western vision.<sup>116</sup> Taking a slightly different angle, in her study *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices* Abigail Solomon-Godeau considers artistic portrayals of nude Oriental women and argues that such representations convey a sense of the sexual availability of "Oriental" women, arguing that this acts a form of imperial violence as evidence of "the violence that may inhere in the representational act itself."<sup>117</sup> In both instances, an argument is clearly formulated that photographic representations of women that might be described as Orientalist combine objectifying tendencies with an agenda to promote the superiority of the West over the East, or at the very least to demarcate a sense of Oriental difference. The figure of the woman as an erotic and exotic object of the European gaze, and therefore as an emblem of cultural difference and inferiority (typically taking the form of a perpetuated archetype of the sexually available subaltern woman) can also be seen in the photographs of African women posed against a studio backdrop depicting the jungle (see Figure 2.2) or photographs of the Japanese geisha (see Figure 2.3) to present only a couple of examples. In short, all these studio photographs used poses and the juxtaposition of objects to suggest sensuality, sexual availability, and primitiveness.

Simultaneously, as we can discern similarities between how Orientalist photography functioned to denigrate and demarcate women and other misogynistic aspects of Orientalist discourse, we might also note a unique difference in terms of the function that photography

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<sup>116</sup> M. Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 4.

<sup>117</sup> A. Solomon-Godeau, "Reconsidering Erotic Photography: Notes for a Project of Historical Salvage," in *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices*, ed. A. Solomon-Godeau (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 221.

was able to play within this wider discourse. We might, for instance, speculate that there are significant differences between painting and photography in terms of how they appear to the viewer. As Roland Barthes has famously suggested, this is a product of how the chemical process behind photography makes it able to claim to “represent a reality” in a way that no artist can claim of painting, even if the conditions under which a photographer works are in fact contrived, and the techniques enable the photographer to manipulate their subject matter in a manner that is strongly comparable to the process of a painter.<sup>118</sup> In other words, the medium of photography transforms the studio arrangements into reality, thus, in the context of photographing 'Oriental' women, it is uniquely positioned to make truth claims regarding the way that people in the Middle East looked, dressed, and behaved (even if what we are seeing has been orchestrated). This issue has parallels with Susan Sontag's observations in her 2003 study *Regarding the Pain of Others*, in which she reflects on Virginia Woolf's 1938 publication *Three Guineas* – a book-length essay in which Woolf at one point discusses a photograph taken during the Spanish Civil War that depicts the horror of war through the representation of a mutilated body. In questioning how Woolf constructs meaning around the photo, one of the points that Sontag makes is that any information about the photograph in question is absent. She notes that the pictures 'sent out by the government in Madrid seem, improbably, not to have been labelled.'<sup>119</sup> The specific meaning of the photo is erased. Yet, Sontag notes that this non-specificity does not diminish the photograph's capacity to speak to the individuals concerned or to ring true. In a sense, rather, the non-specificity heightens the photograph's power as it enables the viewer to construct a generalized view. Sontag writes: 'For Woolf, as for many anti-war polemicists, war is generic, and the images she describes are of anonymous,

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<sup>118</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*, 40.

<sup>119</sup> S. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 18.

generic victims.<sup>120</sup> Sontag's claims regarding the anonymity of the photograph and its capacity to erase historical and cultural specificity – combined with the suggestion that this enables the production of 'anonymous' and 'generic' identity formations that appeal to the viewer – has clear resonances with what we are here describing: the constructed image of the subaltern female shot in a studio not only elicits trusts because as a photograph the spectator trusts its capacity to represent reality: it also in its general-ness produces within the viewer a capacity to reinforce archetypes of a general and anonymous nature. Thus, in a sense, photography proves the perfect vehicle for the Orientalist discourse, here coalescing around a gendered discourse on the promiscuous, available, culturally and morally inferior female.

In photography, just as in painting, images drawing from Orientalist perceptions of the character and role of Middle Eastern women were among the most sellable items in the commercial market. For instance, Saadia and Lakhdar – two Algerian writers – here describe how the mass commodification of studio photographs perpetuated European stereotypes of Middle Eastern women as an erotic seductress:

An entire industry was there to serve him [the European man]: coloured pictures showing some of the regional characteristics of the *mouquère* – the young girl from the desert (Nailia) or the Aurès, the young Kabyl woman or the city woman from Algiers, Oran or Constantine, ludicrously attired, or in a state of "Oriental" undress; postcards for tourists and soldiers, cheap novelties; bizarre or salacious tales peddled on street corners.<sup>121</sup>

Though many women artists and writers contributing to a Western image of the Orient, the imagery and especially the practice of photographing Middle Eastern women was largely a

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<sup>120</sup> Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 18.

<sup>121</sup> P. Lucas and J. C. Vatin, *L'Algérie des anthropologues* (Paris: Maspero, 1982), 246.

male preserve, mostly shaped by men and their desire.<sup>122</sup> In fact, according to many theorists,<sup>123</sup> Orientalist fantasies about women as exotic beauties of the East drove European men to travel to the Middle East, hoping to become acquainted with them and maybe seen to explain some of the underlying fascinations with the Orient. For instance, we might consider the following male imperial perspective from the 1893 *L'Algerie de nos jours*:

The kasbah! This magic word intrigued me when I was a child [...] I only knew that bloody fights between Arab and soldiers took place there at night, and also that women were to be found there. Which women? I had no idea. Undoubtedly there were unnatural creatures, quite different from all other women. I imagined a den of danger and enchantment, straight from the Arabian nights.<sup>124</sup>

However, European travellers arrived with such high expectations that they were often very disappointed upon arrival in the Middle East, as Léon Michel pointed out in his 1883 *Tunis*:

Whatever has been written about the Orient, French men happily believe that they will meet the famous odalisques, as beautiful as the morning star and just waiting to be loved. The European man thinks that he will find in Africa beautiful palaces with a balcony over the door to the street, where a charming prisoner will be waiting for a gallant French knight in shining armour to rescue her. They forget that the harems are well guarded and that the *moushrabias* at the windows make it impossible to communicate, even to exchange glances.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Malika Mehdi, "A western invention of Arab Womanhood: The 'Oriental' Female" in H. Afshar, *Women in the Middle East: Perceptions, Realities, and Struggles for Liberations* (London: Macmillan, 1993).

<sup>123</sup> See Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*.

<sup>124</sup> J. Mabro, ed., *Veiled Half-Truths: Western Travellers' Perceptions of Middle Eastern Women* (London: IB Tauris, 1991), 31-2.

<sup>125</sup> L. Michel, *Tunis* [1883] quoted in Mabro, *Veiled Half-Truths*, 32.

Michel's assertion shows his disappointment in not being able to enact the European fantasy of the valiant knight playing the saviour to the poor damsel in distress while simultaneously entertaining the Orientalist fantasy that women are hidden to outsiders and that they *would* perhaps be available to European men were it not for the guards at their door. Europeans often travelled to the Orient with high expectations only to be disappointed with the sights they saw or, in fact, did not see. These European men complain that women are hidden from them. It is also frequently suggested that the women they do encounter do not meet expectations. As one traveller attested: "Eastern women, even the young, are the more often hideous than not, whatever legends may have been suggested by their seclusion and the dark eyes under the voluminous veil".<sup>126</sup> Europeans were frustrated at being denied the opportunity to look at women without their veils. This denial was perceived as a true affront by most European visitors who felt they had the right to see what was behind it. As Katherine Bullock has argued, "to be denied the opportunity to see was to be denied the power of the superior over the inferior and [...] seeing in the form of possession".<sup>127</sup> Quite literally, the veil was a physical barrier that forbade the viewer to see and thus possess Middle Eastern women. This may be seen to suggest that the attempt to render the unveiled woman in pictorial terms can, in fact, be read as attempts to own the veiled woman: to symbolically unveil the protection disguising their personal individuality and thus assert both male and colonial authority over the subaltern female subject. Frantz Fanon has pointed out another phenomenon that occurred amongst Europeans visiting the Middle East. Travelers quickly and discontentedly realized that not only could they not see the women and the scenes they had expected to see, but in fact, they were the ones who were seen and observed by the Orientals. Fanon writes, "the woman who sees without being seen frustrates the colonizer. There is no reciprocity. She does not yield herself, does not give

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<sup>126</sup> F. Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, translated by H. Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 45.

<sup>127</sup> Bullock, *Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil*, 6.

herself, does not offer herself".<sup>128</sup> Though handbooks and personal guides had advised European tourists to veil so as to see without being seen, they certainly did not expect to become the object of spectacle rather than the spectator.

#### 2.4 The veil and Orientalism

This section builds on the suggestion just made that Orientalist photography of women performed a symbolic unveiling of their protected individual identity disguised by the veil by considering in greater detail the symbolic value of the veil and how it came to be associated with Islamic culture during the period in question. In particular, this section will also consider how the veil came to be interpreted as a sign of a culture that is allegedly primitive in nature and without basic liberties, against which Western intervention (for instance, through the symbolic act of removing the item that protected and disguised the individual identity of the "Oriental" woman) can be seen to have been contiguous with the civilizing intervention performed by Orientalist discourse more generally.

No site is more conflated with the "Muslim woman" than "the veil," which is as true in Euro-American visual culture as it is in Islamic circles and discourse. The phenomenon is not new and has long been prevalent within certain cultures and traditions both within and outside of Islam. In fact, although mostly associated with Muslim women, neither the veil nor the practice of veiling is an invention of *or* unique to Islam. Christian women in the Near East veiled long before the creation of Islam and continued to veil in Europe until the twelfth century.<sup>129</sup> Before them, Jewish women veiled, as did Roman, Greek, and Indian women, among many of whom veiling was a privilege belonging to women of the upper classes and subsequently an aspiration

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<sup>128</sup> Fanon, *A Dying Colonialism*, 44.

<sup>129</sup> K. Shove, "The Politics of the Veil in Medieval Christianity," *Saba Mahmood and the Practice of Feminist Historiography*, Vol.7, no. 4 (December 2019): 245–262.

for lower-class women. Mohja Kahf also points out that women veiled in the ancient pagan Near East.<sup>130</sup> Statuettes of veiled priestesses date back to 2500 BCE, long before any of the three Abrahamic religions were even created. Another difficulty in any scholarship on the veil lies in its origin within the Islamic religion and its presence in the Qu'ran. In fact, throughout its thirty chapters, the Muslim Holy Book is relatively quiet on the subject of seclusion and the veiling of women. In total, the term *hijab* (the Arabic word commonly used to describe a headscarf) appears seven times, mostly referring to a physical or metaphorical barrier without any reference to women or how they should dress.<sup>131</sup>

The interest in Muslim women and their veils only emerged at a centrepiece of Western Orientalist narratives. Europeans started to establish themselves as a colonial power in Muslim countries during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Leila Ahmed has suggested that the western obsession with the veil was first associated with the writings of the renowned misogynist Evelyn Baring, 1st Earl of Cromer, and others like him. The then British consul-general of Egypt, Cromer, had quite decided views on Islam, women in Islam and the veil. Cromer, for instance believed that the veil and segregation were manifest signs of female oppression in Islam and that these customs were the fundamental reasons responsible for the "backwardness"<sup>132</sup> of Islamic societies as a whole. As Meyda Yeğenoğlu puts it:

The veil is taken as a sign of the inherently oppressive and unfree nature of the entire tradition of Islam and Oriental cultures, and by extension, it is used as proof

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<sup>130</sup> M. Kahf, "From Her Royal Body the Robe was removed: The Blessings of the Veil and the Trauma of Forced Unveilings in the Middle East" in J. Heath, ed., *The Veil: Women Writers on its History, Lore, and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

<sup>131</sup> S. S. Alvi, H. Hoodfar and S. McDonough (eds.), *The Muslim Veil in North America Issues and Debates* (Toronto: Ontario, Women's Press, 2003).; F. Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite; A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Right in Islam*, translated by M. J. Lakeland (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1991).

<sup>132</sup> L. Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 152.



of oppression of women in these societies. When the necessity to modernize these cultures was taken for granted, there was no hesitation in morally condemning the veiling practice, for it was regarded as an impediment to modernization.<sup>133</sup>

Europe's obsession with the veil resulted in the form of a variety of motives, and it is impossible to deny that the colonial period and the tradition of Orientalism indelibly marked a turning point in the history of the perception of the veil in both the East and the West, as the veil took on enormous proportions representing something much greater than the position of women in Islamic societies. The cloth became the unbridgeable divide between two worlds: forever redefined as a symbol visually signalling both cultural difference and inferiority. The oppressed Muslim woman and her veil were also used to justify the French occupation of Muslim countries.<sup>134</sup> Suppose veiling became synonymous with female oppression, Muslim male cruelty, and backwardness. In that case, the unveiling within Orientalist photography may be seen to have communicated modernity, progress, and emancipation or, in other words, western culture and values.

## 2.5 The veil and photography

This section builds on this suggestion that the photographing of Middle Eastern and Islamic women may be considered a symbolic unveiling of the protective shield disguising individual identity to render the "Oriental" female visible, and thus to subject them to male and to imperial power by reflecting on the history of the veil, and in particular by drawing attention to Malek

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<sup>133</sup> M. Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 99.

<sup>134</sup> J. Clancy-Smith, "Islam, Gender, and Identities in the Making of French Algeria 1830-1962" in J. Clancy-Smith and F. Gouda, eds., *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (London: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 173.

Alloula's study *The Colonial Harem* in which the symbolism of the veil in Orientalist photography is analysed in greater detail.

As Sarah Graham Brown argued, "no single item of clothing has had more influence on Western images of Middle Eastern women than the veil".<sup>135</sup> More specifically, the veil, or should I say, the face-veil symbolized Islam's patriarchal subordination of women. However, veiling predates Islam, it has been practiced by Christian women in the Near East before the advent of Islam and continued to do so in Europe until the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. Before them, Jewish also women veiled, and so did Roman, Greek, Assyrian and Indian women.<sup>136</sup> Veiling was often seen as a privilege belonging to women of the upper class. The veil – a sort of portable form of seclusion – was largely an urban phenomenon: it was not generally practiced in rural areas.<sup>137</sup> In addition to this, the veil was also popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, with Marni Reva Kessler noting the presence of veiled women in Édouard Manet's paintings.<sup>138</sup> Most Europeans, however, were often oblivious to the social nuances existing within the practices of veiling. They were either captivated, outraged, and quite frequently often annoyed that women's faces were not available for them to see, the women were visible yet invisible. This was particularly difficult for Western men as the veil posed a challenge to their imagination.

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<sup>135</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*, 8.

<sup>136</sup> M. Kahf, "From her royal body the robe was removed: The blessings of the veil and the trauma of forced unveilings in the Middle East" in J. Heath, *The Veil, Women writers on its History, Lore, and Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 27.

<sup>137</sup> R. F. Woodsmall, *Study of the Role of Women Their Activities and Organizations, in Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Syria* (US: International Federation of Business and Professional Women, 1956), 38.

<sup>138</sup> M. R. Kessler, *Sheer Presence: The Veil in Manet's Paris* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), xvii.

In *Colonising Egypt*, using the "Exposition Universelle" (or World's Fair) tradition of international exhibitions designed to exhibit nations' achievements as his central motif, Timothy Mitchell argued that for the 19<sup>th</sup> century European man, the reality was primarily to be grasped through its pictorial representation.<sup>139</sup> Naturally, this created a huge problem in terms of the European man's ability to comprehend the reality of women living in the Middle East. Unable to see the Middle Eastern woman to the same extent, the Western man, therefore, established his own representative models. As we will shortly see, Malek Alloula's study of French colonial postcards highlights these dynamics perfectly.

In *The Colonial Harem* (1981), Malek Alloula collected, arranged, and annotated Algerian women's picture postcards produced and sent by the French in Algeria during the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The French colonial postcards present the Algerian women in various stages of undress. One of the most unusual and resonating images of the collection (Figure 2.4) portrays a woman wearing a niqab completely veiled and yet showing her breasts through the folds. Alloula's critique of the photographer perfectly encapsulates the "world-exhibition effect" identified by Mitchell:

The Algerian woman does not conceal herself, does not play at concealing herself. However, the eye cannot catch hold of her. The opaque veil that covers her intimates clearly and simply to the photographer a refusal. Turned back upon himself, upon his own impotence in the situation, the photographer undergoes an initial experience of disappointment and rejection. Draped in the veil that cloaks her to her ankles, the Algerian woman discourages the *scopic desire* (the voyeurism) of the photographer. She is the concrete negation of this desire and thus brings to the photographer confirmation of a triple rejection: the rejection of his desire, of the practice of his "art," and of his place in a milieu that is not his own.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> T. Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) , xv.

<sup>140</sup> Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 7.

While Alloula refers here to the photographers, the experience he is describing may be considered to be to some extent true for all European visitors who came to the Middle East seeking out the Orient. The veiled woman whose entire body excepts is covered, can see yet cannot be seen, described by Alloula is not only "an embarrassing enigma to the photographer but an outright attack on him":

Thrust in the presence of a veiled woman, the photographer feels photographed; having himself become an object-to-be seen, he loses initiative: *he is dispossessed of his own gaze*. The photographer turns this varied experience of frustration into the sign of his own negation. Algerian society, particularly the feminine world within it, threatens him in his being and *prevents him from accomplishing himself as gazing gaze*.<sup>141</sup>

As the photographer cannot picture the real Middle Eastern woman, he proceeds to capture the Middle Eastern woman by once against turning to studio photography. Since he was forced into this, his revenge is a "double violation: the photographer unveiled the veiled and give figural representation to the forbidden".<sup>142</sup>

Relatedly, Marina Warner has suggested that there are four approaches to the portrayal of the female nude in Western art: the nude as an erotic symbol, often associated with sin, danger, corruption, and death; the nude as a symbol of spiritual innocence; the nude as a symbol of asceticism, the stripping away of material trapping; and finally, the *nude naturalis*, the nude as a representation of the primal state of humanity<sup>143</sup>. Most of the photographs of Middle Eastern women stand within the first tradition. The eroticism and danger which this genre aims to

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<sup>141</sup> Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 14.

<sup>142</sup> Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 14.

<sup>143</sup> M. Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985), 95.

convey do not, however, depend on the simple act of stripping off clothes, but rather on the juxtaposition of clothed and unclothed parts of the body, with the veil remaining as a motif of this erotic act of play between concealment and revealing. Above all, these photographs are assertions of sexual and cultural power: exposing, selectively and at will, parts of the women's bodies. These photographs, like many Orientalist paintings, are thus a transgression not of Western morality but of the rules and taboos of another culture, viewed as inferior to that of Europe.

## 2.6 Working with models

Another topic raised by the consideration of Clérambault's visual representations of "Oriental" women of importance in the context of this study is the relationship that he built with his models. Working with women in the Middle East presented many difficulties for European artists, painter and photographers alike, although the accessibility and willingness of women to pose may have differed from country to another. Unfortunately, my archival research did not yield any discoveries concerning how Clérambault managed to get in touch with his models. However, investigating how other image makers in Morocco approached their subjects might shed light on the various ways Clérambault could have come in contact with the people in his photographs. The first issue with working with Moroccan female subjects was first and foremost to find them, which according to Christine Pletre was at times fairly problematic.<sup>144</sup> If Delacroix remedied this difficulty by turning to the Jewish milieu, often more accessible and accommodating, forty years later, Henri Regnault, managed relatively easily to invite Muslim women into his home:

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<sup>144</sup> C. Peltre, *L'Atelier du Voyage* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 43-44.

We have a little Moorish girl for a maid who asks nothing better than to pose and bring us friends. Some have already come, and we have encouraged them with good reception.<sup>145</sup>

At that time and at least, until the early days of the protectorate, being a model for Western artists seemed to function for Moroccan women as a first step towards emancipation. Under the protectorate, when Clérambault was in Morocco finding a model was not very complicated either. Jules Borély, the director of the service of fine arts and historic monuments in Morocco asserted: “You can easily get models in exchange for a small tip, but obviously you have to be tactful.”<sup>146</sup> Except perhaps for official and bourgeoisie portraits, all the models used by artists during this period were Moroccans. Responding to the high demand for models, Aline Reveillaud de Lens even opened a model agency in Fez in the 1920s, but this type of structure was very rare and almost all artists used non-professional models.<sup>147</sup> Some asked directly, others sought the help of their colleagues who were likely to know Moroccans agreeing to pose. Artists living in Morocco used their entourage and relationships, appealing to the goodwill of their neighbours or their servants to find models. Though the above is true for many cases, the vast majority still used the services of prostitutes to pose as models as Marcel Vicaire attested:

I sometimes painted landscapes and even had Moroccan women pose on the terrace, prostitutes to whom the Police Commissioner issued an authorization to leave their neighbourhood to come to my house; my neighbours watched me and

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<sup>145</sup> “Nous avons pour servante un petit Mauresque qui ne demande pas mieux que de poser et de nous amener des amies. Quelques-unes sont déjà venues, et nous les avons encouragées par une bonne reception.” Peltre, *L’atelier du Voyage*, 43-44.

<sup>146</sup> “Letter from Borély to Tièle, 26 July 1934,” F95, Archive Nationale du Maroc, Rabat.

<sup>147</sup> E. Amster, “The Harem Revealed” and the Islamic-French Family: Aline de Lens and a French Woman’s Orient in Lyautey’s Morocco,” *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 279.

were entertained by the spectacle that I was offering; the less shy approached [...] came back several times and agreed to pose for me.<sup>148</sup>

This kind of anecdote shows that the search for contact was not always a one-way street. Outside the posing session, most artists temporarily residing or simply visiting the protectorate had few opportunities to get close to Moroccans. Though they certainly went to moussems<sup>149</sup> and souks, actual exchanges with Moroccans were rare and extremely brief. As for artists residing in Morocco, the place where they lived was almost always indicative of their relationship with the Moroccans. For instance, Fez – the residence of Clérambault – was the capital city of the protectorate before being moved to Rabat, and was thus where French officials and military resided. Daniel Rivet explained that urban segregation was by no means established by the Protectorate but it was however registered in mentalities.<sup>150</sup> As colonization progressed, the physical distance between the European and Moroccan populations diminished due on the one hand to the settlement in colonial cities on the part of the Moroccan elite, and on the other hand to the emergence of shantytowns which surround them, the fruit of a massive rural exodus of the poor inhabitants. The settlers who lived in the new towns built away from the medinas only rarely interacted with Moroccan. Of course, the domestic staff were often Moroccan, but relations with others (merchant, neighbours) were mainly between colonialists,

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<sup>148</sup> “Il m’arrivait de peindre sur la terrasse, des paysages et même d’y faire poser des femmes marocaines, des prostituées auxquelles le Commissaire de Police délivrait une autorisation de sortie de leur quartier pour venir chez moi ; mes voisines [marocaines] m’observaient et se divertissaient du spectacle que j’offrais ; les moins timides s’approchaient, passant de terrasse en terrasse pour mieux voir ; petit à petit, elles s’apprivoisaient et l’une d’elles n’hésita pas à venir partager quelques rasades d’anisette avec mes modèles et Merzaka [la femme de sondomestique]... elle revient à plusieurs reprises et accepta de poser pour moi.” In M. Vicaire, *Souvenirs du Maroc, Un peintre au Maroc de 1922 à 1958 dans le sillage de Lyautey*, (Casablanca: Afrique Orient, 2012), 79.

<sup>149</sup> Moussems also known as "amougars" are festivals held in honour of Saints or “marabouts”. They range from religious holidays to trade fairs and are celebrated in various part of Morocco throughout the year.

<sup>150</sup> D. Rivet, *Le Maroc de Lyautey à M Mohammed V. Le double visage du protectorat* (Paris: Denoël, 1999), 238.

as attested the daughter of an officer residing in Fez who remarked: “The French [...] hardly sought to know Moroccans anymore”.<sup>151</sup> Artists living in the medina were quite rare at the time. As such, they had a special status as those who were closest in terms of their living arrangements to the Moroccan population on all levels. Some artists had more or less friendly relationships with Moroccans.

Although no information was found regarding Clérambault’s encounters during his time in Morocco, his professional status would have placed him in the category of people who had close relations with the Moroccan population. A clue regarding his physical contact with the Moroccan population – but also a sense of the difficulty of establishing relationships with Moroccan women – is indicated in his *Introduction a l’Etude des costumes Drapés Indigènes*, in which Clérambault mentions the difficulty of getting close to the Muslim people:

Men who agreed to pose misinform and women never speak to any man, unless he is a doctor. With everyone, men or women, a certain knowledge of their language extreme patience and care are needed. Such conditions can hardly be fulfilled expertly by a doctor and it is this quality that enable us to undertake this study.<sup>152</sup>

From this passage, we can deduce that Clérambault used not only his ability to speak Arabic but also his professional medical status to gain access and to gain the trust of Muslim women

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<sup>151</sup> "Les Français [...] ne cherchaient plus guère à connaître les Marocains, confesse la fille d’un officier résident à Fès." in Y. Knibiehler, G. Emmery and F. Leguay, eds., *Des Français au Maroc* (Paris, Denoël, 1992), 347.

<sup>152</sup> "L’homme même qui consent à poser renseigne mal, et les femmes régulières ne parleront jamais, d’ici longtemps, a aucun autre homme qu’un médecin. Auprès de tous, hommes ou femmes, une certaine connaissance de leur langue, une patience extrême, et un ascendant susceptible d’avoir raison de leur incurie sont nécessaires. De telles conditions ne peuvent guère être remplies que par un Médecin, et c’est cette qualité qui nous a mis à même d’entreprendre la présente étude." in “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.



in Morocco. At the same time, we might ask: could Clérambault have used his very own servants as models for his images? Or did he use a family he got to know through his work as a doctor? The photographs taken within the compound of his home in Fez showing men and women of all ages could lead to the assumption that Clérambault used families for his photographs. The photograph of a young woman (see Figure 2.5), who appears several times throughout the photographic investigation of the haik holding her baby and smiling at the camera is indicative of how his subjects appeared to have been comfortable in the presence of both the lens and Clérambault.

Whether European artists mixed with Moroccans only during their work sessions, whether they spoke Arabic, whether they were interested in Moroccan culture, whether they lived in the heart of the medinas, all of the artists documented in this chapter who photographed or painted Moroccan women and men showed an interest in Moroccan culture. Though we cannot say for certain how he interacted with or procured the subjects for his photographs – although his comments about his linguistic abilities and his professional practice indicate that he may have had close contact – Clérambault certainly falls into the category of someone who exhibited a clear degree of interest in familiarizing himself with and capturing Moroccan culture in this way.

As suggested previously, having now firmly established the contextual basis surrounding Clérambault's depictions of female subjects from "the Orient" in photography, this section will explore how Clérambault's photographs themselves in more detail may be seen to configure within this broader development. In particular, it will do so by comparing Clérambault's photography to the works of other contemporary photographers and artists who similarly represented non-Western female subjects, as well as attempting to situate Clérambault's

photographic practice within other related discursive trends. In the process, we will be asking a series of questions, including: how did Clérambault's practice differ from that of his contemporaries? Moreover, what can be ascertained in terms of his approach in relation to the theory of Orientalism established in the introduction to this chapter, particularly concerning the role between Orientalist discourse and gender?

## **2.7 Clérambault and the postcard's of Malek Alloula**

To begin with, this stage of the analysis will commence by continuing with the subject of the postcards identified by Alloula, and building towards a comparative assessment of their relation to the photographic works of Clérambault, concentrating on representations of the veil within each of these works.

In photographs of the Middle East, costume and particularly the dress of women became a form of visual identification for Westerners to define races, types, and ethnic groups and contribute to the picturesque, exotic, and erotic imagery. The most spectacular costumes rapidly became a popular subject within the domain of photographic representation. Simultaneously, the use of costumes may be seen to expose the representational fallacies that lay at the heart of Orientalist photography. For instance: we might note that if women who were the kinds of "authentic" colonized or "Oriental" subjects that the photographers were looking for could not be found to pose for the camera, the resources of the photographic studio could always provide substitutes. Most professional studios had racks of costumes in which to dress their models, who could in several minutes be transformed into a "Druze bride" or a "Moorish type." The actual origins of the sitter were absolutely irrelevant. The fabrication can easily be demonstrated. For instance, large studios like that of Bonfils in Beirut sometimes used the same models and costumes to represent different "types." For example, a woman who appears in one

Bonfils photograph as an "Armenian woman of Jerusalem" appeared in a later photograph in the series in the same costume but this time carrying a fan as "an Egyptian woman."<sup>153</sup> Similarly, in a postcard series from French colonial Algeria, the same model in the same clothes in the same location appears in photographs taken by the same photographer as *Young Beduin Woman* (see Figure 2.6), as a *Young Woman from the South* (see Figure 2.7), and as a *Young Kabyl Woman* (see Figure 2.8). In the absence of a real Algerian subject, the postcard created its own version of the truth about Algeria women and its society.

Photographers were just as cavalier about the costumes themselves, creating their own confections of dress and ornament. Simultaneously, the caption of the resulting photograph would announce authoritatively that this was a "Bedouin girl" or an "Arab peasant." Many of these women's photographs in costumes, taken either outside or inside the studio, were factually inaccurate but tended to treat the people wearing them as little more than a tailor's dummies to hang beautiful and exotic clothes and jewellery. The women seen in the photographs most likely did not wear such garments in real life. Nevertheless, as has been seen in the historical account of the haik, these costumes did have a very real significance in the lives of their wearers.

Alloula's analysis of photographs circulated as evidence of the exotic, backward, and strange customs of Algerians focusses on what he refers to as the tendency for the photographs to portray *Women from the Outside*. Accordingly, the very first thing the foreign eye catches about the Algerian women in the photos analysed by Alloula is that they are concealed from sight: with several examples identified by Alloula portraying scenes of veiled women in various locations, often in anonymous groups, often not facing the camera, often in the distance (see

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<sup>153</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women, The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*, 120.

Figures 2.9 and 2.10). If we now turn to Clérambault's depictions of the veiled woman, we might ask: what noticeable differences are there?

To begin with, Clérambault photographed outside the compound of his home. Though he also photographed scenes that resemble the aesthetic of the colonial postcards documented by Alloula, these are not studio shots. At the same time, there are some clear parallels: most of Clérambault's photographs similarly depict images of veiled silhouettes walking across an arid landscape under the crushing sun. There is the same evasiveness and remoteness in the photographed subjects as they take the form of groups. They do not face the camera (especially in Figure 2.11): and yet there is at the same time a greater level of intimacy. The photographs look more spontaneous and less staged. The subjects are closer to us as the viewer. Perhaps more significantly, there is an urgency and a dynamism in Figures 2.12 and 2.13, a sense of movement and activity not just in the subjects, but in the camera as it is at a slightly uneven angle, and as it struggles to keep the subject entirely in focus.

Furthermore, Clérambault himself is visible, with his shadow intruding (see Figures 2.12 and 2.13), further heightening a sense of the scene's reality. These particularly interesting photographic representations of veiled 'Oriental' women – dynamic and intimate in feel and featuring Clérambault's own silhouette – begin to indicate how Clérambault's images differ from those of Middle Eastern women in the postcards identified by Alloula. In the shadow of Clérambault, we have what Barthes might describe as the *punctum*: punctuating the photo without necessarily having a specific symbolic or cultural meaning, what we can nonetheless say about the shadow (and perhaps of the intimacy, the proximity, the odd angle, the lack of

focus) is that there is an intervention of the real, or a real effect, which subsequently brings life to the scene and humanizes the subject.<sup>154</sup>

Thus, in comparing representations of veiled women outside in the postcards identified by Alloula and in Clérambault's images, we are impressed with a sense of the intimacy and the latter's realism. What, then, might we say of the photographs that are shot of veiled women in interior spaces? The sense of distance and staged-ness that characterizes the postcards identified by Alloula are less striking characteristics? As we will see, both the postcards identified by Alloula and Clérambault's images use indoor spaces when documenting these women's lives. However, the reasoning behind both choices is very different.

Clérambault's decision to document the wearing of the haik in both outside and inside spaces may be seen to at least be consistent in the sense that within both domains, there is an emphasis on the importance of what we might call "controlled space." For Clérambault to document the sequences of the haik without distraction in such a controlled space was very important, enabling him to curate the image. Clérambault's photograph *Sans titre [femme voilée]* (see Figure 2.14) shows a woman about to cover herself with the veil. The image invokes a sense of Middle Eastern aesthetics, as Clérambault's subject is posed against a background consisting of furniture including a draped sofa, decorative cushions, guns hung on the wall, flowers, and a wall hanging, all reminiscent of the Moroccan living room reconstructed by professional photography studios to satisfy the demand for exotic images, with the model in the photograph posed in front of a curtain with Middle Eastern motifs. Clérambault's photograph is taken from a distance and shows the whole body of the smiling model. Her entire body is covered by the

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<sup>154</sup> C. Barthes, *La Chambre claire: Note sur la photographie* (Paris : Editions de l'Étoile, Gallimard, Le Seuil, 1980), 17.

haik, only letting her right arm and face visible to the viewer. She stares directly into the camera. On the other hand, the postcard is very focused on the upper body of the model, who seriously looks from the side at the camera. Her face, arms, and portions of her breasts are visible. The photo is marked by a serenity: the subtle smile on the subject's face, the gently arced movement of her arm as she drapes herself in the veil, and the dappled light as it falls in patches across the haik.

Let's now turn to the postcard photographers identified by Alloula that have interior settings. The impression we are given is altogether quite different: with the studio becoming (as Alloula states) a place "where [the photographer's] desire, his scopic instinct can find satisfaction."<sup>155</sup> The 1900 photograph of *Kabyl women covering herself with the haik* (see Figure 2.15), for instance, shows a woman looking directly at the camera in the act of covering her body with the haik, her face head is already partly veiled, but her breasts can be seen through her undergarment. This gesture has been executed at the photographer's command and to satisfy the Western spectator's gaze. The whole array of props, carefully placed by the photographer around and on the model, are (as in the Clérambault photograph) meant to suggest the existence of a natural frame whose artificial "realism" is expected to provide a supplementary touch of authenticity: existing stereotypes about the sexual availability of the subaltern woman are thus given a naturalistic twist, confirming their veracity. This, then, is an altogether different type of "controlled space": the model in the postcard, adorned for the occasion, is asked to wear the veil in such a manner that serves the visual agenda of the male photographer. However, the impression confirmed – or complimented with a "reality effect" – is altogether quite different from the Clérambault photograph: here we are closer to the model, and she stares at us not with an air of calmness but with an expression that is perhaps best described as an admixture of

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<sup>155</sup> Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 14

confrontational and curious. The image is simultaneously suggestive (not just the stare's curiosity, but also the exposed breast, directly contravening the purpose of the veil) and hard-edged, as the confrontational air is accompanied by the angular positioning of the model's elbows and the sharp contrasts in the composition. Whereas Clérambault's photograph conveys a sense of harmoniousness and sensuousness: here the impression conveyed is boldly sexual.

Thus, in short, while in the exterior shots the Alloula postcards are marked by anonymity, a staged-ness and a remoteness, while the Clérambault photographs have an intimacy and communicate a sense of the veiled subject existing in reality – the interior scenes are different in quite a distinct manner: here, the suddenly eroticized image of the veiled woman in Alloula's photographs is depicted as bold and sexual – as though the "truth" about the Oriental subaltern female "other" has been unmasked in a symbolic unveiling of their protected and disguised individual identity instigated by the photographer. Conversely in Clérambault's photographs there is a subtle sensuality, and reinforcement of visual signifiers of the East that may be seen to reinforce an Orientalist narrative of otherness, but there is less of an overt sense of the photographer unveiling or eroticizing the female subject.

Another sub-section of Alloula's publication is called "Inside the Harem: The rituals," which explores the presentation of ceremonial harem scenes such as those involving coffee and tea drinkers, narghile smokers, and one of the Orientalist painter's favourite subjects – the odalisque. While Clérambault only ever photographed men and women standing or sitting, some of his photographs also seem to suggest the discursive influence of this trend. For instance, *Sans titre [femme voilée]*, *Untitled [veiled woman]* (see Figure 2.16) presents the image of a woman carrying a teapot with both of her hands. The haik covers most the model with the exception of her right hand and heels. Her eyes are visible through her veiled face as

she stares at the photographer. Once more, the subject is shown in her entirety. The subject of the photograph does not seem to be the woman but rather the garment she is wearing. The dark backdrop contrasts the whiteness of the haik and makes its forms, and fold stand out. The North African garment is at the centre of the photograph. In comparison, *Woman from Southern Algeria* (see Figure 2.17) offers a different portrait of the coffee drinker. Firstly, the postcard is once more focused on the upper half of the subject's body. She is set into a white background, wearing a white dress accentuating her body and the tray she carries. This comparison between the two photographs again suggests that Clérambault's interest did not lie in the Moroccan women's body but rather in the clothing they were wearing: the haik. Clérambault's images are not concerned with the unveiling of the Middle Eastern women, but rather they suggest an interest in the veil and the ways in which Middle Eastern women veil their bodies.

Thus, in short, while the postcards identified by Alloula and Clérambault's images have in common an interest in the veiled female body, the psychiatrist's images defy the straightforward Orientalist reading that Alloula's images encourage. Whereas the images identified by Alloula are indicative of the double bind of oppression that the female subject in Orientalist photography is subjected to, as the determination to sublimate them both as women and as subalterns translates into symbolic efforts to exoticize and unveil the body of the "Oriental", Clérambault's photography exhibits an interest in the drapery. However, it is marked by a greater degree of interest in humanizing than objectifying those who wear it. We may simultaneously detect a trace of the Orientalist objective of generating knowledge around the other and demarcating a sense of otherness at play behind this intrigue.



## 2.8 Clérambault and the photographs of Gabriel Veyre

Having proposed that Clérambault's photography is distinct from the images identified by Alloula in terms of its representation of the veil, we might now consider another contemporary photographer who depicted Morocco in the period in question, again to determine how we might situate Clérambault's photographic practice.

Morocco, unlike its Maghreb neighbours, only had remote relations with Europe until the advent of photography in 1839. The nation viewed itself as a hostile land and successfully managed to keep foreigners along the exterior of the country with little interior penetration. This is why Morocco was not included in the mandatory stages of the Grand Tour – the English institution that allows affluent young people to fly across Europe and the Mediterranean basin.<sup>156</sup> These two factors explain why Morocco remained absent within Orientalist Western iconography for such a long time.

Though there are records from a daguerreotypist named Coufourier in 1846 and Félix Jacques Moulin, a French photographer practicing in 1856 who had connections with Morocco, nothing suggests that they exercised their talents in the North African country.<sup>157</sup> The history of photography in Morocco only started in the 1880s, when Morocco signed the Treaty of Madrid, it became more accessible to the outside world and formalized the commercial penetration of the great European powers. Almost immediately, photographers began to open workshops: the first was Davin in 1880, followed by Molinari in 1883 and Cavilla in 1885.<sup>158</sup> These photographers worked for the rare tourists and Western residents within Morocco, but mostly

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<sup>156</sup> They travelled mainly to Italy, Spain, Greece, and beyond to Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, and Lebanon.

<sup>157</sup> Ben Jelloun, T., A. d'Hooghe, and M. Sijelmassi. *Le désir du Maroc*, 11.

<sup>158</sup> Ben Jelloun, T., A. d'Hooghe, and M. Sijelmassi. *Le désir du Maroc*, 11.

found work through diplomats or government officials who were not accompanied by their own photographic operators and who wished to include images in their reports. The first photographs of Morocco, therefore, resemble those taken forty years previously in Egypt: stark buildings void of people. Photographing the inhabitants of Morocco proved to be a difficult task: apart from their mistrust in foreign invaders, existing interpretations of religious restrictions in Islam concerning image-making proscribed the human figure's representation, preventing photographers from practicing their trade in the interior of the country.

Only when the Sultan of Morocco, Abdul Aziz, hired Gabriel Veyre to be his private photography instructor in 1901, photography became widespread and publicly practiced in Morocco. This forever changed the future of Moroccan and French history. Veyre, who spent years traveling to the world to promote and operate the *Cinématrographe* motion picture system of Auguste and Louis Lumière (or the Lumière Brothers),<sup>159</sup> was fascinated by Morocco and resided in the country until his death in 1936. He noted the Moroccan population's initial response to technology during his first public photography outing:

If for the Moroccans, it is their Easter celebration, it is a photographs celebration for us Europeans. It is the first time in Moroccan history that photographers have been authorized to bring out their cameras. What a scandal this created among the troops! The interpreter explained to me the insults that they threw to our faces since I still do not understand anything.<sup>160</sup>

As an informal diplomat for the French in the Sultan's court, Veyre's practice as a photographer exemplified the indirect strategy of the French conquest of Morocco. In fact, France turned to

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<sup>159</sup> Veyre's work with the Lumière brothers took him to Mexico, Cuba, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, and the West Indies.

<sup>160</sup> They are quoted in P. Goldsworthy, "Images, ideologies, and commodities: the French colonial postcard industry in Morocco" in *Early Popular Visual Culture*, (2010): 147-167.

a new style of imperialism that involved gradually colonizing North Africa through extended cultural and economic influence rather than a direct military conquest. Veyre's photographs were thus used to gather information about Morocco prior to their invasion. Photography and imperialism in this sense appear to have grown in conjuncture in Morocco, more so perhaps than in other conquered countries that were either colony prior to the widespread usage of photography in Algeria or had established photographic studios prior to colonial invasion (for example, Tunisia and the former Ottoman Empire). While the origins of colonialism and of photography remained distinct in other areas of the Middle East and Africa, the two developed in an inextricably bound manner in Morocco.

During four years, Veyre followed the Sultan and his entourage and was able to gather information and photographic evidence of the Makhzen<sup>161</sup> in a publication entitled *Dans l'intimité du sultan: au Maroc* (1905).<sup>162</sup> Although Veyre participated in the foundation of the French Protectorate, his photographs revealed a wish to challenge the characterization of Morocco as a backward country led by an incompetent Sultan: for instance, he depicts the Sultan as the leader and legitimizes the role of the Makhzen by offering visual presentations of meetings with foreign dignitaries.<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, his relative intimacy with his subject matter allowed him to create portraits of the sovereign that take the form of familial snapshots. For instance, in Figure 2.18, a teenage girl pretends to hide behind a curtain of the palace while exhibiting an unreserved smile, while Figure 2.19 shows an image of the Sultan, wearing a royal white garment riding a bicycle alongside some Europeans. The Sultan insisted upon European dress for visitors but personally maintained traditional Moroccan wear inside and

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<sup>161</sup> Makhzen is a term that indicates the ruling elite or, in this case, the government in Morocco at the time - including the army and the administration.

<sup>162</sup> G. Veyre, *Dans l'intimité du sultan: au Maroc* (Paris, Librairie Universelle, 1905).

<sup>163</sup> F. Abdelouahab, P. Jacquier and M. Pranal, eds., *Le Maroc de Gabriel Veyre, 1901-1936* (Paris: Editions Kubik, 2005).

outside the palace. This visual documentation of the Sultan in non-traditional, Western garments indicates and even exhibits the fact that the Sultan did not resist European influences the same way his father, for instance did, who famously insisted upon Moroccan attire even for visiting Europeans.

Clérambault's photographs do not offer a panorama of Moroccan life, such as Veyre. In Veyre's photographs, the relationship and intimacy shared between the photographer and the Sultan can be felt in the images. Though the sets are similar to those orchestrated by studio photographers, the attitudes of the subjects photographed are more spontaneous and testify to the bond with the operator of the camera. The presence of a simple look, smile, or gesture breaks down the barrier that usually exists between the model and the photographer. This is not the case in Clérambault's imagery. In spite of the intimacy, the body of the model seems to obey the operator's requirements who dictate poses and environments. Thus, though we might remark that Clérambault's photography exhibits a less overtly objectifying or eroticizing agenda than the postcards established by Alloula when compared to Veyre, we are forced to temper our analysis concerning the humanizing effects of his approach, as by comparison, we note that in Clérambault's photography though there is greater detail of intimacy and naturalistic detail, it is little compared to the intimate knowledge of Moroccan subjects we find in Veyre. In Clérambault's photographs the models are performing for the camera, they are not a subject sitting for a portrait.

Thus, while in the previous section we were forced to conclude that Clérambault's photography is distinct from that found in the photographs identified by Alloula on the grounds of its intimacy. Here we are forced to qualify this statement by observing that Clérambault's

approach was not intimate: being quite distinct from Veyre's immersive approach, in which the colonial subject truly forms the focus of attention.

## 2.9 Ethnographic practices and colonial art

Having thus established key differences between Clérambault's practice and the tradition identified by Alloula and from the photographs of Veyre, the following few sections will propose that Clérambault's photography can instead be considered contiguous with a broader practice of "colonial art", in particular by reflecting upon the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture at the turn of the twentieth century so that a key objective became the *documentation* rather than the artistic and imaginary rendering of the colonial subject. In doing so, this section will concentrate on the writings of Léonce Bénédite, and in particular, his theories concerning the evolution of the role of Oriental art in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Though Bénédite's writings were primarily concerned with Orientalist art within the domain of painting, the theories that he developed can be applied to the photographs of Clérambault, as we will shortly see, and may be seen to explain how we might classify Clérambault's photographs as Orientalist in spite of their clear difference from other examples of Orientalist photography previously considered.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the French art historian and curator, and co-founder of the Société des Peintres Orientalistes, Léonce Bénédite, affirmed that the objective of Orientalism was no longer to entertain the French metropolises but that instead, its aim was to educate them on the French colonies and on colonial domains. Accordingly, there was a certain pressure for the Orientalist artwork to be "realistic" – explaining why colonial artists during this period became less interested in portraying exotic lands but rather stuck to the representation of what they had already experienced. In 1899, Bénédite explained:

For at least twenty years, the colonial expansion has put in competition or in conflict all the States of the old continent on the African or the Far Eastern soil. These considerations of a political or economic nature solicited, even more, the minds of your younger generations. Writers and artists no longer found themselves the initiators of the public in their direction: they were born from this very desire of the public to be informed, to know in depth these unexplored regions which haunt their imagination, not only as of the land of chimeras but also as countries offered to the appetites of their ambitious dreams; they are the very expression of this ardent thirst for the unknown, for the new, for the exotic poetry...<sup>164</sup>

Without denying the seduction of the Orient and the pleasures that artists might induce, Bénédite thus clearly asserts that Orientalist art's function shifted to a political role giving the illustrative public works of the colonies and thus no longer (ostensibly at least) embodying a fantasized representation of the Orient, but rather serving as a kind of public information service. In fact, for Bénédite, Orientalist art was no longer concerned with the visualization of Western fantasies – projecting Western dreams of violence, exoticism, luxury, and barbarism onto subaltern subjects – but rather became preoccupied with objectively documenting life within the French colonies. Bénédite, for instance, remarks: "Artists can be of great use in any colonizing work. They comment on it, explain it, acclimatize the mind and the eyes to these insistent decorations and thus appeal to the goodwill that one seeks".<sup>165</sup> He further noted that

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<sup>164</sup> "Tout ce mouvement d'expansion coloniale qui, depuis vingt ans au moins, met en concurrence ou en conflit tous les États du vieux continent sur le sol africain ou extrême-oriental, ces considérations d'ordre politique ou économique, ont sollicité plus impérieusement encore l'esprit de nos jeunes générations. Les écrivains, les artistes ne se sont plus trouvés les initiateurs du public dans cette voie ; ils sont nés de ce désir même du public d'être renseigné, de connaître à fond ces régions inexplorées qui hantent son imagination, non plus seulement comme le pays des chimères, mais aussi comme des contrées offertes aux appétits de ses rêves ambitieux ; ils sont l'expression même de cette soif ardente d'inconnu, de nouveau, de poésie exotique..." in L. Bénédite, "Les peintres orientaliste français," *La Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, (March 1899) : 241-242.

<sup>165</sup> "Les artistes peuvent donc être d'une grande utilité dans tout œuvre colonisatrice. Ils la commentent, l'expliquent, acclimatent les esprits et les yeux à ces décors insistés et font ainsi

artists themselves could have an important role in the colonies: "They could act on the new colonizers, too concerned with the interests they might risk [...]. They can make them love the soil they have come to settle and industrially or commercially exploit."<sup>166</sup> In short, colonial art could, according to Bénédite, be used as a civilizing force. This shift in depiction did not endow Oriental subjects with a different yet valid culture but a resource to be exploited.

In signaling this shift from the exotic to the realistic, and thus from the artist's impression of the Orient to an attempt to document with a degree of exactness the conditions of colonial life, Bénédite's remarks may be seen to indicate a shift within the realm of Orientalist expression in the early twentieth century from the artistic to the ethnographic. In line with the taxonomical interest in documenting and classifying human behaviour that Foucault identified as characteristic of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this shift towards ethnography may be seen to mark a new *episteme*, in line with the emergence of sociology and anthropology in this period as formal academic disciplines, in which the production of knowledge seeks to categorize and demarcate cultural difference, again ostensible in the interests of "the welfare of the population." As Bénédite himself expressed it in the *Rapport du Jury International*, indicating a sense of how this new ethnographic modality may be seen to have been justified as though it was in the interests of the colonized cultures themselves:

The regret to see customs and picturesque costumes disappear each day in these regions gave rise to the desire to scrupulously note, to preserve the images, the rare and precious vestiges of this enchanting décor.<sup>167</sup>

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appel aux bonnes volontés qu'on sollicite." in L. Bénédite, "Art et Maroc," *France-Maroc*, no. 7, (15 Juillet 1917): 6.

<sup>166</sup> "Ils peuvent agir sur ces nouveaux colonisateurs, trop étroitement préoccupés des intérêts qui'ils riquent [...] ils peuvent leurs faire aimer ce sol où ils viennent s'installer pour l'exploiter industriellement ou commercialement." in Bénédite, "Art et Maroc," 6-7.

<sup>167</sup> "Le regret de voir chaque jour disparaître les mœurs et le costumes pittoresques de ces contrées a fait naître le désir de noter scrupuleusement, pour en conserver du moins l'image,

Bénédite later defined three phases within Orientalism. The first (according to Bénédite), which preceded Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt, was purely fantastic; the second was marked by the Romantic movement and was based on empirical knowledge, but was still marked by a fixation on the exotic; lastly, the third – exemplified by the work of Etienne Dinet – was characterized by a wish to (supposedly) objectively depict the countries in question ostensibly for scientific, documentary purposes, while also being justified as being in the interest of preserving an awareness of the colonized cultures. Though Bénédite used three different phases within "Orientalism," the last one corresponds with what was termed "colonial art": a name that was claimed and popularized by the *Société coloniale des artistes Français*. In seeking to explain why this third phase of "colonial art" no longer sought to exoticize to the same degree but instead sought to represent with documentary exactness, Bénédite notes how by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Orient had ceased to be perceived as unfamiliar grounds on the grounds that it had become such an integral part of our *moeurs* that it was no longer astonishing. Bénédite notes how Orientalist artworks multiplied throughout the century and how viewers had become acclimatized to the picturesque and fantastic. For Bénédite, at least, this offers some explanation for the shift from exotism towards authenticity.<sup>168</sup>

## 2.10 A quest to authenticity: primitivism, folklore and ethnography

Here, it is necessary to enlarge the analyses to study the institutional changes in France, which heavily influenced the practice of colonial art. The interest of France in the Orient was not limited to the colonial expansion and creation of Orientalist artistic and literary works. Since

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les vestiges rare et précieux de ce féérique décor." in L. Bénédite, *Rapports du jury international, introduction générale, Deuxième partie, Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1905), 358.

<sup>168</sup> L. Bénédite, "La peinture orientaliste et Gustave Guillaumet" in *La Nouvelle Revue* (Janvier-Février, 1888): 326-343.



antiquity, the Orient crystallized many fantasies, amongst which was the desire to preserve a living anthropological exhibit, as it may have been originally in the Western world. The French colonial conquests did not change this belief: in fact, the opposite is true. Ever since the colonization of Algeria, voices were raised against changes in indigenous societies and customs due to the Western presence. The fear of cultural standardization and homogenization continued to grow throughout the century, further increasing at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the colonial empire continued to expand. This notion was not entirely at odds with the ambition of cultural expansion, rather, it was often contiguous and compatible with a belief in the superiority of Western, Occidental values: rather there was a sense of the concurrent need to preserve a sense of the original culture it was founded upon, which existing mythology associated with so-called "primitive" cultures.

The nostalgia linked to the fear of seeing the primitive disappear in Europe and elsewhere in the world creates a special interest in folklore. In fact, at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a movement emerged in several French provinces among the cultural elites, local communities promoting the traditions of regions appearing to them as an effective means of fight the Parisian cultural hegemony. However, the interest in regional culture and keeping their particularities alive was not limited to provinces. In the French capital, too, folklore became institutionalized. Shortly after the foundation of the Musée National d'Ethnographie at the Palais du Trocadéro in 1884, a room was dedicated to provincial costumes and folklore objects. It closed down in 1928 due to its poor condition. For the *International Exhibition* of 1937, the Trocadéro was completely destroyed and was replaced by the Palais Chaillot. Paul Rivet, director of the Musée d'Ethnographie took advantage of this move to reorganise and rename his establishment the Musée de l'Homme. Georges-Henri Rivière, deputy director of this museum, simultaneously created a new institution designed to preserve French folklore called the Musée d'Ethnographie,

which was in 1936 renamed the Musée des Art et Traditions. Rivière became its curator and had significant plans for the museum. He wanted a scientific approach that presented the objects “as the witness of some sociological facts. In such a museum, the object will not be considered a simple curiosity or a purely aesthetic value, but as the material sign of something living, in particular, costumes, traditions, representations that occurred in properly working-class circles”.<sup>169</sup> Clearly, this interest in folklore and the conservation of French traditions can be seen to have complimented the broader interest in so-called primitive cultures suggested by the foundation of the Musée d’Ethnographie.

Moreover, in these developments, we see clearly how the phenomenon observed by Bénédite at the Société des Peintres Orientalistes extended way beyond this organization: with interest in an ethnographic and scientific approach within the domain of Orientalism, and "colonial art" reflecting a broader interest in preserving cultures. One way of looking at this is to see it as linked to the feeling of loss: or in other words, to see it as nostalgia for a pre-modern condition. Another is to see it as a mode of establishing an origin myth within a post-Darwinian setting, with Western civilization seeks to establish a sense of its origins to underline its evolution and progress. Either way, there is clearly in both of these explanations a sense that the ethnographic approach marks a continuity of the Orientalist project of developing knowledge in order to demarcate and subjugate: although there is a shift from an imaginative preoccupation with capturing the exotic to scientific interest in recording and preserving cultural traditions, there is still a definite sense of the Oriental other being contained, and most importantly defined in terms of how it is perceived through Western eyes.

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<sup>169</sup> G. H. Rivière, “Les musées de folklore à l’étranger et le future “Musée français des arts et traditions populaires,” *Revue de folklore français et de folklore colonial* (Mai-Juin 1936): 70.

The nostalgia described above was not unique to scientists: several writers and artists were fearful of colonization's social changes.<sup>170</sup> Clérambault, conscious of the disappearing cultural and visual practice of the Moroccan haik, may be considered to have been one of them. A sense of nostalgia for an original culture and for the traditions that colonialism may be seen to have eroded certainty played an important part in his interest in capturing and representing a way of life before its complete disappearance.<sup>171</sup>

The impact of ethnography can be seen in the way the subjects were approached and represented. For instance, the self-proclaimed ethnographic-artist, painter Jean-Léon Gérôme used daguerreotypes to create his paintings by reproducing fragments of what he photographed in Morocco on his canvas, bringing forward the use of photography to credit his paintings with an aura of realism.<sup>172</sup> In spite of these claims to heighten the veracity and the documentary credentials of art practice by making use of photography, Clérambault criticized Orientalist painters for their lack of austerity, truthfulness in the composition, and the simple inattention to the construction of the drapery, while also criticizing them for not focusing enough of their attention on the nobility of the haik. According to Clérambault, Orientalist painters drew their inspiration from myths and phantasms, illustrating a mix of “documents from different provenances” in their compositions.<sup>173</sup> The Orientalist painter Etienne Dinet, famous for his portrayal of everyday Algerian life, was according to Clérambault, the only orientalist painter

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<sup>170</sup> C. Grant and D. Price, “Decolonizing Art History,” *Art History* (2020): 8-66.

<sup>171</sup> A. De Humboldt cited in C. Peltre, *Les Orientalistes*, (Paris: Hazan, 2000), 155.

<sup>172</sup> Domonique de Font-Réaulx, "Le désir de vrai. et la photographie" in *Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), L'histoire en spectacle*, Edited by L. des Cars, D. de Font-Réaulx, E. Paper (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 2010), Exhibition catalogue, 213-22.; C. Barthe, “Des modèles et des normes. Allers-retours entre photographies et sculptures ethnographiques,” in Charles Cordier, *L'autre et l'ailleurs* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 2004), 3-111.

<sup>173</sup> “Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

who understood and mastered the art of the drapery.<sup>174</sup> Dinet drew inspiration from different aspects of Algerian life's social and private life by manifesting its culture and the spirit of its religion in a sympathetic manner (see Figure 2.20).

In order to ascertain whether Clérambault's photographs can be interpreted as signalling an ethnographic interest in documenting the lives of the colonized, the following two sections will again compare the output of Clérambault to contemporary artists, this time by looking at the work of two artists who similarly depicted women in the *haik*: namely, Jean Besancenot and Gabriel Rousseau. Neither of these artists was necessarily ethnographers in a strict sense. Also, their work has parallels with this tradition. Nonetheless, in comparing their work to Clérambault, the objective is to determine points of differentiation and how we might subsequently gain a clearer sense of Clérambault's status as a practitioner on the fringes of ethnographic practice.

### 2.11 Clérambault and Jean Besancenot

This section explores the work of an artist who may be seen to parallel Clérambault as a chronicler of Moroccan garments on the fringes of the ethnography tradition: namely, Jean Besancenot. It compares these two artists' work before suggesting that ultimately the latter's drawings exhibit a greater deal of attention on the aesthetic dimension of the veil and of Moroccan dress more generally.

Though other French researchers, administrators, and artists resident in Morocco also published texts that analysed the dress terminology or published illustrated dress catalogues, Jean Besancenot's 1944 *Costumes du Maroc* was the most ambitious and systematic undertaking of

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<sup>174</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

its kind in relation to Moroccan dress.<sup>175</sup> Claire Nicholas has even argued that it stands out today as *the* most important reference text for iconography, terminology, and description of traditional Moroccan dress, including the haik.<sup>176</sup>

After training at the Ecole Nationale des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, Besancenot obtained a grant from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to document local Moroccan styles of dress and other adornment forms. He travelled through the country, sketching, photographing, and documenting local styles of dress and other forms of adornments. His study of Moroccan clothing was strongly encouraged by Paul Robert, who congratulated Besancenot on the "real scientific precision and the conscious reproductions which also present remarkable artistic qualities."<sup>177</sup> This expedition and documentation of the Moroccan dress resulted in dozens of plates and sketches and hundreds of photographs exhibited in 1937 at the Musée de la France outre-mer. Besancenot carefully thought out the exhibition: he wished to present 140 drawings and watercolours of costumes, draperies, and portraits accompanied by descriptive texts including the name of clothing, accessories, and jewellery shown).<sup>178</sup> The photographs presented were "destined to give an idea of the character of the climate, the altitude of the regions crossed".<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Other examples include L. Brunot, *Vocabulaire de la tannerie indigène à Rabat* (Paris: Emile Larose, 1923); J. P. Jouin, "Iconographie de la mariée citadine dans l'Islam nordafricain," *Revue Études Islamiques*, (1931): 313-339.; G. Rousseau, *Le Costume au Maroc, Volume 1* (Paris: De Boccard, 1938).

<sup>176</sup> C. Nicholas, "Of texts and textiles: colonial ethnography and contemporary Moroccan material heritage," *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. no. 3 (2014): 390.

<sup>177</sup> "Précision véritablement scientifique et de la conscience de [ses] exécutions qui présentent par ailleurs des qualités artistiques remarquables." in Lettre du 28 février 1935, de Paul Rivet à Jean Besancenot, 1M/6B, Centre des archives diplomatiques de Nantes, Nantes.

<sup>178</sup> "Jean Besancenot," Archive Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, Paris.

<sup>179</sup> "Jean Besancenot," Archive Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac, Paris.

First published as *Costumes et Types du Maroc* (1942), Besancenot's documentation of Morocco's most representative dress style demonstrated Western fixation concern with the classification and categorization of types based on criteria such as racial identity and stereotypes, and tribal affiliation<sup>180</sup>. More important for this thesis is his consistent preoccupation with the drapery and veiling. In his text, he, for instance, describes the drapery as "this form of garment which draws at the same time from the Greek chiton and the Roman peplum and which marks the survival of a millennium-old tradition of the ancient Mediterranean races."<sup>181</sup> This remark echoes one of the dominant themes in French colonial knowledge production: the persistent assertion of racial continuity between the Berber population and the Romans and Greeks.<sup>182</sup>

Unlike Clérambault, Besancenot did not only focus on one single clothing item but rather wished to offer larger iconography of the Moroccan dress and communities. Clérambault and Besancenot were also positioned very differently in relation to the colonial project in Morocco. Clérambault was a doctor and an advocate for the recording of drapery traditions. Besancenot was trained as an artist and made on an extended journey to Morocco between 1934 and 1939 while also relying upon the colonial administration for financial and logistical support for his fieldwork.

All of Besancenot's plates were made in the same way: a background left blank, full-length men and women standing or sitting straining straight, in three-quarter profile and rarely from

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<sup>180</sup> C. Nicholas, "Of texts and textiles: colonial ethnography and contemporary Moroccan material heritage," *The Journal of North African Studies* (2014): 390-412.

<sup>181</sup> Nicholas, "Of texts and textiles," 390.

<sup>182</sup> C. R. Ageron, "L'Algérie algérienne" *de Napoleon III a de. Gaulle* (Paris: Sindbad, 1980), 254.

the back.<sup>183</sup> The attitude of the subjects does not appear stiff nor artificial; facial features are not very personal, even if some expressions are perceptible. Much like Clérambault's photographs, these boards' real subject is the costume, carefully presented in all its details, alongside headdresses, jewellery, and accessories. These watercolours thus lie on the border between art and ethnography, which several different commentators have identified, including Jacques Ruppert, vice-president of the Société de l'Histoire du Costume and Professor à l'École des Arts Appliqués, who defines Besancenot's work as "painted oeuvres constituting decorative documents of specific ethnographic interests."<sup>184</sup> In his own words, Besancenot described his project as "one of an artist, illustrator, and painter in the service of ethnography."<sup>185</sup> He further explained to Ruppert that his "oeuvre did not claim to belong to real of painting. [He] only wished that when looking at his images, a demanding ethnographer would find all the exactitudes, all the desirable details".<sup>186</sup>

To give some specific examples: Besancenot's *Citadine drapée dans le haik [townswoman draped in the haik]* (see Figure 2.21) presents a curious image of a haik that completely covers the face. The subject in question is not visible, and the posture is a standard and neutral pose for presenting costumes. The focus of Besancenot's image is clearly visual representation of the garment, as it captures the folds and the undulations in the fabric and chronicles the specific way Besancenot attests that the haik is worn (whether rightly or wrongly). In *Homme drapé [Draped man]* (see Figure 2.22), we see a similar pattern as the male subject is depicted in a

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<sup>183</sup> Jean Besancenot, *Types et Costumes du Maroc* (Paris: Editions des Horizons de France, 1942).

<sup>184</sup> Jacques Ruppert, Preface to Besancenot, *Types et Costumes du Maroc*.

<sup>185</sup> "Ma démarche était celle d'un artiste; dessinateur et peintre, au service de l'ethnographie." in Besancenot, *Types et Costumes du Maroc*.

<sup>186</sup> "Mes oeuvres, confie-t-il à Ruppert, ne se réclament pas de l'esprit de la peinture. Je voudrais seulement qu'en regardant mes grandes images, l'ethnographe exigeant y puisse trouver toutes les exactitudes, tous les détails désirables sans que ceux-ci ne deviennent jamais ennuyeux pour le simple curieux." in Ruppert, Preface to Besancenot, *Types et Costumes du Maroc*.

neutral manner while there is a clear focus on the undulations, patterns, and wearing of the dress. These tendencies are to be expected given that the colonial administration funded Besancenot to document Moroccan life and given his background as an artist. Next to Clérambault's *Sans titre [femmes voilées]*, *Untitled [veiled women]* (see Figures 2.16), there is a clear parallel in terms of a focus up the dress in contrast against the Alloula postcards, and yet in Besancenot, we might remark that there is a clearer aesthetic focus: while Clérambault seems primarily interested in the haik's symbolic meaning and social significance, and in capturing the reality of those who wear it, for Besancenot the focus upon the dress almost erases the wearer.

## 2.12 Clérambault and Gabriel Rousseau

This section compares Clérambault to the paintings of Gabriel Rousseau and draws similar conclusions regarding how the aesthetic focus is eclipsed in the latter, before drawing some general conclusions about Clérambault in relation to both Besancenot and Rousseau. Just like Clérambault did 20 years earlier, the painter Paul Geuthner expressed concern about the threat of disappearing garments in Morocco:

It is obvious that little by little, either because of the development of the importation of new fabrics or by the practical advantages of European clothing, the traditional Moroccan costume will undergo a transformation that will change their primitive purity.<sup>187</sup>

Following these concerns, Geuthner speaks of the need for a "general inventory of the most typical Moroccan costumes."<sup>188</sup> Gabriel Rousseau's 1938 *Le Costume au Maroc, Volume 1*, may be read as an attempt to respond to this suggestion.

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<sup>187</sup> P. Geuthner, quoted in G. Rousseau, *Le Costume au Maroc* (Paris : Le Boccard, 1938), np.

<sup>188</sup> G. Rousseau, *Le Costume au Maroc*, np.



All plates in Gabriel Rousseau's collection are the faithful reproduction of watercolours and original drawings executed from nature by the painter Gabriel Rousseau who lived in Morocco for more than ten years and who was one of the most active participants in the movement of indigenous art renovations. Each coloured plate reproduces a watercolour representing a subject wearing the traditional Moroccan garment. Each watercolour is accompanied by a black plate that includes a general description of the costume, how it has been created, its form, and an accompanying sketch. If we consider some examples, *Femme Arabe de Marrakech portant le Haik* [Arabic women from Marrakesh wearing the Haik] (see Figure 2.23) and *Femme Arabe de Marrakech portant le Haik* [Arabic women from Marrakesh wearing the Haik] (see Figure 2.24) both bear a strong example to Besancenot: the models themselves stand in neutral poses, and it is the fabric, the coloration, and way the fabric hangs, and the manner in which the garment is worn that forms the primary focus. Again, there is a clearer focus on the aesthetic dimension than in Clérambault.

Reflecting on Besancenot and Rousseau's depictions of the haik in relation to Clérambault's, we might draw a few conclusions: first, it is evident that Clérambault was something of a precursor to this tradition in expressing a marked interest in the veil and in how it was worn; second, it is at the same time evident that Besancenot and Rousseau exhibited a more marked interest in the aesthetic of the veil; third and relatedly, we might argue that Clérambault's depiction is thus in some ways more advanced than Besancenot and Rousseau's in its capacity to humanize, as in both Besancenot and Rousseau's depictions the wearer and the symbolic meaning of the veil serving both as a disguise and a protection of individual identity is eclipsed by a narrow preoccupation upon its aesthetic value.

### 2.13 Colonial Exhibition of 1922

Having thus established that Clérambault differed from both Besancenot and Rousseau in his Manner of depicting the haik on the grounds that he exhibited a more concerted interest in its symbolic rather than its aesthetic value, which may be seen to serve as evidence of his ethnographic priorities, in line with Bénédite's suggestion that Orientalist or "colonial art" reflected a preoccupation with and an overlapping with ethnography in the early twentieth century, this section will build on this suggestion by exploring the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles at which Clérambault's work was exhibited. In particular, it will focus upon the exhibition's function in relation to promoting the objectives of colonization by drawing on contemporary accounts of the exhibition, in turn providing an indication of the status of Clérambault as an ethnographer within the context of a broader imperialist agenda, enabling us to recognize how the photographic works indirectly support a colonial and Orientalist objective by asserting the Protectorate or the colonizer's power as a means through which culture can be *preserved* (while paradoxically it is being colonized). This assumes that "primitive" cultures are static and remained unchanged until the arrival of the civilised European.

In 1922 Marseille hosted a Colonial Exhibition, the second in a series that began in 1906 and which were the largest such exhibitions organized outside of the capital. The Rouet park (today known as the Chanot Park), specifically created for the first edition, was made of 36 hectares solely dedicated to the French colonies' manifestation. On 5 October 1922, Clérambault wrote a letter to the Louvre epigraphist Francois Thureau-Dangin:

My work on drapery is about to take an unexpected leap thanks to the exhibition of 40 large images, Arab documents at the Colonial Exhibition in Marseille.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> "Mes travaux sur le drapé sont sur le point de prendre un essor inattendu, grâce à l'exhibition de 40 grandes images, documents arabes à l'Exposition Coloniale de Marseille."

Clérambault was clearly excited by the news, seeing this as an opportunity to publicize his work via the exhibition, predicted to reach a large audience. In fact, colonial exhibitions were not only very popular but also represented an important facet of colonial politics. Presented as an exposé on the colonies, in the *Journal Officiel* of the exhibition, Adrien Artaud, commissaire general of the 1922 exhibition, emphasized this enterprise's economic importance by highlighting colonies' ability to produce basic commodities and rare products. In common with the first edition – although perhaps less explicitly – the second exhibition was focused upon illustrating the commercial and economic advantages of the colonies, as the following description of its objective in *L'exposition Nationale coloniale de Marseille 1922* suggests:

Familiarize the French public with the colonial empire, introduce the diversity of cultures and lifestyles of its [colonial] inhabitants, the resources it offers to the metropolis as well as the work undertaken by France for the economic development, health, and education of these populations, consequently convincing of the interest that these overseas possessions present for the metropolis.<sup>190</sup>

In 1922, Morocco participated in a French colonial exhibition not as an independent country but as a country under French domination. As Henri Froideveaux wrote at the time, for the first time, “it really figures in France, in an exhibition and is there with dignity producing evidence of the fertile hard work and wonderful results obtained in ten years, putting those in full

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In “Lettre a Thureau,” 2AP3, Box 2, Folder A, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d’Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>190</sup> “Familiariser le public français avec l’empire colonial, lui faire découvrir la diversité des cultures et des modes de vie de ses habitants, les ressources qu’ils offrait à la métropole ainsi que l’œuvre entreprise par la France pour le développement économique, la santé et l’éducation de ces populations, le convaincre enfin de l’intérêt que ces possessions outremer présentaient pour la métropole.” in Charles Régismanset, *L'exposition nationale coloniale de Marseille 1922* (Paris : Les imprimeries françaises réunies, 1921), 79.

light.”<sup>191</sup> To reveal Morocco at the time as being so “little known by the French public” is indicative of the uncertainty of its status in this regard.<sup>192</sup> A sense of the ambiguousness of Morocco’s status as a protectorate within the exhibition is perceivable from the exterior of the pavilion (taking the form of a Kasbah.) through which Morocco's somewhat elevated position above other colonies, given its partial autonomy, is configured in the form of visual grandiosity (see Figure 2.25).<sup>193</sup> Its crenelated walls reproduced the doors of Chellah, the medieval fortified Muslim necropolis located outside of Rabat. However, if the exterior is imposing and austere, the interior is described as wonderful and luxurious: “after crossing this door the visitor as if by magic, find himself transported in one of these delicious Moorish gardens, an Andalusian tradition, which are the ornament of Moroccan palaces.”<sup>194</sup>

Around the patio, Auguste Terrier, the curator in charge of Morocco, arranged several rooms celebrating the various actions of the Protectorate: agriculture and livestock, forest and trade, health, public works, or education. Another novelty in the colonial exhibition was the significant presence of art located in the Moroccan artistic room and the diorama sections.<sup>195</sup> After the rooms presenting the exploits of the Protectorate, a section was dedicated to art and to scientific discoveries, which was itself divided into two rooms. The first entitled “old morocco,” presented archaeological discoveries, photographs of the pacification, and the

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<sup>191</sup> “Pour la première fois, il figure vraiment en France, dans une exposition, et il y figure dignement, produisant les preuves du fécond labeur accompli et des merveilleux résultats obtenus en dix ans, mettant celui-ci et ceux-là en pleine lumière.” in Henri Froideveaux, “L’Histoire à l’exposition coloniale de Marseille,” *Le Correspondant*, (25 Juillet 1922): 213.

<sup>192</sup> Auguste Terrier, “Le Maroc,” *L’exposition nationale coloniale de Marseille décrite par ses auteurs* (Marseille: Commissariat de l’exposition de 1922), 179.

<sup>193</sup> In Morocco, the Arabic word form of *kasbah* refers to multiple buildings in a keep, a citadel, or several structures behind a defensive wall.

<sup>194</sup> “Après avoir franchi cette porte, le visiteur, comme par enchantement, se trouvera transporté dans un de ces délicieux jardins maures, de tradition andalouse, qui dont l’ornement des palais marocains.” in Régismancet, *L’Exposition nationale coloniale de Marseille*, 47.

<sup>195</sup> Régismanset, *L’exposition nationale coloniale de Marseille 1922*, 47.

beginnings of the Protectorate. The other room was dedicated to "what we can call the Morocco of tomorrow, artistic Morocco, touristic and picturesque" alongside plans and photographs of old archetypes. So, the "Morocco of tomorrow" was in fact that of yesterday. The exhibition included paintings and sculptures by mostly occidental artists.<sup>196</sup>

In his remarks on the Moroccan section of the exhibition, Terrier introduced the exhibition's double function "next to the pictures which seduce, the documents which teach."<sup>197</sup> In other words, he suggests that the aim of the exhibition was also to inform spectators of the work of the ten years of the Protectorate. First and foremost, this consisted of a need for visitors to take away an impression of prosperity, with Morocco's economy displaying its products and its wealth. Second, the objective of the expedition was to convey a sense of the civilizing mission of France within Morocco and thus to legitimize the presence of the army in the country. Thirdly, the objective was to showcase French cultural superiority by exhibiting French painters' works, including André Suréda, Maurice Romberg, Jules Galand, Etienne Bouchaud, Henti Hourtal, Emile Beaume, and many more. In the eye of the organizers, the future of the country depended upon its touristic promotion (benefiting the colonized). It relied upon its natural sites and its heritage which required safeguarding, conservation, and at times restoration. Within this domain, colonial art intervened and became a significant component of the French colonial agenda. By representing Moroccan historical and natural sites and giving a snapshot into the life of its inhabitants, art helped popularize a pleasing vision of Morocco. In other words, colonial art was used as another tool to highlight how Morocco was threatened and unattended before the arrival of the French Protectorate. As Terrier puts it:

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<sup>196</sup> "Ce que nous pouvons appeler le Maroc de demain, le Maroc artistique, touristique et pittoresque." in Terrier, "Le Maroc,"<sup>197</sup>.

<sup>197</sup> Terrier, "Le Maroc," 180.

In Morocco, the army wages war only to pacify and to build. Once the work and operation are completed, the military authority installs ambulances, schools, and open markets, trace roads that facilitate agriculture and trade development.<sup>198</sup>

Terrier further highlights the primordial role of France in the acknowledgment of indigenous art:

These art forms were in decadence ten years ago. By looking for the old models by encouraging trade corporations, the Protectorate brought them back to their centuries-old traditions and ensured their renaissance.<sup>199</sup>

The Occidental presence in Moroccan would therefore allow for the conservation and preservation of the indigenous: thus, while in essence Morocco was colonized, this was justified (in line with the analysis above) in terms of what benefitted the colonized.<sup>200</sup> In this regard, J. de la Nézière, delegate of the commission for indigenous arts, recalled that only Morocco and Indochina have set up the creation of official services encouraging the survival of artisanal crafts and by doing so "allowed indigenous art to develop normally in its environment and safeguarded an ancestral heritage that only asked to be preserved."<sup>201</sup>

It is important to note that Terrier did not mention Clérambault's photographs. Nonetheless, Clérambault's photographs certainly competed in the "76a" prize category entitled

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<sup>198</sup> "Au Maroc, l'armée ne fait la guerre que pour pacifier et pour construire. Son œuvre achevée, les opérations terminées, l'autorité militaire installe des ambulances, des écoles, elle ouvre des marchés, trace des routes qui facilitent le développement de l'agriculture et du commerce." in Terrier, "Le Maroc," 182.

<sup>199</sup> "Ces arts étaient il y a dix ans en pleine décadence. En recherchant les anciens modèles, en encourageant les corporations des métiers, le Protectorat les a ramenés à leurs traditions séculaires et à assuré leur renaissance." in Terrier, "Le Maroc," 193.

<sup>200</sup> Though appearing that way, the improvement envisaged would also largely benefit France.

<sup>201</sup> "Permettre à l'art indigène de se développer normalement dans son milieu et sauvegarder un patrimoine ancestral qui ne demandait qu'à être conserve." in J. de la Nézière, *L'exposition nationale coloniale de Marseille décrite par ses auteurs*, (Paris, 1923), 224.

“Photography and Geography”, as Clérambault, in a letter to Paul Léon, revealed that he obtained a gold medal for his images. Given the evident success of Clérambault's contribution, they were combined with the sense derived from the above analysis of how the exhibition ultimately served (according to its organizers) to promote the effectiveness of France as a colonizer or as a protectorate in preserving the culture that it simultaneously oppresses, through sophisticated strategies of documentation (such as photography). Though it would be overly simplistic to suggest that Clérambault's photographs were thus imperial propaganda: their ethnographic function – documenting rather than eroticizing; fixating on the symbolic function on the veil rather than upon its aesthetic value – can be seen to have complimented a broader imperialist agenda of perversely boasting of the French colonialist's capacity to preserve a given culture even as it dismantled it.

In summary, this chapter has explored the relationship between Orientalist discourse and the photographic practice of Clérambault. It began with a definition of Said's conceptualization of Orientalism, noting limitations identified by Serdar and Behdad in terms of its binary focus and lack of specificity, before outlining a more geographically isolated account of Orientalist discourse in a French context and drawing in particular upon Majumdar's analysis of how the civilizing dimension of the French colonial project reflected an ideology rooted in Enlightenment thinking. Having established this, Alloula's analysis of the interplay within photography between Orientalist discourse that subjugates the “Oriental other” and patriarchal discourse that subjugates women on the grounds of gender was considered. With a theoretical framework in place for determining visual manifestations of Orientalist discourse, this chapter then proceeded to develop a comparative analysis of Clérambault's photography alongside the works of a number of artists and photographers who dealt with similar subject matter: in particular, the postcards identified by Alloula, the photographs of Veyre, and the paintings of

Besancenot and Rousseau. The general conclusion drawn was that Clérambault's depictions of veiled women were distinct from each of these forebears and antecedents: less exoticizing and eroticizing than the Alloula photographs; less sympathetic and intimate than the Veyre images; and less preoccupied with the aesthetic dimensions of the veil than Besancenot and Rousseau. In seeking an alternative discursive parallel alongside which Clérambault's photographs might be placed, it was therefore argued that Bénédite's remarks concerning the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture at the turn of the twentieth-century offer key insights into the function of Clérambault's work: indicating a preoccupation with the symbolism of veil, its societal and practical function, rather than a keen interest in exoticizing and eroticizing it, developing an intimate knowledge of its wearers or fixating too narrowly on its aesthetic value. At the same time, it was noted, attending to Bénédite's writings, but also to the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles at which Clérambault's work was exhibited, that the ethnographic interest in the veil and its female wearers may be seen to perform a clearly Orientalist function still: asserting a sense of cultural difference, to begin with (in line with Said's definition of the function of Orientalist discourse); but just as importantly confirming the status of the colonizer as a preserver of indigenous culture, with sophisticated means of preserving and maintaining an awareness of the "primitive", which was conceptualized through origin myths as the foundation upon which the supposedly more advanced Western civilization was based. Thus, in short, having compared Clérambault to several contemporaries and having determined that his work is not classifiable as Orientalist. In the manner that critics have labelled his contemporaries as such, it has been determined that the ethnographic function that is highlighted by identifying how his work differs from that of his contemporaries, and that has also been determined through archival research into his letters and spaces in which his work was exhibited, may nonetheless be seen to indicate off a clear Orientalist function: demarcating



the Oriental other and asserting the dominance of the Occident as a culture that maintains and preserves, perversely used to justify the continuing practice of colonial subjugation.

### Chapter 3: Clérambault, the Drapery and Art history

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The previous chapter explored the relationship between Orientalist discourse and the photographic practice of Clérambault. After comparing Clérambault's depictions of veiled women with photographic representations of the same subject among the work of his contemporaries, it was concluded that Clérambault's depictions of veiled women were distinct from the exoticizing and eroticizing function of photographs identified by Alloula, less sympathetic and intimate than the Veyre's photographs, and less preoccupied with the aesthetic dimensions of the veil than Besancenot and Rousseau, on which basis it was argued, drawing on Bénédite's remarks concerning the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture at the turn of the twentieth century, together with the fact that Clérambault's work was exhibited at the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles, that his interest in the subject represented an ethnographic interest in the veil. It was thus proposed that Clérambault's photography may still be seen to have performed an Orientalist function, not just by asserting a sense of cultural difference, but also by confirming the status of the colonizer as a preserver of indigenous culture.

Having thus established that Clérambault was interested in the ethnographic function of the haik in North Africa, this chapter will add another dimension to this analysis by situating the work of Clérambault within an art historical context and the practice of drapery. By presenting and combining Clérambault's research on the drapery executed in Tunisia and Morocco with an analysis of his photography, we will aim to demonstrate that Clérambault was not only just interested in the social and ethnographic significance of the haik but that he was in fact primarily interested in its aesthetic value. Clérambault believed that studying what he called "living draperies" would shed light on life during Classical Antiquity. In exploring his writings,

we will see that the psychiatrist also deplored existing modes of representation of drapery in art and wished to teach his contemporaries how to represent it properly. To do so, he used the work of Léon Heuzey – and in particular his writing on Antiquity – as a foundation for this thinking, his writing, and his creative practice. This chapter aims to develop our understanding of the photographic corpus of images realized in Morocco by considering how they should be understood by taking into account Clérambault's views on the significance of drapery within an art historical context.

The chief line of argument in this chapter is that by exploring Clérambault's preoccupation with the aesthetic qualities of the veil, and its meaning within art history as a whole, we can begin to determine as an alternative way of viewing his practice. In particular, we will see traces of an aestheticism that narrowly concentrates on the technical qualities of drapery culture as it has existed within Classical Antiquity, but also as it exists within contemporaneous cultural traditions. It will be argued that this is something that can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, marking a continuation of how Clérambault might be perceived as an ethnographer in the Orientalist tradition asserting his own superior capacity to preserve existing cultural traditions; on the other hand, suggesting a surrendering to the form, and in the process a minimization of broader considerations of cultural and social meaning. In short, it will be argued that Clérambault's myopic interest in the visual and technical qualities of drapery may be seen to indicate an aestheticism that cuts across and perhaps supersedes the ethnographic priorities chronicled in the previous chapter, even if there is some overlapping between the two. In seeking to determine whether this is the case, this chapter will divide into two parts. The first will explore how we might redefine Clérambault as an author who was primarily interested in the veil and the drapery culture from an art-historical perspective: believing that the study of drapery could offer unique insights into Classical Antiquity and that chronicling

its specific attributes could lead the emergence of a new discipline within the study of the history of art. The second half of this chapter will then explore the ramifications of this by exploring in more detail how exactly Clérambault might therefore be situated within the existing discourse on drapery culture by exploring existing creative practice and literature on drapery from the late Medieval period to the Late Modern period and placing Clérambault within this overview. Ultimately it will be argued that by demonstrating through a detailed consideration of his lectures and journal notes, Clérambault's interest in the art-historical aspect of drapery culture. Then by situating him within a broader context of discourse on drapery, we can defend the claim that Clérambault's writing and photography amount to a unique contribution to art historical discourse in which the significance of drapery as an art form is attended to *in and of itself*, rather than as a means of exploring an ulterior subject. In the process, it will be argued that while there is perhaps an Orientalist dimension to this in the form of an assertion of cultural superiority, the priority placed upon understanding drapery in and of itself and the sensitivity to different cultural manifestations of it suggests that a more accurate description of Clérambault's practice is to situate him as someone seeking to establish a sense of the aesthetic value of drapery more firmly.

In order to argue this, this chapter will commence with a description of a presentation entitled *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapes Indigènes* at the second Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art (Congress on the History of Art) at the Sorbonne in Paris, in which Clérambault outlined his views on the need for a comprehensive study of drapery culture, explaining how existing studies of costume and art practice (typically in the Orientalist tradition) were inadequate in chronicling the attributes of existing drapery culture, and proposing that a more thorough discipline of observation and communication of existing drapery traditions was needed in order to address this issue. This chapter will then move on to consider how Clérambault was not only

concerned with the drapery, its general shapes once in place on the body, but also with the "savoir-faire" that constituted the arrangement of the fabric on the body and of the variety of solutions that allowed it to stay in place, which, it will be argued, is indicative of his surrendering the form and techniques of drapery culture, in turn indicating a preoccupation with aesthetic considerations over ethnographic considerations. In this section, Clérambault's classificatory criteria – through which he developed a systematized understanding of different types of drapery in terms of how they are assembled and worn, complete with terminology – will be outlined, along with an indication of how he hoped that the ability to classify different types of drapery practice better and fashion would enable comparison between different periods and cultures. However, the documentation and classification of drapery does not belong to the Moroccan drapery culture, it stems from a colonial need to preserve, record, and/ or revive a disappearing practice. In fact, it is interesting to note that Clérambault did not dedicate any time in his research to the consideration of the various methods of weaving, dying or even to the types of materials used for the North African garment.

An analysis of Clérambault's notebooks and various assembled notes belonging to his personal archive, will follow this to determine whether these may be seen to offer further insights into his photography. In analysing these texts, we will find further evidence of how the photographs served the purpose of documenting drapery traditions in order to illustrate the specific habits and traditions relating to drapery culture as an aesthetic practice, and thus to further an understanding of contemporary drapery practice within a broader art-historical context, suggesting that the photographs might, in turn, be understood less as a means of preserving a *culture* and more as a means of preserving an *aesthetic tradition* transcending an ethnographic preoccupation. This aesthetic tradition however is one that is narrowly defined by Clérambault's interest and not a holistic living culture of wearing the drapes in Morocco. The

following section will then consider an additional dimension to Clérambault's interest in developing a drapery science by proposing that Clérambault was motivated by a desire to recognize continuities between Classical Antiquity and contemporary African customs. In other words, it will be argued that Clérambault's interest in the aesthetic value of the veil and the haik can be seen to reflect an interest in exploring existing remnants or parallels with Greek and Roman culture within the North African culture. In exploring this phenomenon, this section will draw attention to writers who held similar beliefs, including both writers who directly influenced Clérambault and contemporaries who expressed similar views. In exploring this discursive context, this section will also explore some of the conceptual foundations of the belief that contemporary Orientalist practice (of which drapery may be considered a singular manifestation) can be considered to offer insights into Classical Antiquity. The following section then takes a step back in order to offer a broader view on how historians and philosophers have analysed drapery culture within Classical Antiquity in order to establish a clearer sense of the purpose behind Clérambault's interest in excavating Classical Antiquity through its imagined reincarnation in contemporary North African culture, mediated through a consideration of drapery culture.

This will be followed by a section that will then explore Clérambault's lectures and, in particular, his relationship with the Beaux-Arts de Paris. In doing so, an analysis will be offered of Clérambault's lecture method, alongside testimonies (drawing on accounts from attendees as well as Clérambault's own remarks in his journals) regarding the success of the lecture series. This section will end by considering the termination of Clérambault's lecture series and possible explanations for this fact.

Having established Clérambault's contribution to the study of drapery, and his intervention into late 19<sup>th</sup> century creative practice, the second half of this chapter will then take a step back in order to ask: what was the context from out of which Clérambault's attempts to document drapery trends and to offer a precise classificatory science of how the drape might be observed and represented grew? In particular, it will be acknowledged that while Clérambault's intervention into twentieth-century discourse in establishing the study of drapery as a cultural tradition was unique, there is nonetheless a legacy of creative practice and discourse in which representation of the veil and the drape is a focal point. Therefore, the objective of this analysis will be to trace this discourse to ascertain the precise nature of Clérambault's contribution and innovation within this domain. To begin with, then, we will consider traditions relating to the teaching of drapery that emerged in the Renaissance period before developing a more detailed analysis of how the innovation of the use of a mannequin allowed this practice to evolve and how it is exemplified in the creative practice of Leonardo da Vinci. Following this, an account of how drapery representation was taught and practiced in 19<sup>th</sup> century France. This analysis will then enable more advanced analysis of the precise nature of the innovation within the drapery studies domain that Clérambault's intervention can be seen to have constituted. In short, as previously indicated, it will be argued that Clérambault can be seen to have offered a unique contribution in the sense that his analysis of contemporary drapery both developed more significant levels of exactitude than any of the antecedents and differed from other similar attempts on the part of his contemporaries in the sense that the focus became drapery in and of itself, rather than drapery as a means exclusively of accessing Classical Antiquity or of adding a layer of the intrigue of fascination to an ulterior subject.

### 3.1 *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapes Indigènes (1921)*

This section will commence with a description of a presentation entitled *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapes Indigènes* (Introduction to the study of Indigenous draperies) at the second Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art (Congress on the History of Art) at the Sorbonne in Paris, in which Clérambault outlined his views on the need for a comprehensive study of drapery culture, explaining how existing studies of costume and art practice (typically in the Orientalist tradition) were inadequate in chronicling the attributes of existing drapery culture, and proposing that a more thorough discipline of observation and communication of existing drapery traditions was needed in order to address this issue.

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1921, on the occasion of the second Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art at the Sorbonne in Paris, Clérambault presented his findings on the drapery for the first time in a communication entitled *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapes Indigènes*. Clérambault's presentation took place as part of the third section of the congress titled "'Art de l'Orient et de l'Extrême Orient'" (Art of the Orient and the Extreme Orient). During his presentation, the psychiatrist called for the urgent establishment of a rigorous recording and complete inventory of the various forms of drapery by arguing that painters no longer analysed the form of the drapery; archaeologists do conversely analyse drapery but confine their attention to generations that have passed; and lastly that Orientalists are primarily preoccupied with folklore and linguistics so that drapery is a secondary consideration.<sup>202</sup> Thus, Clérambault announced the commencement of the writing of his "Traité général de la Draperie" in which he would combine his years of research, drawings, and photographs to create a comprehensive atlas of drapery from Antiquity to Contemporary Africa. Sadly, this publication never saw the light of day.

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<sup>202</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.



In his *Introduction*, Clérambault expressed for the first time his interest in this subject, fervently demonstrating his desire for such a study, in particular focusing on the need for a survey that attends to contemporary manifestations of drapery culture:

It is surprising that, while classical drapery has been analysed and decrypted for a long time, *drapery currently living* in diverse regions of the world are not the subject of a systematic study; one might even say it is not studied at all. Neither the immensity of the subject, not its beauty, not its logic, seems to be in question.<sup>203</sup>

Before moving onto a plea for the acknowledgment and systematic study of contemporary drapery, Clérambault spends some time in his presentation describing the handful of existing ethnological studies of Oriental drapery: alluding to Edmond Doutté's description and analysis of the masculine haik, together with Alfred Bel and Prosper Ricard's analysis of the feminine haik. He also alludes to the descriptions and names of various types of dress in French and Arabic culture in the *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes* of Reinhard Dozy.<sup>204</sup> As suggested in the previous chapter, it is to this ethnologic tradition of recording established costume traditions that Clérambault's research on the drapery belonged to a tradition in which the technical history of the costume is analysed, and that can be seen to have extended well into the twentieth century, with André Leroi-Gaughan, for instance, dedicating a chapter of his 1945 *Milieu et Techniques* on the ethnography of costume and drapery.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> “Il est surprenant de constater que, tandis que les draperies antiques ont été depuis très longtemps analysées et déchiffrées, les draperies actuellement vivantes dans les diverses régions du monde d’ont fait l’objet d’aucune étude systématique, on peut même dire, à peu de chose près, d’aucune étude. Ni l’immensité du sujet, ni sa beauté, ni sa logique, ne semblent avoir été soupçonnées.” in “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>204</sup> R. Dozy, *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes* (Amsterdam: Jean Müller, 1845).

<sup>205</sup> A. Leroi-Gourham, *Milieu et technique, Evolution et techniques* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2012): 209-253.

However, marking itself apart from this ethnographic tradition, Clérambault's study at the same time argued for a recognition of the study of the drapery as independent of that of the general history of the costume. Drapery is a subject which, according to him, deserved its typological study, which the publications mentioned above did not provide. For the psychiatrist, the study of modern drapery within the history of costume only provided brief descriptions. It provided no knowledge on the specific vocabulary used by (for example) Arab communities to define the various proportions of the drapery. As for existing histories of costume such as Albert Charles Auguste Racinet's 1888 *Le Costume Historique* and Friedrich Hottenroth's 1896 *Le Costume Chez Les Peuples Anciens Et Modernes*, they only presented approximate figures while suggesting that the various way of diapering the un-sewn costume on the body is subjective and varies from person to person, which Clérambault called an "absurd idea from a mechanical, psychological and descriptive point of view."<sup>206</sup>

Clérambault's attention to Orientalist painting and representations of Oriental drapery within it provides another justification for his research. In fact, Clérambault blamed Orientalist painters for not dwelling on the nobility of the subject of drapery in their pictorial compositions, criticizing their lack of rigor and inattention when it comes to the construction of drapery. He claimed that existing representations were false and traced the genesis of existing falsehoods in representations of drapery to several documents from various sources.<sup>207</sup> However, he also pointed out that the reasons for this negligence within existing art practice could be explained by the lack of contemporary pictorial examples of drapery. He notes the dependence of existing painters and sculptors in the Orientalist tradition on statues and bas-reliefs from Classical

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<sup>206</sup> Albert Charles Auguste Racinet, *Le Costume Historique* (London: Taschen, 2006 [1888]); Friedrich Hottenroth, *Le Costume Chez Les Peuples Anciens Et Modernes* (Paris: Guerinnet, 1896).

<sup>207</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

Antiquity, and the lack of an equivalent tradition of representations of drapery within Arabic culture, as he, for instance, points out that "the only Muslim paintings where the human figure appears are Persian and only showing adjusted clothing."<sup>208</sup> He also noted that artists could not draw inspiration from local iconographic repertoires. When turning to real-life examples of clothing traditions, artists were confronted with the difficulty of getting authentic models. Therefore, he argued that it was necessary to observe and teach drapery traditions and practices to painters to avoid such technical errors.

Lastly, he argued that the subject was too vast not to necessitate a new specialization. With this project, Clérambault intended to create a material and technical history of drapery by studying the structures of the folds. He concluded his presentation with the following justification:

Just as the history of the costume sooner or later must emancipate itself from the general history of manners, furniture, and armament, so the study of draperies must emerge from the general history of the costume in which it was hardly mentioned until now.<sup>209</sup>

The desire to separate the study of drapery from the general history of the costume was driven by an intellectual motivation deriving from a recognition of the need for a clearer codification and the classification of the various assembling and binding methods of the drapery. For Clérambault, the study of drapery differed from that of costume in general because it required a specific methodology that attended to the particular formal attributes of this practice.

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<sup>208</sup> "D'abord tandis que les Anciens nous ont laissé des statues, des bas-reliefs et des peintures très explicites, les peuples usants encore actuellement du Drapé ne nous offrent, à peu d'exceptions près, rien de tel. Il n'existe pas de statue arabe et les seules peintures musulmanes ou paraisse la figure humaine sont persane et ne montrent que des habillements ajustés." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>209</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

### 3.2 The drapery in its entirety

The problem with making a piece of fabric hold on a moving human body without external help is not likely to receive an unlimited number of solutions. Therefore, it deserves to be classified as an invention in the history of mankind.<sup>210</sup>

This section will explore how Clérambault was not only concerned with the drapery, its general shapes once in place on the body, but also with the "savoir-faire" that constituted the arrangement of the fabric on the body and of the variety of solutions that allowed it to stay in place. Accordingly, in this section, Clérambault's classificatory criteria, through which he developed a systematized understanding of different types of drapery in terms of how they are assembled and worn, complete with terminology, will be outlined, along with an indication of how he hoped that the ability to classify different types of drapery practice better and fashion would enable comparison between different time periods and cultures.

The expressed interest in documenting the process of assembling the veil and different ways of classifying different modes of drapery will be seen to mark a significant shift that relates back to what was established in the previous chapter – and in particular, Clérambault's interest in the ethnographic function of the veil. In particular, it indicates that Clérambault was not only interested in the cultural meaning of the veil and in preserving a sense of Western dominance by asserting the superior capacity of Western discourse to chronicle and record existing cultural practices, but that he was also relatedly interested in the correct visualization and classification of the drapery. This is something that can be interpreted in two ways: on the one hand, it marks

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<sup>210</sup> "Le problème de faire tenir sans secours extérieurs, sur un corps humain en mouvement, un pan d'étoffe tel qu'il sort du tissage n'est pas susceptible de recevoir un nombre illimité de solutions, par suite les réussites méritent d'être classées comme Inventions dans l'Histoire de l'Esprit Humain." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

a continuation of how he might be perceived as an ethnographer in the Orientalist tradition asserting his own superior capacity to preserve existing cultural traditions; on the other hand, in the narrow preoccupation upon the technical attributes of drapery culture there is the suggestion of surrendering to the form, and in the process a minimization of broader considerations of cultural and social meaning. In short, Clérambault's myopic interest in the visual and technical qualities of drapery may be seen to indicate an aestheticism that cuts across and perhaps supersedes the ethnographic priorities chronicled in the previous chapter, even if there is some overlapping between the two.

Clérambault classified living draperies among the inventions of "the general history of human ingenuity" (*l'Histoire générale de l'ingéniosité humaine*). As indicated, the proposed study described his *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes* was not only concerned with the drapery and its form once on the body, and it was also to explore the "savoir-faire" needed for its construction and the various solutions that allowed it to hold. The need to chronicle these aspects of drapery culture, according to Clérambault, was rendered more acute by the profound changes and the gradual disappearance of the drapery in North Africa with the expansion of Western civilization and the accelerated change in traditional lifestyles:

There is not only interest in collecting the current formulas of the living drapery today: there is urgency. It is disappearing very quickly and in several ways. In some ways, it retreats before sewn costumes; in others, it is schematized; in another, it is distorted; in another, it gets bastardized. By that, we mean formulas that have up until now remained separate are getting mixed.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> "Il n'y a pas seulement intérêt à recueillir des aujourd'hui les formules actuellement vivantes de la draperie : il y a urgence. Elle disparaît avec une grande rapidité, et cela suivant plusieurs modes. En telle place elle recule devant le costume cousu ; en telle autre elle se schématise ; en telle autre elle est déformée ; en telle autre elle s'abâtardit, nous voulons dire mêle des formules restées jusqu'à présent distinctes" in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

As a result of modernization and changes in the Maghrebi lifestyle, Clérambault foresaw the drapery's complete disappearance. The psychiatrist had already seen this disappearance in Algeria and Tunisia's neighbouring countries, where workers abandoned the haik for more comfortable and practical vests and coats.<sup>212</sup> Focussing on the Faldetta – a traditional Maltese headdress, and how over time it had lost its amplitude and rigidity, Clérambault used this as an example of how the rapid societal changes described above had begun to ensure “deformations” in garment wearing practice. Above all, he deplored the cross-cultural fertilization transpiring in the traditional dress and reminded his audience that “each region has its formula, its Qaïda.”<sup>213</sup> For example, Clérambault noticed a trend during his travels throughout Morocco whereby he found certain forms of draperies and draping methods of specific regions completely intact elsewhere. This was due to what he referred to as "agents of transmission" moving from city to cities, such as sex workers or fashionable ladies from higher societal ranks. Clérambault equated the failure to record the draperies before their disappearance as comparable to the failure to "mourn the recent departure of certain animal species that a little care could have preserved."<sup>214</sup>

In this desire to record a soon-to-be-obsolete cultural practice, photography seemed to be the best solution to “freeze” in time these ever-moving changes which were “attached to the principal of the drapery tradition.”<sup>215</sup> The photographic medium appeared as a valuable tool to conserve the traces of a traditional garment and of existing cultural practices that he believed were about to become "extinct":

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<sup>212</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*

<sup>213</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

<sup>214</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

<sup>215</sup> “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

It is essential, for the drapery, that its extinction does not take place without complete images having been taken, without their structure having been analysed, without having drawn all the mechanical, ethnographic, psychological lessons, which we could not later draw from the mere examination of their images.<sup>216</sup>

For the documentation and for the study to be helpful, the research method needed to be suited to capturing the complexity of the object of study. As the folds in the drapery made this problematic, Clérambault opted to study the way the haik was assembled and worn in minute detail: from the moment it was assembled on the body until the moment it reached its final form.

Each step of the construction, much like each part, must be given a specific name or rather a reference number, allowing them to be rapidly mentioned compared to another era or drapery of similar proportions.<sup>217</sup>

Clérambault insisted on the establishment of a specific vocabulary to describe the drapery, refusing the use of random terms and hoping that this might enable historians and observers of drapery culture to establish more precise comparisons. For Clérambault, drapery conformed to mechanical and biological laws, and its analysis required a "dissection." For this reason, he segmented his subject of study into "descriptive anatomy, comparative anatomy,

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<sup>216</sup> "Il importe, pour les drapés, que leur extinction n'ait pas lieu sans que des images très complètes en aient été prises, sans que leur structure ait été analysée, sans qu'on en ait fait sortir tous les enseignements mécaniques, ethnographiques, psychologies, que plus tard on ne pourrait tirer du seul examen de leurs images." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>217</sup> "Chacun des temps de la construction comme chacune des parties doit recevoir un nom spécial ou à défaut un numéro d'ordre, qui permettra de les évoquer rapidement pour les comparer à des temps ou des portions similaires d'une autre drapé." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

organography, physiology or in embryology,"<sup>218</sup> Much like a doctor studies the human body.<sup>219</sup> It was the sequence of construction that particularly attracted the attention of Clérambault (see Figure 3.1). He wished to capture the temporality of the gestures that went into the construction of draped garments. Crucially, the psychiatrist did not trust observation to be sufficient for this study and thus utilized photography as a tool to chronicle these movements. Clérambault wanted "to be able to codify drapery so much that [different modes] can be identified even without a drawing [...]. The same drapery should have been shown successively in its original and completed form. Each construction time must receive a special name or a sequence number which would make it possible to refer to them quickly and to compare them with periods or similar portions of other draperies."<sup>220</sup> This method aimed to establish a classification of drapery and a scoring plan according to each typology, aiming to facilitate the chronological and geographical comparison of different types of draperies across cultures and periods. In order to do so, Clérambault focused on the mechanical aspect of drapery:

The layout of its construction must define a drapery. Three aspects supply this layout: 1° the principal hinging point; 2° the movement of the fabric from this point; 3° the number of covered areas and the way to get used to it. – Example: "Scapular spiral drape, body, and head; fake left sleeve, cephalic finish with the return."<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> "Anatomie descriptive, anatomie comparée, organographie, physiologie ou encore embryologie in "Avis aux médecins artistes, La Presse Médicale, n°48, 14 juin 1924," 2AP3, Box 2, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>219</sup> See chapter 4 for an analysis of Clérambault's photographs in relation to psychiatry.

<sup>220</sup> "Pour codifier les drapés à ce point, qu'ils puissent être identifiés même sans dessin comme un visage. Une même draperie doit être montrée successivement dans sa forme achevée et sa genèse. Chacun des temps de la construction comme chacune des parties doit recevoir un nom spécial ou à défaut un numéro d'ordre, qui permet de les évoquer rapidement pour les comparer à des temps ou des portions similaires d'un autre drapé." in "Notes et Croquis," Congrès de l'Histoire de l'art, 1921, 2AP3, Box 2, Folder B, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>221</sup> "Un costume drapé doit être défini par le schéma de sa construction. Ce schéma est fourni par trois ordres d'éléments : 1° le point d'appui principal ; 2° le mouvement d'étoffe partant de ce point ; 3° les noms des zones recouvertes, et la façon de s'y adapter. Exemple : "Drapé



The first two aspects – that is, the hinging point and the movement of the fabric from this point – are the phases that for Clérambault control the classification. However, before getting to this already specific taxonomical component, Clérambault offers a preliminary distinction within draperies which is the separation between draperies that are "préparés" (prepared) and those that are "non préparés" (unprepared). The prepared draperies correspond to a type of drapery that uses artificial closing, whereas unprepared draperies use the fabric without modifying it by directly wrapping it around the body. The latter was fascinating to Clérambault since these draperies only adhered to the body through the arrangement process. Consequently, unprepared draperies constitute the more significant part of Clérambault's written study and are the sole focus of his photographic investigation.

Clérambault goes on to provide subcategories within the category of unprepared drapery. First, the "drapé posé" (posed drapery) is held in place as soon as it is arranged. Second, the "drapé pose fixé" (fixed posed drapery) is fixed with a pin. Third, the more complex "drapé spirial" (spiral drapery) provides elaborate and prestigious draperies. Clérambault believed it was relatively easy to describe lines and even arrangements of volumes within a drapery, but that it was challenging to portray surfaces in revolution in this manner.<sup>222</sup> Clérambault was thus the first ever to perceive and understand, but most importantly to define the movements and the construction of the haik.

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scapulaires spiral, corps et tête ; fausse manche gauche finition céphalique avec renvoi. Les deux premiers ordres de données (point d'appui et mouvement d'étoffe partant de ce point) commandent la classification." in "Conférence sur la classification des costumes drapés devant la Société d'ethnographie de Paris 1928," Congrès de l'Histoire de l'art, 1921, 2AP3, Box 1, Folder B, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>222</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

Clérambault seemed to be incredibly excited about a "totally unexplored" form of posed drapery called the *haik redda* or *le haik- be-redda* – the haik worn in the form "redda."<sup>223</sup> In contrast to a standard-sized haik, measuring between 4.5-5m in length and 1.65m in width and weighing 2 to 3 kilograms, the haik redda was only about 3m long and 1.5m large. Clérambault describes how this haik, worn in redda, is often called "Nous" which means "half".<sup>224</sup> Clérambault offered a detailed description of the *mise-en-place* or the confection of this specific drapery on the body:

1. Haik passed behind the back, horizontal chain, vertical weft; the arms wide apart hold the upper edge (warp threads) not far from the angles, which hang 50 centimeters below the hand; the half-stretched material forms a vast crescent from one hand to the other behind the back.
2. Filled, by gentle whipping, with 50cm of material that hangs over the hand; this filled instead of outside inside, the filled includes the full height of the haik, it takes place according to a weft thread and in all the extent of this thread; a large band is thus brought back, like a shutter, against the internal face of the haik; the forearm is included between the two blades of fabric. The corresponding arm is raised, then its forearm is included between the two blades of the fabric.
3. The corresponding arm is raised, then its forearm folds down to place the two blades of cloth on the head. The corresponding arm is raised, then its forearm is included between the two blades of the fabric.
4. Same filled for the second arm.
5. Same drawdown for the second arm.
6. Successive retractions of both arms.
7. Miscellaneous alterations.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>224</sup> "Notes et Croquis," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>225</sup> "1. Haik passé derrière le dos, chaîne horizontale, trame verticale ; les bras bien écartés tiennent le bord supérieur (fils de chaîne) non loin des angles, qui pendent de 50 centimètres au-dessous de la main ; l'étoffe à demi-tendue forme un vaste croissant d'une main à l'autre derrière le dos. 2. Rempli, par fouettement doux, des 50cm d'étoffe qui pendent au-dessus de la main ; ce rempli à lieu de dehors en dedans, le rempli comprend toute la hauteur du haik, il a lieu selon un fil de trame et dans tout l'étendu de ce fil ; une large bande est ramenée ainsi,

These successive descriptions correspond to the images found in the series (see Figures 3.1.1 to 3.1.3). Clérambault photographed one female subject alone to record the gestures used to cover her body in the haik redda from Fès. The completion of the documentation of the formation of the haik was not found in the archives, but we have found its images of its final front and back forms (see figure 3.2 and 3.3) They thus might be seen to signal the importance of recognizing how Clérambault's photographic practice, described in the previous chapter as ethnographic, given that it was exhibited at the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles, and given its crossovers concerning Bénédite's remarks concerning the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture, must be seen in relation to his writing on the subject of drapery, and his interest in documenting the assemblage and wearing of draped garments as part of a broader art historical attempt to document with precision this dying art. The "wearing" shown in Clérambault's photograph is very static and demonstrative, it was aim at showing the different processes involved in the draping the body rather than a lived experience. The combination of the photographs coupled with the description of the haik redda in Clérambault's *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes* attest to Clérambault's extremely methodical way of studying the haik, and of documenting ways in which it was worn and assembled. Again, there is a sense that this may be interpreted as contiguous with the interpretation offered in the previous chapter, in which it was proposed that the documenting of the haik is part of an ethnographic and Orientalist practice in that it consists of asserting the power and superiority of Western culture in documenting and preserving the very cultural

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comme un volet, contre la face interne du haik ; l'avant-bras se trouve inclus entre les deux lames d'étoffe. Le bras correspondant est élevé, puis son avant-bras se trouve inclus entre les deux lames de l'étoffe. 3.Le bras correspondant est élevé, puis son avant-bras se rabat pour déposer sur la tête les deux lames d'étoffe. Le bras correspondant est élevé, puis son avant-bras se trouve inclus entre les deux lames de l'étoffe. 4. Même remplis pour le deuxième bras. 5. Même rabattement pour le deuxième bras. 6. Retirements successifs des deux bras. 7. Retouches diverses." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

traditions that its imperial hold has helped to endanger. However, at the same time, the meticulousness of Clérambault's interest in the haik and the sense that his interest is isolated to its aesthetic qualities for the purpose of art historical comparison may be seen to indicate the possibility of an alternative reading in which the ethnographic function is secondary to a taxonomical and art historical interest in the aesthetics of drapery culture.

### **3.3 Clérambault's notebook**

This section will develop an analysis of Clérambault's notebooks and various assembled notes in order to determine whether these may be seen to offer further insights into his photography. In analysing these texts, we will find further evidence of how the photographs served the purpose of documenting drapery traditions to illustrate the specific habits and traditions relating to drapery culture as an aesthetic practice, thus further understanding of contemporary drapery practice within a broader art-historical context.

Two notebooks belonging to Clérambault – one red and one green –, as well as precisely dated notes that refer to the photographs allow for precise evaluation of Clérambault's approach in this regard. Clérambault's investigation of the haik's various regional forms began in January 1919 and then lasted until April of that same year. In January, he began his observational tour of hospitals in various Moroccan cities in his capacity as a military doctor. During this tour, he met colleagues and other personalities in residence in Morocco, most notably the Orientalist painter Joseph de la Nézière. He gained access to models whose names he arbitrarily recorded in his notes. Amongst the male models he worked with, he makes mention of a "Professeur," an "Othello," "Si Abed," and a woman named "Fatima." In the notebooks, Clérambault also recorded the process of photographing sex workers in the hospital of Azemmour to which he, for instance, noted: "be wary of information given by prostitutes [...] they did not receive

familial Qaida<sup>226</sup> [...] or mixed the Qaida because they travelled [...] imperfect or partial imitation of local Qaida".<sup>227</sup>

In January, he remained in Fez and photographed "Othello." On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February, he was in Rabat; on the 25<sup>th</sup>, he was in Casablanca; on the 27<sup>th</sup>, he visited Azemmour; on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, he was in Mazagan; on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March, he spent some time in Safi; on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March he was in Marrakesh; on the 17<sup>th</sup> he was in Mogador; and finally he returned to Marrakesh on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March and to Fez on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, diving into the existing literature on the drapery and citing Edmond Doutté, Budget Meakin and Arnold Van Gennepe.<sup>228</sup> The notes are brief and range from hospital observations to comments on the haik linked to his photographs. However, he never directly describes the other photographs in his repertoire, nor are the photographs labelled. It is also of interest to note that he seems to have used hospital visits to advance his research by questioning doctors – for instance, referring to a Dr. Bernard and a Dr. Delanoë, while he also describes speaking to patients about local dress habits, which he measured and weighted.

According to Clérambault, another critical element shaping the haik's exterior form is located in its "finition" (finish), which he described as "the shape given to the final portion of the fabric

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<sup>226</sup> The word Qaida is the Arabic word for "base" and "foundation." In this particular context, Clérambault was using this term to refer to the formation of the haik, which is, as it has already been established, dependent on social, regional, and familial backgrounds.

<sup>227</sup> "se méfier des renseignements des prostituées ... n'ont pas reçu la qaïda familiale... ou mélangeant les qaïda parce qu'ont voyagé ... imitation imparfaite et partielle des qaïda locales" in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>228</sup> E. Doutté, "Figures, notes et impressions," *La Géographie*, no. 7 (1903): 177-202; B. Meakin, *The Moorish Empire A Historical Epitome* (London: S. Sonnenschein & Company, lim., 1899); A. Van Gennepe, *Le Tissage aux Cartons et son utilisation décorative dans l'Egypte Ancienne* (Neuchatel, Switzerland: Delachaux & Nestlé, 1916).

after the latter has been applied according to its general method."<sup>229</sup> To illustrate this, Clérambault provided two examples found in the Moroccan haik. The haik "redda" and "tsqouica". The haik redda, the veiling of the body, ended with a cephalic finish that allowed the face to be completely veiled, leaving only the eyes or even only one eye to be seen in the slit. This finish did not only determine the form of the cephalic closures but the entirety of the drapery, particularly the folds in the back. *Sans titre [femme drapée], Untitled [draped woman]* (see Figure 3.4) shows the elegant folds created by the cephalic finish of the haik redda.

This question is what the photographs investigating the drapery of "Azemmour" seem to want to consider. The drapery of Azemmour finished in a "drape tombé" (fallen drapery), in a form that Clérambault described but also sketched: "in Azemmour, the triangle for the eye is called qouisa [...] the qouisa is a cephalic finish giving a headdress the form of a helmet or tiara. The word qouisa means "small arc."<sup>230</sup> Clérambault photographed the various positionings of this finish to distinguish the effects of the haik redda from Fez and that of the classic redda, which come to rest over the head, giving it a puffy effect (see Figure 3.5). From the front, the qouisa covers the entire face and only leaves a small triangular opening for one eye. The rear view of the qouisa displays its fold asymmetrically around the head, forming a diagonal from the neck rising from the right to the left. The selection of sketches seen (see Figure 3.6) responds to the images in the photograph in that they share a concern to record the customary structure of the drape. The drawing in blue crayon (see Figure 3.7) shows the rear aspect of the haik redda. The upper-tier falls in a conch to reveal below a fabric falling in folds to the ankles.

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<sup>229</sup> "Nous appelons finition la forme donnée à la portion finale de l'étoffe, après que cette dernière a été appliquée selon la Méthode Générale." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>230</sup> "à Azemmour, le triangle pour l'oeil s'appelle qouisa... La qouisa est une finition céphalique donnant une coiffe en forme de casque ou de tiare. Le mot qouisa signifie "petit arc"" in Clérambault, "17 Février" in "Carnet et Agendas", *Papier Clérambault* (1872-1934), 2AP3, Box 1, Folder E, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

Reflecting on how Clérambault's notes and diaries closely document and reflect on his photographic practice, it becomes evident that Clérambault's photographs were taken in support of his observation during his visits to various hospitals across Morocco. More than just serving as a means of documenting and preserving a culture from an Orientalist standpoint, the notes and diaries provide an insight that confirms our supposition on the basis of Clérambault's various presentations and published works on the haik: namely, that Clérambault's photography served the purpose of documenting drapery traditions in order to illustrate the specific habits and traditions relating to drapery culture as an aesthetic practice, and thus to further an understanding on contemporary drapery practice within a broader art-historical context. Clérambault's photo-documents of the haik – such as his image of a man carrying his prayer's mat, his image of two women simultaneously diapering, and his image of tea being served while draped (see Figures 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10) – might thus be understood less as a means of preserving a *culture* and more as a means of preserving an *aesthetic tradition* that transcends an ethnographic preoccupation.

### **3.4 Classical and Modern Draperies**

This section will consider an additional dimension to Clérambault's interest in developing a science of drapery and how his photographic practice may be seen to have been oriented around a perceived need to document this dying art. Namely, it will be argued that Clérambault was motivated by a desire to recognize continuities and discontinuities between Classical Antiquity and contemporary Maghrebi life. Thus, in essence, Clérambault's interest in the aesthetic value of the veil and the haik can be seen to reflect an interest in exploring existing remnants or parallels with Greek and Roman culture within the North African culture. In exploring this phenomenon, this section will draw attention to writers who held similar beliefs within separate

but related domains, including both writers who directly influenced Clérambault (as is suggested by the presence of their writing in newspaper clippings preserved by Clérambault) and contemporaries who expressed similar views. In exploring this discursive context, this section will also explore in detail some of the conceptual foundations of the belief that contemporary Orientalist practice (of which drapery may be considered a singular manifestation) can be considered to offer insights into Classical Antiquity.

The study of modern Arabic drapery was considered by Clérambault as a unique way of better accessing and understanding Antiquity. As he himself remarked:

The benefits to take from the study of the living drapery are a better comprehension of Antiquity, ethnographic information, aesthetic richness, documents on the history of human ingenuity. The forms of the drapery in movement and their unexpected uses will provide details of the classical world, precisely like Polynesian tools make us understand prehistoric instruments.<sup>231</sup>

As we will shortly see, this sense that life in North Africa at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century echoed a bygone era is a constitutive mark of Orientalist discourse, of which (as was argued in the previous chapter) Clérambault's photography may be seen to have been apart. This thinking notably appears in newspaper articles conserved by Clérambault that I have found in his archive. In one article entitled “L’Afrique du Nord et la vie Antique” published in 1922 in the journal *Colonia*, Joël Thézard for instance wrote:

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<sup>231</sup> “Les profits à tirer de la draperie vivante sont la compréhension plus complète à l’antique, les renseignements ethnographiques, les richesses esthétiques, enfin les documents pour l’histoire générale de l’ingéniosité humaine. Les formes du drapé en mouvement et les usages inattendus de telle ou telle de ses parties nous expliqueront tel détail des œuvres antique, exactement, comme l’outillage polynésien, nous fait comprendre les instruments, préhistoriques.” in “Introduction à l’étude des costumes drapés indigènes,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.



To travel to North Africa is to travel to Antiquity. However, it is not the study of the deceased Antiquity found in museums [...]. It is the living Antiquity, it is contemplating the beautiful, noble, in what was familiar and picturesque.<sup>232</sup>

The author of this article followed these remarks by specifically linking scenes of Antiquity with African artworks. He gives the example of a Greek vase painting representing a burial procession and likens it the procession of the El-Ketta cemetery in Algier, arguing that there are clear parallels between Arabic draperies worn by the carrier of death "faithfully" represented within the Greek vase (see Figure 3.11). The comparison between classical and modern draperies or the Greco-Roman and Arabic draperies is so apparent to Thézard that he at one point even goes so far as to suggest that the observation has an air of banality about it. To illustrate this, he quotes André Chevrillon from the French Académie discussing a Moroccan market in the *Revue Française* on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 1921:

The greatest pleasure here, just like in the Orient, is to see the ancient world, to see it directly in daily, unconscious life; is to find the man draped in a single fabric under the sun, the rhythm of living lines the gravity of the folds of canvas and wool whether gestures widen, the beauty of bare feet in the dust... It is a people of living statues because in the ample folds of muslin and wool where lines and rhythms are stylized, the individual disappears, and the figures are amplified to the status of the symbol.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> "Faire un voyage dans l'Afrique du nord c'est faire un voyage dans l'Antiquité. Mais ce n'est point étudier l'antiquité squelettique des ruines, [...] c'est retrouver l'Antiquité vivante, c'est contempler la vie antique dans ce qu'elle avait de beau, de noble, comme dans ce qu'elle avait de familier ou de pittoresque." in J. Thézard, "L'Afrique du Nord et la vie antique," *Colonia*, n°7 (1 November 1922), Paris, Bibliothèque central du muséum d'Histoire naturelle, 2AP3C2.

<sup>233</sup> "Le plus grand plaisir ici comme en Orient, c'est de voir le monde antique, de le voir directement dans sa vie quotidienne, inconsciente ; c'est de retrouver l'homme drapé d'une seule étoffe sous le soleil, le rythme des lignes vivantes la gravité des plis de toile et de laine où les gestes s'élargissent, la beauté des pieds nus dans la poussière... C'est un peuple des statues vivantes, car dans les grands plis de mousseline et de laine où se stylisent les lignes et

More specifically relating to the subject of drapery, this assimilation of Antiquity within the contemporary Orient (in this case Morocco) is something that has also been observed by Léon Heuzey, who saw in the haik a "survivance" (survival) of the Egyptian Sindon: a single rectangular piece of fabric "long enough to wrap around the body several times."<sup>234</sup> Edmond Doutté has similarly compared the haik to the Greek pallium – a large rectangular piece of fabric used as clothing.<sup>235</sup> The anthropologists Lucien Bertholon and Ernest Chantre in their *Recherches anthropologiques dans la Berbérie Orientale*, drawing on Dozy's *Dictionnaire détaillé des noms des vêtements chez les Arabes*, also reflect on the likeness between the modern orient and the classical culture of the antiquity.<sup>236</sup> As Heuzey notes, Bertholon and Chantre also associated the haik with Berber burnous – a long loose hooded cloak worn on the shoulder and around the neck with a pectoral piece called a *star*, perceived as the remains of the Greek *chlamyde*.<sup>237</sup> Also called chlamys, this Greek cloak was part of the state costume of the emperor and high officials and presented itself as a rectangular piece that has "the three straight sides and the fourth side rounded" attached around the neck by a clip.<sup>238</sup>

In addition to echoing newspaper articles in Clérambault's possession, and mirroring claims made by contemporary ethnographers and Orientalists like Heuzey, Doutté, Bertholon, and Chantre, Clérambault's assertion that forms of contemporary drapery and their use might serve the purpose of helping to explain and illustrate details of Classical Antiquity (in this sense

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les rythmes, l'individuel disparaît, et les figures s'amplifient jusqu'au symbole." A. Chevrillon quoted in J. Thézard, "L'Afrique du Nord et la vie antique."

<sup>234</sup> "Assez longue pour faire plusieurs fois le tour du corps." in L. Heuzey, *Histoire du costume antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant* (Paris: E. Pottier, 1922), 19.

<sup>235</sup> E. Doutté. "Figures, notes et impressions," 260.

<sup>236</sup> L. J. Bertholon and E. Chantre, *Recherches anthropologiques dans la Berbérie orientale: Album de 174 portraits ethniques* (Paris: A. Rey, 1912).

<sup>237</sup> Heuzey, *Histoire du costume antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, 115-141.

<sup>238</sup> Heuzey, *Histoire du costume antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, 117.

echoing how prehistoric instruments have been documented throughout the study of Polynesian tools) can be interpreted as a manifestation of a broader 19<sup>th</sup> Century belief that there are universal evolutionary stages of cultural development characterizing the transition from the primitive era to the modern era, the two anthropologists most strongly associated with such claims are the American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881) and the British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), whose name was cited in Clérambault's personal record conserved at the museum Histoire Naturelle in Paris.<sup>239</sup>

In his principal work *Primitive Culture*, written in 1871, Tylor – influenced in part by Darwin's theory of evolution<sup>240</sup> – argued that it is possible to construct earlier stages of cultural evolutions by studying examples of "survival," a term he defines as:

processes, customs, opinions, which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had their original home, and they thus remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer has been evolved.<sup>241</sup>

Tylor believed that the best way to explain any “force of habit” was to show how it came to be in the “new state of society from that in which they had their original home”: that is, to discover its history. Tylor also believed in the fundamental similarity of human thought around the world: what Frantz Boas has termed the "psychic unity of mankind."<sup>242</sup> This belief was the foundation for Tylor's unilineal evolutionary views and supported his contention that societies progressed through parallel and related evolutionary stages. This whole perspective was rooted

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<sup>239</sup> “Notes et Croquis,” Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

<sup>240</sup> C. Darwin, 1809-1882. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London: John Murray, 1859).

<sup>241</sup> E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom* (London: John Murray, 1871), 14-15.

<sup>242</sup> Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).

in a 19<sup>th</sup> century discursive practice known as the *comparative method*,<sup>243</sup> which consisted in the conviction that contemporary "primitive cultures" were like "living fossils" with intimate links to early stages of advanced parallel cultures.<sup>244</sup> In a paper delivered to the Royal Anthropological Institute in 1889, Tylor made an effort to construct a rigorous methodology based on systematization and classification of "survivals" and the identified "other half" that has been lost.<sup>245</sup> In turn, he proposed that once executed, these elements could allow for the comparison of cultures and the reconstruction of historical antecedents through the study and observation of contemporary cultures.

By vigorously documenting (as we will see) the North African haik in all its variations and finishes, as well as establishing a comparison with the Greco-roman drapery, Clérambault's research and art practice may be seen to mirror Tylor's diachronic approach to interrogating and reconstructing the past by exploring its supposed continuities within so-called primitive cultures of the present. At the same time, however, as this may be seen to indicate that Clérambault may have had an agenda, i.e., to discern parallels between his photographic subjects when capturing North African drapery habits and practices within Classical Antiquity, there is little evidence to suggest that Clérambault actively encouraged these parallels through his creative practice. In particular, Clérambault seems to have refused to give precise directives to his models or to have asked them to pose in a specific way, and at no point this he set up a studio (as others who chronicled Oriental culture did) in order to cultivate a particular image. One might perhaps imagine that given his professed interest in discerning continuities between

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<sup>243</sup> E. A. Hammerl, "The Comparative Method in Anthropological Perspective," *Comparative Studies and History*, Vol. 22, no. 2 (April 1980), 145-155.

<sup>244</sup> R. J. McGee & R. L. Warmes, *Anthropological Theory, An Introduction History* (New York: Mc Graw Hill, 2008), 10.

<sup>245</sup> E.B. Tylor "On a method of investigating the development of institutions; applied to laws of marriage and descent." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 18 (1889): 245-56, 261-69.

Classical Antiquity and contemporary North African culture, in line with Tylor's approach, the psychiatrist may have tried to manipulate his material in some way, in a manner that would be comparable to what had been seen in other anthropological studies.

Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, photography was inserted in data-collecting practices and observational processes conducted by anthropologists and social investigators. More specifically, researchers interested in the question of race developed different techniques to generate and systematize their data. In the case of ethnology and anthropology practices, including observation, information collection, photography, and classificatory approaches to arranging natural history, anatomical and physiological evidence into manageable data for analysis were frequently subject to manipulation so that a given hypothesis could be proven.<sup>246</sup> In spite of photography's status as an essentially reliable and accurate tool for acquiring visual representations of different races from around the world, when it was used as an evidentiary resource for generating and systematizing data, the impression of mechanical accuracy through the capturing data in a supposedly objective manner was frequently exploited in order to promote the given ideological agenda of the practitioner making use of it. As Kelley Wilder, among others, has argued, it thus enabled researchers to make objective claims about the data they had gathered because the technology that produced them gave the impression of unbiased objectivity: and yet, the manipulation of given subjects, the choice of what to photograph in the first place, the decision of which photographs to develop and exhibit to present, all of these

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<sup>246</sup> C. Grasseni, ed., *Skilled Visions: Between Apprenticeship and Standards* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2007).; A. Grimshaw, *The Ethnographer's Eye: Ways of Seeing in Modern Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).; L. Daston and P. Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

factors, of course, enabled those engaging in this practice to nonetheless communicate the messages they desired to communicate.<sup>247</sup>

This sense that photography could be and was manipulated in spite of the veneer of objectivity in order to pursue ideological ends is especially strongly evident if we consider some other contemporary examples of ethnographic photographic practice within which evidence can be found of strategies of manipulating the subject matter in order to convey a particular meaning. In particular, we might consider the creative practices and commentaries of two thinkers in this regard: namely J.H. Lamprey and Thomas Huxley.

In the opening statement of his paper "On a method of measuring the Human form, for the use of Students in Ethnology," J.H. Lamprey attempted to systematize ethnographical photography.<sup>248</sup> Lamprey wished to change the way researchers and photographers captured human diversity but, more importantly, raise the quality of ethnographical photography within the human sciences to allow for more precise analysis and the discussion of physical similarities and differences. In order to do so, he included clearly marked measurement lines in his ethnographical photographs.<sup>249</sup> The backdrop was made of a chequered-grid, which was divided into 2-inch squares. To exemplify this technique, Lamprey included a visual illustration, *Younge Africa, (Sierra Leone)* (see Figure 3.12), produced by Henry Evans standing naked in front of the grid. The subject looks away. However, Lamprey omitted to include any instructions on how to position his figures, which resulted in a series of images

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<sup>247</sup> K. Wilder, *Photography and Science* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), 19–20, 32–35.; E. Edwards and C. Morton, "Introduction," *Photography, Anthropology, and History: Expanding the Frame* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 1–24.

<sup>248</sup> J.H. Lamprey, "On a Method of Measuring the Human Form, for the use of Students in Ethnology," *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*, Vol. 1 (1869): 84–85.

<sup>249</sup> J.H. Lamprey, "On a Method of Measuring the Human Form, for the use of Students in Ethnology," 84–85.

where models were positioned in a variety of different poses. The lack of standardized guidelines for the photographer and model revealed discrepancies in the images, which made it difficult for researchers to cross-compare anatomical features. Another example (see Figure 3.13) of Evans for Lamprey shows *Front and Profile Views of a Malayan Male* photographed before the grid. This time the subject is photographed twice, from the front and in profile, holding a spear with his right hand and resting his left arm on his thigh.

The same year as Lamprey published his guidelines, scientific naturalist Thomas Huxley (1825-1895) suggested an alternative photographic scheme for producing ethnographic images.<sup>250</sup> Unlike Lamprey, Huxley provided a detailed set of instructions explaining exactly how to photograph models. Colonial informants had to photograph their models unclothed, once in facing forward, once in profile, hands on the side, and ankles touching. He also provided precise specifications for the distance between the model.<sup>251</sup> Lastly, he asked that a yardstick be placed in the photographs to provide those viewing the image with a sense of scale (see Figure 3.14).<sup>252</sup> This precise protocol minimized the inconsistencies in the resulting imagery and, in turn, allowed for a precise collection of data for comparative studies and classifications. These photographs were taken in order to serve two purposes: one scientific, the other political. They were designed to analyse the physical differences between European white and African black subjects and simultaneously to prove the superiority of the white race.

Clérambault, I would argue, is clearly distinct in his creative practice from both Lamprey and Huxley. On the one hand, it is clear that he wished to systematically document the haik in order

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<sup>250</sup> E. Sera-Shriar, *The Making of British Anthropology, 1813–1871* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013), 109–45.

<sup>251</sup> E. Sera-Shriar, *The Making of British Anthropology, 1813–1871*, 140.

<sup>252</sup> E. Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 138–40.

to be able to compare it not only with other forms of “living draperies” but also with Greco-Roman draperies with the objective of finding out more information about Classical Antiquity. At the same time, however, there is little sense of Clérambault having subsequently manipulated his subject matter in order to validate these claims, in the manner of Lamprey and Huxley. On the contrary, his aesthetic seems to reside more with the late 20<sup>th</sup>-century tendency towards attempting to capture photographic subjects in their natural environment. Compared to the photographs of Lamprey and Huxley, Clérambault’s images are in many ways less invasive and ruled by rigorous guidelines and props to be executed. Clérambault did not appear to follow a strict set of directives when documenting the haik. The models are often photographed against different backgrounds, often framed differently and the lighting is almost never constant (see Figure 3.1.1 to 3.1.3). Clérambault’s photographs appear softer in focus, less scientific and cold, more focused on the beauty of the subject and so perhaps more artistic in turn resisting their symbol as research and diligent documentations of the various forms of the “living drapery”.

### **3.5 The role of drapery in Art**

This section takes a step back in order to offer a broader view on how historians and philosophers have analysed drapery culture within Classical Antiquity in order to establish a clearer sense of the purpose behind Clérambault's interest in excavating Classical Antiquity through its imagined reincarnation in contemporary North African culture, mediated through a consideration of drapery culture.

In the introduction to her publication *Drapery Classicism and Barbarism in Visual Culture*, Gen Doy points out the lack of relevant material on the topic of drapery. She points out that significantly more has been written by artists concerned with technical questions than has been



written by historians on the subject.<sup>253</sup> Doy explains that this lack of secondary material may be due to the subject not fitting in with the "major approaches" of visual culture, both old" and "new."<sup>254</sup>

The most substantial publication dedicated to the subject of drapery in art history is G. Woolliscroft Rhead's *The Treatment of Drapery in Art*, published in 1904: a textbook for art students offering an investigation into the principles of drapery, the formation of the individual folds, the lines which drapery takes upon the human figure and the general behaviour of drapery under different conditions.<sup>255</sup> In the course of their text, Woolliscroft Rhead underlines the lack of interest of such in this critical subject and expresses his dissatisfaction with art schools for not giving drapery the place it deserves, proposing that drapery "should unquestionably be made the subject of special examination."<sup>256</sup>

Besides the visual shift towards more modern representation, a significant breakthrough in the drapery discourse was inaugurated only a few years later with the publication of the first two articles on drapery in the fine arts by A. L. Baldry, both published in 1909. In a similar vein to Rhead, Baldry stressed the importance of drapery in fine art and argued that understanding how drapery functions as an art form are of such significance that it should be considered to only come second to the subject of the technical requirements of capturing the human figure within the painting.<sup>257</sup> He, too, stressed the insufficient amount of consideration given to drapery as a pictorial detail in artistic representation. For Baldry, too few painters show any serious interest in depicting drapery. Too many failed to attend to the requirements for depicting details within

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<sup>253</sup> Doy, *Drapery Classicism and Barbarism in Visual Culture*, 3

<sup>254</sup> Doy, *Drapery Classicism and Barbarism in Visual*, 4.

<sup>255</sup> G. Woolliscroft Read, *The Treatment of Drapery in Art* (London: Georg Bell & Sons, 1904).

<sup>256</sup> Woolliscroft Read, *The Treatment of Drapery in Art*, 7.

<sup>257</sup> A. L. Baldry, "The Treatment of Drapery in Painting," *Art Journal*, (1909), 231.

draperies and costumes by merely suggesting the character and texture of the chosen materials.<sup>258</sup> Baldry suggests that the drapery study should be based upon the "anatomy of each material" and that the student of drapery should "learn how each [piece of fabric] behaves under different conditions. Subsequently, he argues that it "is by the formation of the folds, by the way, they hand and turn and by their manner of shaping themselves in curves or angles, that the nature of the material of which the drapery is made can be explained."<sup>259</sup>

A useful general history of the evolution of drapery in European art has also been provided by the art historian Anne Hollander. Starting with Classical sculpture and ending with a painting by Albert Moore in 1882, Hollander argues:

Draped cloth per se accumulated an immense sense of expressive visual power, first from its august origins in Classical sculpture, on through its medieval association with holiness and luxury. Finally, its emergence as a purely artistic basic element, ready for use in any representational convention.<sup>260</sup>

Another factor in the nature of fine art drapery is the persistent allure of antique classicism as a model. As Hollander has argued, "the original source and later justification for artistic drapery in the West has always been the variously interpreted example of surviving Classical sculpture."<sup>261</sup> Hollander goes on to argue that this has given rise to:

[the] subsequent connection between draped cloth and lofty concepts or between the idea of nobility and the wearing of loose clothes... The association of the idea of drapery with the idea of a better and more beautiful life flourished, fed by the

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<sup>258</sup> Baldry, "The Treatment of Drapery in Painting," 231.

<sup>259</sup> Baldry, "The Treatment of Drapery in Painting," 232

<sup>260</sup> A. Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 36.

<sup>261</sup> Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 2.

accumulated art of the past with its thousands of persuasive and compelling folds<sup>262</sup>.

In his lectures on the subject of aesthetics, the philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel considers the development of the embodiment of what he called "The Spirit" in art throughout history. For the philosopher, art reached its absolute peak of beauty and of the form of its plastic individuality in classical Greece. Later, Hegel argued that clothing should be seen as a signifier of this high point comparable to classical antiquity architecture. He writes:

The principle for the artistic kind of drapery lies in treating it as if it were architectural. An architectural construction is only an environment in which we can nevertheless move freely. On its side, being separated from what it encloses must display in its formation the fact that it has a purpose of its own. Moreover, the architectural character of supporting and being supported must be formed on its own account according to its own mechanical nature. A principle of this kind is followed by the sort of drapery that we find used in the Greeks' ideal sculpture. The mantle especially is like a house in which a person is free to move.<sup>263</sup>

Hegel admired how certain classical sculptural figures were draped, rather than always naked, as a way of signifying the superiority of the spiritual material. He wrote: "we get drapery where a higher intellectual significance, an inner seriousness of spirit, is prominent and in short, where nature is not to be made the predominant thing."<sup>264</sup> We might ask: could this be a reason why his peers unsuccessfully received Clérambault's wish to introduce a course of the North African drapery? Clérambault's interest in the haik and the way it was fastened on the body of the

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<sup>262</sup> Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 2-3.

<sup>263</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Arts*, Vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 165.

<sup>264</sup> Hegel, *Aesthetics. Lectures on Fine Arts*, 747.

"other" was in complete contradiction to the colonial admiration's ideal, which sought to unveil women to conquer them better.<sup>265</sup>

### 3.6 An alienist at the Beaux-Arts de Paris

This section will then explore Clérambault's lectures and, in particular, his relationship with the Beaux-Arts de Paris. In doing so, an analysis will be offered of Clérambault's lecture method, alongside testimonies (drawing on accounts from attendees as well as Clérambault's own remarks in his journals) regarding the success of the lecture series. This section will end by considering Clérambault's lecture series's termination and possible explanations for this fact.

As we already know, Clérambault presented in 1922, in Marseille, forty large-format photographs of veiled women in the Moroccan pavilion. The images delighted the viewing public so much that they earned Clérambault a gold medal. Paul Léon, under-secretary of state for Fine Arts and director of the Beaux-Arts, discovered the drapery photographs with enthusiasm. Excited by the prospect of a course on the Arab drapery, Clérambault wrote to Léon:

I learned from M. de la Nézière that during your visit to the Exhibition of Marseille in the Moroccan Pavillion, you showed interest in my photographs on the indigenous draped costume and that you had planned to ask me the subject of my studies and conferences eventually. I am very pleased and flattered that you perceived a whole set of ideas behind my images. Regarding my conclusions, I hope you will give me credit for them.<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> F. Fanon, "Algeria Unveiled" in *Veil, Veiling, Representation, and Contemporary Art*, eds. D. A. Bailey and F. Tawadros (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, Modern Art Oxford, 2003).

<sup>266</sup> "J'ai appris par M. de la Nézière que, visitant à l'Exposition de Marseille le Pavillon du Maroc, vous avez bien voulu vous intéresser à mes photographie de costumes drapés indigènes et que vous auriez envisagé l'éventualité de me demander, sur l'objet de mes études, des

The following month, Clérambault wrote again to Léon, this time to highlight the fact that he was the first to have seen, penetrate and understand the Moroccan drapery through his photographs investigating the garment in "revolution." In a clear statement, he expressed his aspiration to transform the landscape of art history:

The combinations of lines, the surface movements, the inner paths of translucent fabric, the fluidities of fabric in lighting biases, all these effects for which my photographic images will have fixed the prototypes (without claiming to render their intensity) have not yet been sensed/perceived by orientalist artists as art themes [...] Moreover, the result of my teaching will be nothing less than to *finally*<sup>267</sup> introduce the drapery into Orientalist painting.<sup>268</sup>

Léon was very favourable to this initiative as he proposed Clérambault to the superior commissioning body of the Beaux-Art. Several months later, the verdict arrived: Clérambault was granted the authorization to "one- or two-yearly conferences on the indicated subject", although it was also stated that "the administration of the Beaux-Arts not having the necessary credits, no compensation will be provided to you."<sup>269</sup> The first conference was held on the 13th March 1924 and the second on 24th March 1924. Clérambault would give another lecture on 16 and 23 May 1925 and 29 and 31 May 1926.

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conférence. Je suis très heureux de ce que vous avez perçu, derrière mes images, tout un ordre d'idées, et flatté de ce que, pour ce qui est de me conclusion, vous vouliez bien me faire crédit" in "Lettre à Paul Léon, le 4 Septembre 1922", Congrès de l'Histoire de l'art, 1921, 2AP3, Box 1, Folder A, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

<sup>267</sup> Underlined by Clérambault.

<sup>268</sup> "Les concours de lignes, les mouvements de surface, les trajets intérieurs d'une étoffe translucide, les fluidités d'un tissu dans des partis pris d'éclairage, tous ces effets dont mes images photographiques auront fixé les prototypes (sans prétendre d'ailleurs en rendre l'intensité) n'ont pas encore été sentis, par les artistes orientalistes comme des Thèmes d'Art [...] le résultat de mon enseignement ne serait rien moins que d'introduire *enfin*, la Draperie dans la Peinture Orientaliste" in Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 165-166.

<sup>269</sup> "L'administration des Beaux-Arts ne disposent pas de credits nécessaires, aucune indemnité ne pourra vous être allouée" in "Archive du Congrès," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

During these multiple lectures, Clérambault sought to communicate and teach his expertise and findings on the subject of drapery to artists who wished to perfect their own understanding of the fabric. Clérambault asserts, "the result of this teaching would be nothing short of the final introduction of the drapery into Oriental painting. It could also contribute to the possibility of an Oriental sculpture."<sup>270</sup> Clérambault's teaching method was thus practically motivated: his classes did not solely focus on the theoretical aspect of drapery but also made use of practical methods, including the display of live models, templates, and his own photographs taken in Morocco. As he himself wrote:

Our teaching (March 1924) was based upon the presentation of photographs, several templates, and four live models, including three women (and one man). The live models draped themselves numerous times and decomposed their movement in the process. The parallelism of their gestures helped to understand their actions, much like the parallelism of their outline helped to create a result.<sup>271</sup>

For his first conference on the subject of Arabic drapery, Clérambault was given the largest lecture hall at the Beaux-Arts, and it was, to the psychiatrist's delight, completely packed. It has been noted that some participants even had to stand (though the attendance of the event may not be as surprising when analysing the extensive invitation list devised by Clérambault).<sup>272</sup> Wanting to convince the school of the originality and the necessity of his

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<sup>270</sup> "Sans exagérer que le résultat de l'enseignement ne serait rien moins que d'introduire enfin la draperie dans la peinture orientaliste. Il pourrait aussi contribuer à susciter tout une sculpture orientaliste." in "Archive du Congrès," *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

<sup>271</sup> "Notre enseignement (mars 1924) a été basé sur la présentation de photographies, de maquettes nombreuses et de quatre modèles vivants, dont trois femmes. Les modèles vivants se sont drapés de nombreuses fois en décomposant leurs mouvements, et le parallélisme de leurs gestes aidait à la compréhension de leur action, comme ensuit le parallélisme de leur contour aidait à celle des résultats." in "Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l'École des Beaux-Arts," *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

<sup>272</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés : Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 166.

conferences, Clérambault invited the likes of generals, ministers, ambassadors, and editors, and refused to permit his colleagues from the special infirmary, family, or artistic acquaintances to attend the first lecture. This purely political and tactical move by the psychiatrist insured his research would receive maximal exposure. The turnout at his event certainly surpassed his expectations, but it is worth briefly considering those who declined his offer. Louis Massignon, Professor of Muslim Sociology at the Collège de France, did not attend the inaugural conference.<sup>273</sup> However, the greatest cause for regret for Clérambault was the fact that Maréchal Lyautey, the French Army General, and Colonial officer of Morocco, did not deign to show up to any of the two conferences held by Clérambault in 1924. This humiliating evasion on the part of the two most knowledgeable authorities within the French culture of the Arab world was most definitely a problem for Clérambault, and was noted and lamented by Clérambault in his journal. In attempting to understand the non-appearance of Lyautey and Massignon, we might speculate that Clérambault's method of accompanying his presentation with live draped models and wooden dolls did not seem very serious and were, therefore, not deemed worthy of approval. Certainly, Clérambault's approach to presenting his material may be regarded as unusual for the era.

Considering, now, the lectures themselves: before the assembled audience of individuals who had responded to his strictly personal invitation, Clérambault started his lecture greeting by thanking Léon Heuzey and Paul Léon for their contribution to the research on the drapery. The alienist then began his lecture by presenting wooden figures meticulously draped in the drapery's various forms. Thereafter, he invited a life model to parade the same draperies seen on the dolls. Clérambault drew particular attention to the execution of the model's gestures and to position the cloth. The simple contact between the fabric and his hand represented a critical

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<sup>273</sup> "Archive du Congrès," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

source of information for the psychiatrist. Draperies spoke to him, certainly like no other. By a simple touch, Clérambault identified the weaving processes and the country of origin of a given style of drapery design. The first conference of the drapery was a huge success. The use of templates, live models, and photographs – all fresh innovations – transformed the collective understanding of how to approach the subject of drapery representation. Artists who attended the lectures now understood that one had to be able to make use of a model in order to be able to represent the drapery in their painting and that the analytical comprehension of the drape can only be obtained following meticulous observation of all the gestures that make the fabric come alive. In order to demonstrate this, at each end of the fabric, Clérambault placed folded paper strips, creating a space within which the paper markers would come into collision with one another, highlighting the movement of different folds and accentuating the formal qualities of the drapery. Such innovations as these allowed for a better understanding of the draperies in movement. They transformed the methodological approach for not only comprehending but also representing drapery within Oriental at practice as well as beyond this.

According to Clérambault's account, at least, the "Amphitheatre de Construction," the largest lecture hall of the *École des Beaux-Arts*, was always filled with students during his conferences and the "success was technical because at each of the conferences the majority of the attendees would make sketches."<sup>274</sup> The public was enchanted, and Clérambault expressed his satisfaction with the significant number of students that attended. Louis Perin, an architect who attended the conference, but also an old friend of Clérambault, wrote, "I have never seen it [the lecture hall] so full, so attentive, nor hanging on every word of the lecturer so much. A young

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<sup>274</sup> "L'affluence à mes Conférences été telle, que le plus grand des amphithéâtres de l'École s'est toujours trouvé trop étroit et cela surtout à la deuxième des Conférences de chaque année : preuve de la propagande active que les élèves faisaient entre eux. Mon succès était bien technique car à chacune des Conférences les auditeurs prenant des croquis ont été la majorité." in "Archive du Congrès," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).



student who took some sketches told me that the lecturer had achieved something special by initiating them [to the drapery]"<sup>275</sup>.

Unfortunately, however, in June 1926, a letter written by Brommer was to destroy Clérambault's hope for a future at the Beaux-Arts. The decision to no longer offer his conferences on the drapery was announced without any particular reason. Shocked, Clérambault questioned the motive behind the decision to end the lecture series. He had – according to his diaries and the testaments of his friends – seen with his own eyes how popular the lecture series had been and was aware of the fact that students across several disciplines had embraced his subject matter. Elizabeth Renard had, of course, a logical explanation for this abrupt foreclosure of the lecture series: jealousy. For the researcher, it was clear that Clérambault's genius and intention to create a new field in the history of art singly handily was the reason for the annulment of his conference. However, this hypothesis was based on no solid evidence concerning the motives of those involved. Nonetheless, it is indeed possible to imagine that the magnitude of Clérambault's project frightened more than one ossified French academic. In fact, Clérambault never shied away from his intention to make the study of the drapery a new discipline completely independent from the history of the costume. In other words, if published, the drapery would require its own chapter and inevitably its own biography, implying that the congress would have had to create a special section dedicated to the drape. In other words, Clérambault shed light on an unprecedented object of study and intended to construct new knowledge around it, which must have undoubtedly have unsettled and even alarmed some academics at the prospect of their own work being infringed upon, and

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<sup>275</sup> “Jamais je ne l’ai vu si comble [amphithéâtre], si attentif, si suspendu aux lèvres du conférencier. Une jeune élève qui a pris quelque croquis charmants, bien construits et bien compris, me disait que le conférencier était réellement chic de venir les initier.” in “Archive du Congrès,” *Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934)*.

at the prospect of an obligation to expand the discipline in order to accommodate this new development (which, for an institution that was already strapped for cash – as is indicated by their unwillingness to pay Clérambault for his work – may be seen to have been a troublesome prospect). The short-lived Beaux-Arts lecturer bitterly moved on.

After having been dismissed by the Beaux-Arts, Clérambault sought to address a new audience: namely, The Ethnographic Society presided by Louis Marin. *The Classification des costumes drapes (Classification of draped costumes)* was the title of the paper he presented on 5th May 1928. Both his introduction and conclusions were published without photographs in the journals *l'Ethnographie* and the *Journal Officiel*. Clérambault's research direction then became more and more technical: the mechanical aspect of drapery construction and movement gradually grew into the only primary focus of his presentations. In the process, Clérambault slowly left behind the ritual and social aspects of drapery culture that had been recorded in his notes and journals, and which had been a component of previous presentations. By re-focusing his research in this way, Clérambault demonstrated his will to acknowledge and spread the drape study and establish it as its own discipline. He wished for the study of the drape to be independent and not incorporated into the history of costume, and above all, to be recognized for its uniqueness as an art form. As he himself put it:

Let me point out that my studies, no matter as modest, give the French École a priority above, and the publication of my oeuvre would cause satisfaction in all our colonial milieus, at the school of Oriental languages, and in the Muslim world itself. Furthermore, it would be important for French art and French science to officially take possession, as of today, of the subject brought by me in several areas,

but it would still be possible for the *foreigner* to approach and highlight [the drape], without owing us anything.<sup>276</sup>

Waiting to be published, Clérambault – subject to paranoia following his exclusion from the Beaux-Arts academy – expressed some caution. "Until my doctrine is published, I better conceal it."<sup>277</sup> He said after the termination of his lectures at the Beaux-Arts. From his first trip to Africa, Clérambault continued to acquire information on any matter surrounding the drape. Until his death in November 1934, the psychiatrist engaged in postal correspondence with specialists who could guide him on subcategories of drapery culture he had not yet mastered (Indonesian, Indian and Japanese drapes, for instance). Clérambault, in turn, expressed his hope that his study of the living drapery would be only the beginning and would spread across all continents:

We aim to continue our research on the drape in other countries: Algeria, Tunisia, Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Abyssinia, French Somaliland, Madagascar, India, Insulindia, Oceania, South America. Having visited these regions, we wish to receive documents collected according to our plan or at least in the same vein; we call upon the research of all countries and languages. If these researchers advance far enough in their studies to be published, we ask that they implement our classification, observation plan, and terminology.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> "Je ferais remarquer que mes recherches, si modestes soient-elles, donnent à l'école française une priorité de plus par rapport aux écoles rivales, et que la publication de mon œuvre provoquerait une satisfaction dans tous nos milieux coloniaux, à l'école des langues orientales et dans le monde musulman lui-même. D'autre part il importerait, pour l'art français et la science française, de pendre officiellement possession, dès aujourd'hui, du sujet signalé par moi en diverses places, mais qu'il serait encore possible pour l'Etranger d'aborder et de mettre en valeur, en paraissant ne rien nous devoir." in "Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l'École des Beaux-Arts," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

<sup>277</sup> "Lettre à Paul Léon, le 4 Septembre 1922," Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934).

<sup>278</sup> "Nous comptons poursuivre nos recherches dans les autres pays du Drapé : Algérie, Tunisie, Tripolitaine, Cyrénaïque, Abyssinie, Côte des Somalis, Madagascar, Inde, Insulinde, Océanie, sud-Amérique. Avant de visiter ces régions nous aimerions à en recevoir des documents recueillis selon notre plan, ou tout au moins dans son esprit, nous faisons appel aux chercheurs de tous pays et de toutes langues. Si ces chercheurs, passent leurs études assez loin pour les

Clérambault wished to gather a vast global archive on the subject of drapery. He hoped that his methods, vocabulary, and classificatory model would be kept together to continue this comparative analysis.

### 3.7 Teaching the drapery and studying the drapery

In attempting to comprehend more fully Clérambault's contribution to the study of drapery, and his intervention into late 19<sup>th</sup> century creative practice, it is worth at this stage taking a step back and asking ourselves: what was the context from out of which Clérambault's attempts to document drapery trends and to offer a precise classificatory science of how the drape might be observed and represented grew? We have so far argued that Clérambault's photography can be better understood by situating it within the context of his lectures, journal entries, and notes on the subject of a need to document the dying art of drapery fashion, and that this may be seen to indicate that Clérambault was more interested in exploring drapery traditions from an art-historical perspective (on the basis of a contention that living drapery might be interpreted as a modern-day manifestation of a cultural tradition traceable to Classical Antiquity) than in the ethnographic function of depictions of the veil (while still allowing that there is a sense of cultural privilege behind the attempt to preserve a cultural practice in this way, and an underlying sense of Western cultural superiority that may be regarded as Orientalist in this sense). The line of inquiry that we must now develop is: what was the precise nature of Clérambault's intervention into drapery studies in this regard? So far, we have seen that Clérambault upset the art history establishment by seeking to expand the domain of costume

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publier, nous souhaitons, qu'ils veuillent bien adopter notre classement, notre plan d'observation et notre terminologie." in "XXVème Congrès international d'anthropologie et d'archéologie préhistorique, Vème session de l'Institut International d'anthropologie. Paris 20-27 Septembre 1931," Congrès de l'Histoire de l'art, 1921, 2AP3, Box 1, Folder C, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

studies. Nevertheless, at the same time, in order to gain a fuller understanding of Clérambault's place within art history and to recognize the nature of his contribution to drapery studies, we must acknowledge that drapery studies were an established discourse and practice (albeit a minor and neglected one). In this and the following two sections, the aim is to trace the major developments within drapery studies in the late Medieval, Early Modern, and Late Modern periods to gain a clearer sense of Clérambault's innovations within the domain of drapery studies. To begin with, then, we will consider traditions relating to the teaching of drapery that emerged in the Renaissance period before developing a more detailed analysis of how the innovation of the use of a mannequin allowed this practice to evolve and how it is exemplified in the creative practice of Leonardo da Vinci. Following this, an account of how drapery representation was taught and practiced in 19<sup>th</sup> century France. This analysis will then enable a more developed analysis of the precise nature of the innovation within the domain of drapery studies that Clérambault's intervention can be seen to have constituted.

The methods employed to teach the study of drapery changed very little over the centuries and were preserved in institutional forms of instruction until the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, specifically in France. In the early Renaissance, artists learned their trade as apprentices to masters. Apprentices learned a considerable range of skills and in bigger workshops were likely to gain a wide variety of experience. In workshops, knowledge was passed on by imitation and very rarely through theoretical teachings. However, according to L.B. Alberti's writing on painting, evidence can be found of new developments in the Renaissance period as a balance was achieved between workshop technique and abstract theory.<sup>279</sup> In the later 16<sup>th</sup> century in Southern Europe, academies developed guilds of masters' workshops, while in Northern Europe, academies for the teaching of fine arts were only formed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The

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<sup>279</sup> L. B. Alberti, *On Painting*, ed. J. R. Spencer (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956).

Florentine Academy declared in 1571 that sculptors were required to prepare clay models to be used for drapery studies.<sup>280</sup> Sculptors of the Roman Academy, founded in 1593, constructed copies of antique figures in clay according to ideal proportions, which were then draped for pupils to draw.<sup>281</sup> The study of drapery became an important exercise in the rendering of light and shade and the transition from two to three dimensions. The correct depiction of drapery was an integral part of an artist's vocabulary, but since it was almost always a part rather than the entirety of a composition, it belonged to a lower register of skills, beneath broader concerns about the composition as a whole.

Gradually over the years, academic teaching became so specific that its practices and traditions became increasingly inflexible, cementing the marginal status of drapery studies. As long as the depiction of religious scenes and classical history within painting remained at the top of the academy's hierarchy of types of art, drapery and its study in relation to the body remained a magical and minor consideration. As a consequence, many of the techniques used for the study of drapery remained relatively unchanged for many years. The most popular methods for studying drapery were copying antique and draping model figures and draping life models.<sup>282</sup> After copying the drawings of masters, plaster casts, and live models, artists were in theory trained to draw anything either from memory or nature.

The Florentine sculptor, architect, and theorist Antonio di Pietro Averlino, known as il Filarete, was one of the first to describe a small mannequin in Milan (1461-1464) although his work

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<sup>280</sup> C. Goldstein, *Teaching Art: Academies and School from Vasari to Albers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 22.

<sup>281</sup> *Children of Mercury: the education of artists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Providence, RI: Department of Art, Brown University, 1984), Exhibition Catalogue.

<sup>282</sup> A. Boime, *The Academy of and French Painting in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century* (London: Phaidon, 1971).

was only published at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He described these "cigarette di leg names" (small wooden figures) as having articulated arms, legs, and neck where clothing could be adjusted and arranged on it as one would wish. He underlined the figure's great advantages for artists as being able to observe "il naturale" (the natural) "as if the draperies were those of a living model".<sup>283</sup> Filarete recommended that those interested in depicting draperies follow this method, especially when attempting to sketch the draperies of antiquity. Filarete's method appears to have been adopted by numerous practitioners in the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Giorgio Vasari, for instance, mentions in his life of Piero Della Francesca the use of "model di terra" (clay models) on which the painter disposed "supple draperies which made an infinite of folds", and which the artist "copied" and "used."<sup>284</sup> In Lorenzo di Credi's life, Vasari specifies that amongst his famous collection of drawings – *Libro de' Disegni* – di Credi kept sketches of his paintings executed "from clay models wrapped with waxed linen fabric."<sup>285</sup> In the workshop of Andrea del Verrochio, di Credi was most certainly taught this process, much like Leonard da Vinci was.

On this point, a more specific analysis of Leonardo da Vinci's drapery study might be useful to consider here in order to give a fuller indication of drapery representation as a creative practice. Leonardo da Vinci executed a collection of drapery studies produced with a brush in black and whitewashes on linen between 1470 and 1480, and have intrigued art historians for centuries. Scholars have since the 19<sup>th</sup> century tried to understand these drawings and to understand why they were drawn. One explanation attributes the drawings to the heightened

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<sup>283</sup> A. Averlino detto il Filarete, *Trattato di Architettura*, ed. A. M. Finoli (Milan: Il Poligom 1972), 676-677.

<sup>284</sup> K. Christiansen and R. Bellucci, *Piero Della Francesca Personal Encounters* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2013), 89.

<sup>285</sup> Léonard de Vinci (Paris: Hazan & Louvre éditions, 2019), Exhibition Catalogue.

interest in naturalism in paintings of the Quattrocento's later-half.<sup>286</sup> Studies exploring da Vinci's interest in draped figures also address the same problems of figure structure and gesture, together with the expressive role of drapery in the articulation of human movement. In this connection, da Vinci's creative practice may be seen to belong to a particular phase in the history of drawing developed to resolve specific artistic problems.<sup>287</sup>

The period within which da Vinci produced his major work is well known for inaugurating the development of figure studies, detailed studies of human anatomy, and depictions of animals, but what is perhaps less well documented is the sense in which it also gave birth to the discipline of drapery draughtsmanship. Though, as previously explained, drapery studies are traceable to the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, da Vinci's sketches remain among the instances of drawings and paintings solely focusing on the subject of drapery. Rather than being a drawing of a draped figure, the drawings may be interpreted as having drapery as their central focus (see Figure 3.15). Jean K. Cadogan has argued that this drawing is primarily a study of the action of light on a surface:

The piercing quality of the light in 420E is achieved by the way the highlighting is applied. The thick, liquid highlights of the crests of folds are relieved in the halftones by tiny white strokes [...]. Broad planes of shadow are applied in washes that do not reveal individual strokes, while the tiny hatches of highlights are so small that they avoid any possible calligraphic reading.

In the heightened awareness of the role of light in the perception and depiction of texture, shape, and volume, this drawing exhibits Leonardo's acute awareness of the pictorial

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<sup>286</sup> A. E. Popham, *The Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci* (New York, 1945).

<sup>287</sup> C. de Tolnay, *The History, and Technique of Old Master Drawings* (New York, 1943), 28-35.



representation of drapes and folds, as he explores how light falls on irregular and textured surfaces. Leonardo's drapery studies were first discussed in an account of Leonardo's life, written by the Renaissance art historian and artist Giorgio Vasari, himself a great collector of drawing. In his study, Vasari recounts that Leonardo "would make clay model models of figures, draping them with soft rags dipped in plaster and would then draw them patiently on thin sheets of cambric or linen in black and white, with the point of the brush."<sup>288</sup> However, in his *Treatise on Painting*, Leonardo presents a slightly different account of his approach to drawing draperies. He writes:

Draperies should be drawn from the actual object: that is, if you wish to represent a woollen drapery, make the folds accordingly, and if it silk or fine cloth, or coarse material such as peasants wear, or linen, or veiling, diversify the folds or each kind of material, and do not make a habit, as many do, of working from clay models covered with paper or thin leather, because you will have greatly deceived yourself by so doing.<sup>289</sup>

It is hard to know whether Leonardo changed his mind about the best ways of studying drapery by the time he committed his thoughts to paper. He realized later that when he was writing his treatise, his earlier methods were not the ones he wanted to recommend to other artists.

The use of a mannequin as a technique for representing drapery first pointed out by Filarete a century or so earlier was a major help for da Vinci, and even more so when the dimensions of the mannequin were proportionate to a human figure. The use of life-size mannequins made it possible to avoid the deformations and distortions which often appeared when using smaller

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<sup>288</sup> J.K. Cadogan, "Linen drapery studied by Verrocchio, Leonardo and Ghirlandaio," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, Vol. XLVI, 1983, 27.

<sup>289</sup> L. da Vinci, *Treatise on Painting*, trans. by A.P. McMahon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 204.

models. In a chapter dedicated to the "mannequin" (small man), Crispijn de Passe praises the advantages of this model:

Because a living man will get tired of modelling for too long [...] for this reason, the grandmasters in Italy have invented an easier and safer way to paint their draperies after the natural, using a human-made of wood dressed with some of the fabrics remaining in place and which can be directed by its joints – curved, bent, lying down – just like a living person.<sup>290</sup>

The use of the mannequin in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century in the work of French painters of this period, such as Jacques-Louis David<sup>291</sup>, exhibited visible traces of the approach to drawing draperies first suggested by Filarete. Subsequently, it evolved through the use of life-sized models, with da Vinci's representations serving as exemplary of Renaissance practice.

### 3.8 Drapery in 19<sup>th</sup> century France

Drapery appeared in many religious and historical paintings in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as if frozen in time, separated from contemporary life in which clothes were increasingly produced by machines and sold in huge department stores. This section will shed light on the aspects of drapery, fine art, and photography in the latter half of the century in order to investigate the role of drapery in French visual culture. In doing so, it will begin by exploring representations in fields less directly related to Clérambault's art practice – most notably by considering depictions of draperies within artistic representations of nudes, pornography, and dance – before then considering a 19<sup>th</sup> century practice of representing and reflecting on the representation of drapery within the visual culture in the writings of Léon Heuzey. Ultimately the objective is

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<sup>290</sup> Averlino detto il Filarete, *Trattato di Architettura*, 677.

<sup>291</sup> *Drapé, Degas, Christo, Michel Ange, Rodin, Man Ray, Dürer...* Edited by E. Pagliano and S. Ramond, Paris: Lienart, 2019. Exhibiton Catalogue, 108.

(as already indicated) to ascertain a clearer sense of how Clérambault configures within this wider discourse.

*Cours de Dessin, Étude Academique [Drawing lesson, Academic Study]* (see Figure 3.16) shows a typical image from one of the many folders of prints published at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as educational aids for art students. These prints, known as "modèles estompés" (model prints), were used to supplement instruction by teachers in art institutions. This was a stage through which art students passed on the way towards drawing from life. The influence of academic teaching is apparent in print, which shows a male model in an unnatural pose reminiscent of the previous generation's French neoclassical art in the paintings of artists such as Jacques Louis David or Jean-Germain Drouais<sup>292</sup>. The role of the drapery in this illustration is rather surprising, as it appears to merely be an accessory within the study of the nude with the sole purpose of covering intimate parts of the model. However, this was a common practice within drapery representation of this period. The beginning of the century was marked by a keen interest in the figure of the nude, and little attention was given to drapery and clothing.<sup>293</sup>

While some artists in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were more interested in developing ways of accurately representing modern dress, academic painters were still able to get prestigious commissions for religious, historical, and allegorical work in which the mastery of drapery was crucial. Another collection of drawings by Alexandre Hesse may, for instance, be interpreted as evidence of how artists used drawings of drapery in practice (see Figure 3.17). The drawings even got the Secretary of the State's attention for the Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, who stated his belief that they would be of great educational value to students of the

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<sup>292</sup> Doy, *Drapery, Classicism, and Barbarism in Visual Culture*, 32.

<sup>293</sup> A. Lemaistre, *L'école des Beaux-Arts dessinée et racontée par un élève* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1889), 156.

Beaux-Arts. The sketches in question were part of a series of several working drawings for the figure of *Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane* executed for church decoration.<sup>294</sup> Here, Hesse tried out two different versions of the draped arm, in which the folds are quite different. This suggests he may not have been working from the same model in both cases. This sketch is a testament to Hesse's concern with the detailing of the fold and a sense in which this provided part of the general decorative effect within his work. It is interesting to note that this work was executed in the same year as Manet's *Olympia*, and how Hesse's detailed drapery study is worlds away from the shawl in Manet's presentation of the model posing as a courtesan.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, photographic images of draperies were not only seen as records of the draped body or as means to illustrate the use of the garment within Classical Antiquity while avoiding the costs of a life model. The main types of a photograph showing bodies in relationship to cloth in that capacity were, of course, pornographic images, for which there was a high demand. The relatively cheap prints and naturally the fact that it showed an actual person's nakedness made it a common commodity. Pornographic nudes could be given a suggestion of artistic flair with the addition draperies, but the presence of drapery within such representations is of course undermined by the fact that the primary focus was the naked body: the audience for this kind of image was after sexual arousal by seeing the body of a woman.<sup>295</sup> Thus, though these images are of interest as 19<sup>th</sup> century depictions of the veil, they are nonetheless a world away from the kind of concentrated depiction of this subject matter that Clérambault and others represented.

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<sup>294</sup> Doy, *Drapery, Classicism, and Barbarism in Visual Culture*, 35.

<sup>295</sup> S. Aubenas, ed., *L'Art du nu au XIXe siècle. Le photographe et son modèle* (Paris: Hazan/Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), 200.

Another 19<sup>th</sup> century context of drapery representation to consider, and from which Clérambault was again distinct, was the representation of drapery in dance. During this period, dancers such as Loïe Fuller and Isadora Duncan exploited the moving fabric's possibilities in their performance. At the same time, Clérambault was only interested in the practical and functional movement of drapery. Fuller mesmerized her public with the "Serpentine Dance" performances, swirling fabric in space to form billowing, almost organic shapes as an extension of her clothed body.<sup>296</sup> In the course of "Serpentine Dance," both dancers moved freely in the room and expressed themselves through movement and dance. Duncan and her brother had studied Classical Antiquity at the Louvre and the British Museum, hoping that their dance would draw, like the Greek artists did, "from the great well of nature."<sup>297</sup> Fuller used coloured lights to enhance her performances and sometimes installed mirrors on stage to give an impression of an infinity of dancing draperies.<sup>298</sup> Once again, Clérambault's interest in the subject of drapery is markedly different from the nature of this interest represented by Fuller and Duncan. For Clérambault, the aesthetic pleasure does not so much lie in the moving body and in relation to nature – or in the spectacle surrounding representations of the veil – but in the formal assembly of the folds, its movement and overall harmony. Nonetheless, there is clearly at the same time some crossover as Clérambault utilized the same technique for his conception of the movement of the veil. Still, if he was interested in the movement of the body under the drapery, it was to understand its mechanics better than to observe the beauty of the gestures alone. There seems to have been a regression or a shift in how the drapery was depicted, which was picked up by Clérambault. Unfortunately, and this perhaps explains the later cancellation of his course at the Beaux-Arts, the need for an accurate depiction of the

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<sup>296</sup> J. C. Flugel, *The Psychology of Clothes* (London: Hogarth Press, 1930), 34.

<sup>297</sup> *Ornement de la durée: Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Adorée Villany*, Edited by H. Pinet (Paris: Musée Rodin, 1987), Exhibition catalogue, 13.

<sup>298</sup> *L'Ornement de la Durée : Loïe Fuller, Isadora Duncan, Ruth St Denis, Adorée Villany*, 13.

drapery was no longer deemed necessary as art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was more focused on expression than aesthetic exactitude.

### 3.9 Léon Heuzey and Classical Drapery

Léon Heuzey, an "archaeologist, artist and professor," was a major reference point and influence for Clérambault, especially in his teaching on the antique costume at the Ecole des Beaux-Art inaugurated in 1862 after his return from Macedonia, and which lasted until 1884.

Heuzey was helped by additional staff and continued to carry out the practical part of these courses until his retirement in 1910. This component consisted of draping live models in imitations of examples within antique art, whether paintings or sculptures. Students were then asked to draw or paint from these models. Much like all drapery studies, this exercise aimed to understand the function and purpose of draperies in relation to the body, rather than merely copying artistic representations (for example, within sculpture from Classical Antiquity). As A. Lemaistre attests in the history of *L'école des Beaux-Arts* Heuzey also – like Clérambault – held that the study of drapery in this manner enabled a greater level of understanding of Greco-Roman culture. Lemaistre writes:

Mr. Heuzey uses engravings and drawing pinned to the blackboard to teach his audience the way disappeared populaces lived, the aspect of their houses, their costumes during peace, their costume during war, the character of their familial, religious or political ceremony; all civilizations pass in turn before their eyes.<sup>299</sup>

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<sup>299</sup> “M. Heuzey s’aide de gravures et de dessins épinglés au tableau noir, pour apprendre à ses auditeurs les façons de vivre des peuples disparus, l’aspect de leurs maisons, leurs costumes pendant la paix, leurs costumes pendant la guerre, le caractère de leurs cérémonies, familiales, religieuses ou politiques; toutes les civilisations défilent tour à tour sous leurs yeux.” in Lemaistre, *L'école des Beaux-Arts dessinée et racontée par un élève*, 156.

The professor also brought in boxes of clothes to use on selected models corresponding to the “type” of people studied. His idea was to keep antique culture alive and relevant for his students. Though Heuzey expressed an interest in extending the course to offer a global perspective, *L'école des Beaux-Arts* prioritized the teaching of nudes and anatomy before all. They restrained his teaching to the study of costume in Greece, Egypt, Assyria, and ancient Rome, focusing upon Classical Antiquity. Much like Clérambault wished was to keep the North African haik alive, Heuzey wanted to keep the antique culture alive but also relevant for his students. In fact, he believed drapery would always be a relevant study in art and concluded:

Even apart from subjects taken from antiquity, every time the artist, by the force of his conception, rises above the specificities of his of time and race to represent man and human beauty, drapery is for him a tool he can hardly do without.<sup>300</sup>

In fact, one cannot truly understand the lecture given by Clérambault between 1923 and 1926 at the École des Beaux-Art in Paris without referring to the work of Heuzey and, most specifically to his publication *Histoire du Costume Antique*, published posthumously in 1922 and prefaced by Edmond Pottier. Much like Clérambault, Heuzey admired the kind of life that drapery could take on when animated by the human figure. The way in which Heuzey also shared Clérambault's enthusiasm, or perhaps better said, Edmond Pottier outlined an obsessive interest in the drapery in his preface to the text. Pottier described how enchanting it was to see the master delicately and skillfully manipulate the fabrics in his hands before noting Heuzey is a never-ending search for the rare cloth and his excitement when "he got his hands on some

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<sup>300</sup> “En dehors même des sujets tirés de l’antiquité, toutes les fois que l’artiste, par la force de sa conception, s’élève au-dessus des particularités d’époque et de race pour représenter l’homme et la beauté humaine, la draperie est pour lui un moyen dont il peut difficilement se passer.” in L. Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume Antique d’après des études sur le modèle vivant* (Paris: Champion, 1922), 36.

beautiful oriental fabric".<sup>301</sup> The archaeologist looked for the survival of the antique cloth in the fabrics produced by "undeveloped" people and countries, such as India, Turkey, and Abyssinia, and he went on several visits to International Exhibitions. In the age of colonialism, Heuzey's bricolage of sources brings up an interesting point concerning the Orientalist aspect of his attempts to reconnect with Classical Antiquity.

As has already been established in the second chapter of this thesis, specificities of cultures were often lost in the attempt to construct a generalized "Otherness" within Orientalist discourse. Accordingly, just like Bonfils used one single model to represent both an Armenian and an Egyptian woman, Heuzey used the same model to model an Abyssinian cloak, a shield from Sudan, and a lace from Madagascar.<sup>302</sup> He also used some cloth woven by Romanian nuns to demonstrate the drapery used in Classical Antiquity. In parallel, he also altered modern clothing to fit his agenda. For instance, when he found a dress made from light white fabric covered with little pink flowers, he had it dismantled and remade into a rectangle so that he could use it to drape his models as if an ancient drape.<sup>303</sup> In short, Heuzey did much to dehistoricize and to blur the cultural specificity of drapery in his interest in reconstructing Classical Antiquity, in this sense marking a clear distinction from Clérambault's practice.

Another interesting 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century figure to draw a comparison with – and one intimately connected to Heuzey – is the professor of anatomy Paul Richer whose photographs (taken in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts photographic studio) fill the pages of Heuzey's book (Figure 3.18, 3.19 and 3.20).<sup>304</sup> It is perhaps important to stress that Heuzey did not use photography

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<sup>301</sup> "quand il avait mis la mains sur quelque beau tissue d'Orient" in E. Pottier, Preface to Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume Antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, XI.

<sup>302</sup> Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume Antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, 43-44.

<sup>303</sup> Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume Antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, 203.

<sup>304</sup> Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume Antique d'après des études sur le modèle vivant*, 127.



during his lectures but solely focused on the live demonstration as well as sketches and pieces of cloth, and that the use of photography was reserved for his publications. Throughout his writing, Heuzey nonetheless stresses the usefulness of the photograph in providing truthful, factual information for his students. This tool could be used for anyone interested in the research that could not attend his lecture.

A few years after Heuzey's publication, Jules Repond's *Les Secrets de la Draperie Antique* (*The Secrets of Antique Drapery*) praised the archaeologist's class at the Beaux-Arts. They argued for the importance of a knowledge of antique dress in order to appreciate contemporary Arabic dress.<sup>305</sup> In 1935, Heuzey's grandson Jacques published another publication on the antique costume based on his grandfather's article. The introduction to the publication hinted at the end of the drapery tradition at the Beaux-Arts. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Jacques posed live models in recreations of ancient costumes. However, much of the fabric he used was a product of contemporary manufacturing processes (in particular, Rodier's fabrics, by then famous for making a soft and pliable knitted jersey material). Jacques commented that some of these fabrics possessed "precisely the suppleness, the weight and the quality that is necessary to realize these draperies that characteristic of antique costumes."<sup>306</sup> However, he did not entirely stop using authentic draperies. In a comment on a recreation of ancient Egyptian costume, illustrated by an old photograph created by his grandfather, Jacques Heuzey notes that the items used for his reconstruction are an Abyssinian cloak and a modern club "taken from an Arab who attacked the encampment of M. de Sarzec."<sup>307</sup> Colonial conquest and culture come together in this evocation of the noble past of North Africa, in contrast to the North

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<sup>305</sup> J. Repond, *Les secrets de la draperie antique*, (Rome and Paris: Pontificio Institutio de Archeologia Cristiana and Société d'éditions Belles-Lettres, 1931), 156.

<sup>306</sup> Repond, *Les secrets de la draperie antique*, 156.

<sup>307</sup> L. and J. Heuzey, *Histoire du Costume dans l'antiquité classique, L'Orient, Égypte, Mésopotamie, Syrie, Phénicie* (Paris: Champion, 1932), 43-44.

African present, which is to be conquered, disarmed, and civilized. Again, then, as in Heuzey – in the photography of both Richer and Jacques Heuzey – there is a sense that the interest in reconnecting with Classical Antiquity by exploring contemporary cultures in which the veil remains common had an Orientalist aspect in the sense that it conflated cultures and blurred any sense of cultural specificity.

Like any scientist aspiring to total objectivity, blinded by the idea of the camera's truthfulness, Clérambault wished to erase his fingerprints from the photographs.<sup>308</sup> However, a certain number of factors escaped him and contributed to him, nonetheless leaving the imprint of his singular individuality. The choices of framing, viewpoint, shots, and series were made according to precise objectives answering to a specific purpose. Therefore, his photographic practice results cannot be considered a pure reflection of tangible and material reality. Clérambault acted according to his mastery of the medium and the technical possibilities available to him. The contention underlining this chapter has been that with a fuller knowledge of Clérambault's intentions and ambitions, an analysis of the hidden meaning behind the purported objectivity of his images becomes possible.

In the previous chapter, it was proposed that Clérambault developed his photographic practice in order to fulfil the Orientalist objective of preserving a given culture. Drawing on the fact that Clérambault exhibited at the 1922 Colonial Exhibition in Marseilles, together with a consideration of the parallels between his practice and the writings of Bénédite, it was proposed that while Clérambault was not quite like other Orientalist photographers in the sense of wanting to construct Othering depictions of his veiled subjects conforming with subjugation social stereotypes, there was nonetheless a sense of an Orientalist objective in his professed

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<sup>308</sup> L. Daston and P. Galison, *Objectivity* (London: Zone Books, 2021).

desire to preserve a dying culture (even while Clérambault represented the culture responsible for the threat posed). This chapter has offered a different but not entirely incompatible perspective: namely, it has proposed that while there is perhaps a desire to assert the status of the cultural preserver, Clérambault's interest in drapery – most notably expressed through his lectures and journal entries – is suggestive of an aesthetic preoccupation with the specific formal attributes of the veil, and the idea that it may be interpreted as a continuation of a long-lasting cultural legacy that traces back to antiquity. Again, while this is not necessarily incompatible with the suggestion that Clérambault sought to assert his cultural dominance and superiority, there is nonetheless a sense in which by thus succumbing to interest primarily in the formal attributes rather than the ethnography of drapery, Clérambault may have exhibited how his primary concern was art-historical, and how this perhaps overrode an interest (though did not render irrelevant) in asserting his superior status as a preserver of dying cultures.

In the final few sections of this chapter, this line of analysis has been tested by asking the question: how, then, does this relate to existing discourse on the subject of drapery? As has been argued throughout, Clérambault's innovations in drawing attention to the significance of drapery made him something of an anomaly. The fact that his lecture series at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts was discontinued despite its popularity may be considered a testament to that fact. Nonetheless, it remains possible to trace a discourse on the subject of drapery – not so much in an art historical context, but more in the context of art practice – from the late Medieval period through to the Late Modern period. In particular, we have seen that drapery was a concern for da Vinci, who was influenced by Antonio di Pietro Averlino's use of the mannequin to model and study the formal attributes of drapery. We have also seen how in 19<sup>th</sup> century France, drapery was a key component of art practices, from the depiction of nudes to the development of commercial pornography through to contemporary dance. In these practices, what has

perhaps been most apparent is a sense that the preoccupation in these antecedents is the drapery as a vessel leading to a consideration of something else: for da Vinci, studying drapery was a means of exploring the representation of light and how it falls; for painters of nudes and pornographers it was a means of simultaneously concealing and daring attention to the body; finally, for contemporary dancers, it was a means of dressing up and exposing nuances within the bodily movement. Compared, then, to these earlier developments within the discourse on drapery, what is remarkable about Clérambault's contribution is the singularity of his focus on the drape itself and on its movements, as exhibited in his lectures and journal notes, and as further demonstrated in his photographic practice.

The closest person to realizing this objective, we have subsequently seen, was the archaeologist and historian Léon Heuzey, whose work at L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts may be seen to have been intimately connected to Clérambault's. At the same time, in exploring his writing and his lectures and taking note of his use of photography in his publications (not his own, but Paul Richer's), there is a sense of a key difference between his approach and Clérambault's. To deal with the similarities first: there is a distinct sense in which the two men were interested in contemporary manifestations of the veil as a means of further understanding Classical Antiquity. However, in the Orientalist dimension to Heuzey's practice as he conflated different cultural practices, there is a distinct sense in which Heuzey was more interested in contemporary drapery as a means of illustrating and understanding Classical Antiquity, and that his interest in its specific attributes in its own right was limited. Thus, Clérambault's interest in drapery once again feels unique, odd or even obsessive. His interest in chronicling in precise detail the specific attributes of different modes of veil construction – and attending to different cultural manifestations of the veil in their specificity – signals that Clérambault did not demean the modern veil by suggesting that its interest lies solely in the insights it offers

into the past, but saw in living drapery a set of customs and practices as valuable and as important to attend to in their specificity as their antecedents.

Thus, by comparing Clérambault's work on drapery to other key landmarks within the discourse on drapery, we are able to make two key deductions. The first is that Clérambault sought to systematize the understanding of the veil's aesthetic value and nuances more than any of his antecedents. The second is that he did so with a sensitivity to cultural difference and attentiveness to the significance of contemporary manifestations of drapery culture within their own right that distinguishes him apart from his contemporaries. Clérambault's entire research project and mission consisted of creating a formal, detailed, and precise vocabulary to describe this form of drapery. The vocabulary based on his acquired knowledge of the various techniques of assembling the fold was to provide painters with the tools and methods to depict the oriental and antique drapery correctly. From his observations, Clérambault drew a concise and synthetic vocabulary. In that, it differs from the one created by Heuzey some years before. However, the perhaps more important difference is the sense of sensitivity to cultural differences. Rather than exploiting existing drapery practices to simply illustrate or render more vivid drapery practices from Classical Antiquity, Clérambault appears to have been interested in the aesthetic value of drapery customs and culture in and of itself. This sense that Clérambault's interest in the veil was to a limited sense disinterested, and primarily aesthetic, is highlighted by several significant remarks and facts about his work. The first is a comment made by Clérambault in which he declares: "Drapery must not disappear without leaving to the arts and sciences complete, precise, and aesthetic documents."<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> "Il importe que la draperie ne disparaisse pas sans l'art et à la science des documents complets, précis et esthétique." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

In these remarks, Clérambault lays bare his sense that the value of the "documents" he has produced is aesthetic. The second significant and related piece of supporting evidence to validate these claims can be found in a letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> August 1923 from the Minister of Public Education and the Beaux-Arts, thanking Clérambault for the gift 1112 photographs while informing him of their decision only to keep 530 of these. The key detail here is that the first institution to benefit from Clérambault's oeuvre was, therefore, the Musée du Trocadero (as might be expected) but the Ministry of Fine Arts. Clérambault's gift of his photographs to this institution is again a clear indication of the sense in which he personally regarded his project to primarily be an aesthetic one. Again, none of this necessarily disqualifies the previous chapter's claim that Clérambault's photography served an ethnographic function. It did, and it is possible to argue that preserving a supposedly dying culture has an imperialist and an Orientalist function. However, at the same time, it is simultaneously evident that Clérambault's leading priority, and his perception of his own project – as proven from a consideration of his lectures and journal entries – was with contributing to an art historical discourse and shining a light on contemporary manifestations of an aesthetic tradition that dated back to antiquity, but that he evidently regarded to be just as much of interest in and of itself as it was for shining a light on former customs.

## Chapter 4: Clérambault, psychiatry and photography

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The second chapter of this thesis explored the relationship between Orientalist discourse and the photographic practice of Clérambault, comparing Clérambault's depictions of veiled women with photographic representations of the same subject within the work of his contemporaries, and concluding that Clérambault's depictions of veiled women were distinct from other examples of Orientalist photography such as photographs identified by Alloula, Veyre's photographs, and depictions of the veil in Besancenot and Rousseau. On that basis, it was argued, drawing on Bénédite's observations concerning the evolution of Orientalist practice within French culture at the turn of the twentieth century, that his interest in the subject represented an ethnographic preoccupation with the haik. On this basis, it was argued that Clérambault's photography may still be seen to have performed an Orientalist function, not just by asserting a sense of cultural difference, but by confirming the status of the colonizer as a preserver of indigenous culture. Adding a layer of complexity to this view, the following chapter then considers how Clérambault's work might be viewed in the context of developments within art history. By presenting and combining Clérambault's research on the drapery executed in Tunisia and Morocco with an analysis of his photography, it was demonstrated that Clérambault was not only interested in the social and ethnographic significance of the haik, but that he was invested in its aesthetic value. By exploring Clérambault's lectures and diary entries, in particular, this chapter uncovered Clérambault's interest in what he called "living draperies" and his belief that they might shed light on life during Classical Antiquity, as well as being of interest in their own right. Thus, it was proposed that by exploring Clérambault's preoccupation with the aesthetic qualities of the veil, it is possible to see traces of an aestheticism that narrowly concentrates on the technical qualities of drapery culture as it has existed within Classical Antiquity and within contemporaneous

cultural traditions. In short, it was argued that Clérambault's myopic interest in the visual and technical qualities of drapery might be seen to indicate an aestheticism that cut across and perhaps superseded the ethnographic priorities chronicled in the second chapter of this thesis while allowing that the two interpretations are far from being mutually exclusive. The objective of this fourth chapter is to present yet another possible analytical framework for understanding Clérambault's photography and, in particular, his preoccupation with the veil. In particular, it will do so by tracing the role of Clérambault's interest in psychiatry and its impact upon his work and his preoccupation with the veil.

The suggestion that Clérambault's art practice is closely entwined with his career as a psychiatrist is one that lay at the heart of the exhibition *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographe* in 1990. This exhibition spread the idea that Clérambault secretly kept his Moroccan photographs for himself and never publicly exhibited them during his lifetime, effectively offering new perspective on Clérambault's photographic work.<sup>310</sup> Clearly, the previous chapters of this thesis have indicated that this was untrue, as we have seen repeated evidence of the fact that Clérambault actively sought out ways to present his research and exhibit his photographs. At the same time, and of more direct relevance to our immediate line of inquiry: the *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographe* exhibition sought to associate these images with Clérambault's psychiatric research, especially his widely disseminated publication *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme (Women's erotic passion for fabric)*.<sup>311</sup> This publication takes the form of a report on Clérambault's psychiatric observation of four women who felt sexually attracted by certain fabrics and, more specifically,

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<sup>310</sup> Papetti, Valier, De Freminville and Tisseron, *La passion des étoffes chez un neuro-psychiatre*, np.

<sup>311</sup> G. G. de Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2002).



by silk. Clérambault notes how this attraction to and fascination with the fabric caused kleptomaniac impulses within the studied patients in his text. One of Clérambault's aims in this research was to discover if women who stole clothes from department stores and masturbated with them were, in fact, fetishists. Since then, allusions to the supposed fetishism of Clérambault and his obsession with female models have dominated writings both in relation to his psychiatric practice and his photographic practice.<sup>312</sup>

This chapter both confirms and challenges the assumptions that lie at the heart of the *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographie* exhibition. On the one hand, it aims to bring to light the links between Clérambault's medical research and his practice as a photographer, while also aiming to provide some background for this fascination with clothes of all types that was, in fact, prevalent during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. To do so, Clérambault's personal journey towards becoming a psychiatrist and the influences that shaped his later research will be discussed. In exploring this dimension to Clérambault's art practice, there is also a broader ambition to demonstrate the complex interplay between photographic practice and psychiatry. Throughout art history, the lines between art and science have been blurred, with the two domains interacting and crossing over with the effect of enriching each other. In the course of this chapter, it will be argued that Clérambault enabled progress in both of these domains by producing an important and innovative photographic oeuvre that illustrated and expounded upon themes in his own psychiatric practice. In this sense, this chapter will attempt to understand (by studying Clérambault's photographic work alongside a consideration of his medical research) how the two practices were conjoined, and in turn, how they should be understood. In particular, it aims to show how Clérambault's education and own psychiatric research influenced his photographic practice in that the images he created often served the

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<sup>312</sup> See section 1.6, Exhibiting the photographic corpus.

function of performing as "interrogation certificates" clarifying his own theorization of mental illnesses within such texts as his 1908 "Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme" and his 1885 "L'Érotomanie." Against this, however, this chapter will also confront some of the key assumptions behind the *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, psychiatre et photographie* exhibition. In particular, it will challenge the notion that Clérambault's preoccupation with the intimate relationship between Clérambault's creative practice and his work as a photographer is indicative of a kind of perversion at the core of his practice, as an alternative hypothesis will be developed, through which it will be argued that Clérambault's preoccupation with the drapery may be interpreted as signifying an interest in its symbolic value, based on discoveries he made through his psychiatric practice.

In exploring the relationship between Clérambault's photographic practice and his psychiatry practice, a specific theme will prove dominant in the first half of what is to follow. Namely, we will be investigating the extent to which Clérambault can be seen to have utilized photography as a tool to advance the physiognomic practice of allowing the representation of the human form to serve as a guide to enabling a fuller understanding of human psychology. Representing the human form in order to identify aspects of its physiognomy has always been a key preoccupation within Western medicine, and it became a particularly valued skill by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France.<sup>313</sup> The physiognomic tradition of associating facial and bodily traits with personal characteristics entered a new phase in Duchenne de Boulogne's work in the 1860s, which explored the correlation between facial expression and "passion."<sup>314</sup> At the same period, Jean-Martin Charcot developed an "anatomy-clinical method" grounded on the visual

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<sup>313</sup> A. Callen, *The Spectacular body. Science, Method, and Meaning in the Work of Degas* (New Haven, London, Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>314</sup> D. de Boulogne, *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine, ou analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1862).

examination of the body by trying to establish a connection between the body and neurological lesions.<sup>315</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France, the human body on display became a means of observing and assessing the emotional, psychological and pathological internal processes that scientists and the public wanted to try and understand.<sup>316</sup> Photography quickly became a powerful instrument in this process. While the objectivity of photography was often challenged, the capacity of the medium to freeze a subject and replicate its image proved extremely useful in both medicine and popular culture much like it had been in Orientalism.<sup>317</sup> As Geoffrey Belknap has noted in his study of the use of photography within the scientific practice during this period, the advancement of science as a discipline and of photography as a discipline were intertwined.<sup>318</sup>

This chapter aims to situate the photographic and psychiatric work of Clérambault within this wider development, in particular by considering the role between his corpus of images, his practice as a psychiatrist, and the wider discourse about the study of body shapes and facial expressions as a means towards better understanding and categorizing the human "passions."

While the first half of this chapter will largely be focused upon tracing Clérambault's work within the domain of psychiatry and the role of photography within his practice, the second half of this chapter will concentrate instead on Clérambault's writings, and upon what they might be seen to say about his preoccupation with the subject of drapery. *Passion érotique des*

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<sup>315</sup> C. Goetz, "Jean-Martin Charcot and the Anatomy-Clinical Method of Neurology," *Handbook of Clinical Neurology*, no. 95, (2009): 203–212.

<sup>316</sup> B. Pichel, "Reading Photography in French Nineteenth Century Journals," *Media History*, (October 2018): 1-19.

<sup>317</sup> J. Tucker, *Nature Exposed—photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

<sup>318</sup> Geoffrey Belknap. *From a Photograph. Authenticity, Science and the Periodical Press 1870–1890* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).

*étoffes chez la femme* – containing the four testimonies of female patients – will be found to be a key text in seeking to understand the relationship between Clérambault's photographic practice and his psychiatric practice, as it will be seen to offer key insights into Clérambault's interest in the artistic and psychiatric dimension of a perceived dominance of fabric over the body. We will be asking ourselves as we approach this component of our analysis: are the folds and the materiality of the drapery the true subject of the photographic oeuvre? Or is it the insights that this fixation upon the drapery and the fabric offer into human psychology that Clérambault was interested in?

As indicated, the first half of this chapter will concentrate on Clérambault's work as a psychiatrist and the influences that worked upon him. The first section will begin by offering a brief overview of madness history, particularly paying attention to how it has been theorized by historians and critical theorists, including Sander Gilman and Michel Foucault. It will ultimately be argued that there is evidence of a continual ostracization and bothering of the mentally ill across history, but that in the late modern era, there is also evidence to suggest the emergence of a new trend as the mad are perceived less as a danger and are instead medicalized, in accordance with a broader disciplinary attempt to regulate human behaviour. The next section will explore in greater detail the evolution of the art of physiognomy. In the process, it will be argued that with the evolution of attitudes towards the mentally ill came new pressures upon the art of representing physiognomic attributes to achieve greater levels of accuracy – and that photography came to serve as the perfect vehicle for achieving this objective. Following this, an in-depth analysis of Clérambault's medical training will be offered – in particular exploring his position as an intern at l'Infirmerie Spéciale près de la préfecture de police, the influence of the chief physician Dr. Paul Garnier, and Clérambault's development of a certification procedure at the Infirmary, making use of photography as a means of

documenting patients. This analysis of Clérambault's career trajectory will help us understand his direct influences and the research he was exposed to, giving us a clearer idea of the background behind his photographic investigation of Moroccan drapery.

Having thus established a sense of the influences that worked upon Clérambault as an intern at l'Infirmierie Spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police, the following section will then consider Clérambault's work at the Infirmierie spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police, and in particular his innovations in the art of certification. By comparing some of the certificates written by Clérambault with those of other psychiatrists at other infirmaries, namely by Marc Briand, we will gain a sense of how Clérambault developed a new approach to writing certificates for patients that both foreshadowed and mirrored his photographic and psychiatric practices in their novelistic attention to detail. The following section will then add a layer of complexity to this suggestion by considering the use of photography at the Special Infirmary in greater detail. This analysis will begin with a consideration of how Clérambault's used photography at the Special Infirmary to illustrate and prove his psychiatric theories. In seeking to understand this phenomenon, this section will trace this development to the practice of Jean-Martin Charcot, and before that to the innovations of Hugh W. Diamond – again exploring existing criticism of these two practitioners that similarly suggests that they incorporated photography into psychiatric practice in a manner designed to illustrate their theories – and that this often entailed the manipulation of their subject matter. In relation to this point, Foucault's account of how Charcot's practice of adopting a paternalistic role can be seen to have constituted a shift whereby the power of the physician was translated from one of direct control to one of control through knowledge will be applied to a consideration of both Charcot and Clérambault's use of photography as a means of generating and validating knowledge ostensibly on humanitarian grounds but in reality in order to exercise authority and control over subjugated patients.

The next section aims to strengthen this analysis by offering a fuller description of photographic practice within the domains of psychology, psychiatry, and physiology within the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France, in particular, thinking about a specific discursive interest in external bodily signs of what were described within the discourse as "passions." Thus, this analysis focuses on the photographic production of scientists and photographers who made a significant contribution to the study of expression and gestures: most notably, Guillaume Benjamin Duchenne. The process will map the diverse approaches to depicting and exploring what was referred to as "passions" that were developed within fields of psychology, psychiatry, physiology, and photography in France in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In addition to this, this section will consider the role of series photography, or chronophotography of the kind developed by Albert Londe, as a means of capturing physiognomic aspects of the face and body as outward manifestations of human psychology. In particular, this area will be seen to be of interest because – having demonstrated that the practice of psychiatric photography influenced Clérambault – the specific interest in capturing movement through *series* will be seen to a trend that is reflected in Clérambault's depictions of the veil. Accordingly, the following section will thus argue that chronophotography was something that may be seen to have influenced Clérambault's creative practice, in particular in his depictions of drapery. Just as in the case of the use of photography for medical research in Londe and others, we will see here that Clérambault followed a protocol for his photographs in order to capture a sense of movement through a sequence – thus eliminating the role of randomness that renders a single photographic image unrepresentative – and that this is also exemplified in his sketch work.

Having now established the discursive preconditions within the domain of psychiatric photography that may be seen to have influenced Clérambault's creative practice, the second

half of this chapter will then adopt a different perspective in order to attempt to trace the influence of Clérambault's status as a psychiatrist upon his photographic practice. In particular, it will explore the possibility that Clérambault's interest in depicting draperies can be seen to be related to his own exploration as a psychiatrist into the phenomenon of the fetishization of drapery and cloth. In order to develop this analysis, this half of the chapter will begin with a section offering an exploration of the wider societal phenomenon of a perceived fetishization of clothing materials on the part of women, together with the possible causal explanations for this: one is that it is indicative of a misogynistic attempt to medicalize and ostracise the female sex; the other being that it reflects the emergence of a commodity culture in which the fetishization of every day became commonplace.

Following this, a detailed analysis will be offered of Clérambault's *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* will be offered in order to test the claim that his interest in the subject of fabric may be related to his own exploration as a psychiatrist into the phenomenon of the fetishization of drapery and cloth. This section begins with an account of the discursive context of Clérambault's interest in this subject by suggesting that it is tied to a wider discursive interest rooted in the newly emerging discipline of criminology. By then exploring *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* in detail, a hypothesis will then emerge: in particular that in following this example by exploring the psychology of those whose fixation upon cloths, fabrics, and draperies led them to criminal activities, we have an explanation that may be seen to complement the suggestion made in the two previous chapters that Clérambault's interest in the ethnographic value of drapery and his interest in its aesthetic qualities informed his decision to photograph the veil: namely, that Clérambault's investigations of draperies and drapery culture can be seen to have been borne out of an interest in documenting the drapery in a manner that mirrors his interest in documenting mental illness. Beyond this, it will also be argued that in so

doing, Clérambault arguably stumbled upon the fact that the veil could be viewed as a visual metaphor for mental illness. In either instance, it will be maintained that this interest in the veil is indicative not of Clérambault succumbing to the fixations and fetishes that he elsewhere documented in taking photographs of the veil, but rather that this practice was contiguous with his interest as a psychiatrist in the process of *documentation*, and with his ongoing interest in the subject of mental illness. Clérambault drew materials from a variety of disciplines and fields: history of art theory and orientalism, photography and psychiatry and of photography as documentation.

#### **4.1 The History of Madness**

As previously stated, this chapter aims to demonstrate how Clérambault's education and psychiatric research influenced his photographic practice in the sense that the images he created can be interpreted as a methodical interrogation of visual manifestations of psychological phenomena that he explored in his own theoretical investigations into the topic of mental illnesses. This first section will begin by offering a brief overview of the history of madness, in particular paying attention to how it has been theorized by historians and critical theorists, including Sander Gilman and Michel Foucault. It will ultimately be argued that there is evidence of a continual ostracization and bothering of the mentally ill across history, but that in the late modern era, there is also evidence to suggest the emergence of a new trend as the mad are perceived less as a danger and are instead medicalized, in accordance with a broader disciplinary attempt to regulate human behaviour.

Madness, or mental illness, is something that has both been romanticized and denigrated throughout French history. Before the Enlightenment and the emergence of the new positivist psychiatric profession, insanity was viewed as a by-product of the failure of morality.



Considered within a religious framework, insanity was often understood as a form of demonic possession and associated with violent excitement.<sup>319</sup> In *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to Aids*, Sander Gilman argues that the reasoning behind the separation, classification, and denigration of the mentally ill was determined by a desire to control populations by labelling aberrant or undesirable forms of behaviour as "other."<sup>320</sup> In *Seeing the Insane*, Gilman provides extensive examples of the portrayal of madness and identifies instances in which the insane are removed from mainstream society, reinforcing a sense of their "otherness."<sup>321</sup> In his seminal work *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Michel Foucault reflects on the genesis of this need to others: he, for instance, observes that there is an inherent and continuing need across long stretches of history for the position of the "other" to exist, ostracized from the mainstream, as he writes of the way in which the figure of the leper was substituted by other representations of outsider individuals after the phenomenon of leprosy had been contained: "The game of exclusion would be played again, often in these same places, in an oddly similar fashion two or three centuries later. The role of the leper was to be played by the poor and by the vagrant, by prisoners and by the 'alienated,' and the sort of salvation at stake for both parties in this game of exclusion is the matter of this study."<sup>322</sup>

Simultaneously, as Foucault's analysis suggests a continuity, with a recurring sense of a marginalized group being ostracised, Foucault's analysis also suggests that there are evolutions in attitudes towards and depictions of madness as different *epistemes* evolve. For instance, we

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<sup>319</sup> J.H. MacGregor, *The Discovery of Art of the Insane* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 11-12.

<sup>320</sup> S.L. Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 1-4.

<sup>321</sup> Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS*, 2.

<sup>322</sup> M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), 6.

might note that while the 18<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the fear and the ostracization of the mad from society, as we transition into the late modern period in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, corresponding with the transition into "disciplinary society". Insanity became medicalized and professionalized so that it was viewed within a scientific framework so that the fear surrounding mental illnesses diminished and artists broke free from the traditional tropes of representation madness in a manner oriented around superstition.<sup>323</sup> This shift can be explained by taking into consideration Foucault's 1975 text *Discipline and Punish*, in which he argued that within post-18<sup>th</sup> century society, new sophisticated tactics designed to 'impose a particular conduct on a particular human multiplicity.'<sup>324</sup> were developed, emblemized by the prison – especially Jeremy Bentham's panopticon, which 'automatizes and deindividualizes power.'<sup>325</sup> By forcing the prisoner to internalize disciplinary functions and to themselves become a tool to regulate society and people's behavioural conduct. Foucault argues that this example is emblematic of the much wider practice of implementing strategies of 'normalization' to regulate human behaviour.<sup>326</sup> In short, then, the medicalization of madness can be seen to be contiguous with a broader development through which sovereign power was replaced by disciplinary power, and an emphasis was placed upon regulating behaviour by encouraging the internalization of codes of conduct: thus the mad, rather than being locked in insane asylums and treated as an explicit danger, were characterized as individuals who had deviated from social norms and who thus needed reformation through medical attention. The 19<sup>th</sup> century, then, might be characterized as an era in which there was a widespread attempt to understand and categorize the insane through less outwardly brutal means, but with the ultimate objective of nonetheless demarcating undesirable forms of behaviour and subjugating disapproved of

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<sup>323</sup> T. L. Karaim, "Representations of Insanity in Art and Science of Nineteenth-Century France: From the Demonic to the Degenerate." PhD diss., 2016.

<sup>324</sup> M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (London: Penguin, 1991), 29.

<sup>325</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 202.

<sup>326</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 307.

populations: the process of ostracization because more sophisticated, but it nonetheless remained.

At the same time, however, we might note that while Foucault and others have theorized about the shift towards a disciplinary approach of regulating madness, the shift into the 19<sup>th</sup> century was nonetheless one towards significantly more humane treatment of the mentally ill. The French physician Philippe Pinel, an individual who became famous for having "liberated the insane from their chains"<sup>327</sup> was, for instance, exemplary of this trend. While the view of Pinel literally removing chains from women who had been identified as mad at the Salpêtrière was certainly romanticized, he truly was the first to make a step towards more humane treatment of the mentally ill and, in this sense, laid the foundations for a less outwardly brutal form of psychiatric science. Pinel also significantly impacted the discipline thanks to a textbook that he wrote: *Traité medico-philosophique sur l'aliénation mentale (A Treatise on Insanity)*.<sup>328</sup> While it may be the case that Pinel was in some senses representative of a more humanitarian approach, his text *Traité medico-philosophique sur l'aliénation* is indicative of how this often coalesced or corresponded with a disciplinary agenda. For instance, Pinel included a number of illustrations in the physiognomic tradition in his textbook. Physiognomy, or the study of facial features and bodily form, revolved around the assumption that outer appearance disclosed all sorts of information about an individual's character.<sup>329</sup> The inclusion of such images is clearly indicative of continued interest in demarcating and "othering" the mad or "othering" certain people as mad, albeit through more subtle, insidious means.

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<sup>327</sup> P. Pietikainen. *Madness: A History* (Milton Park, Abingdon, UK, and New York: Routledge, 2015), 106.

<sup>328</sup> Pietikainen. *Madness: A History*, 106.

<sup>329</sup> S. Pearl, *About Faces: Physiognomy in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2010).

## 4.2 The evolution of physiognomy

Having just offered a brief overview of the history of madness and of the evolution of perceptions of madness – giving as an example of the simultaneous continuity and distinctness of the disciplinary mode of medicalizing the mentally ill the example of Pinel – this section will explore in greater detail the evolution of the art of physiognomy of which Pinel may be seen to be a representative. In the process, it will be argued that with the evolution of attitudes towards the mentally ill came new pressures upon the art of representing physiognomic attributes to achieve greater levels of accuracy, and that photography came to serve as the perfect vehicle for achieving this objective.

While the art of reading faces dates back to ancient Greece, it was repolarized by the Swiss pastor Johan Caspar Lavater and his book *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschliebe* (*Physiognomic Fragments for Furthering the Knowledge and Love of Man*). In the four volumes published between 1775 and 1778, Lavater wrote rules for systematically identifying physical traits and corresponding mental characteristics. While Pinel drew upon Lavater's analysis of facial features in connection to the mental character, he also combined it with empirical data and scientific theory.<sup>330</sup> Just like Pinel, Jean-Étienne Esquirol, a pupil and colleague of the later at the Salpêtrière, intended for his drawing to be scientific and based upon observation. Esquirol (clearly also influenced by Lavater) commissioned portraits of more than two hundred mentally ill patients and used several of these sketches to illustrate his *Dictionnaire des sciences médicales* (*Dictionary of Medical Science*).<sup>331</sup> The emphasis placed on the facial expression and features of the patients demonstrated the clear adoption of physiognomy. However, also evident in the sketches is a

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<sup>330</sup> Gilman, *Disease, and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS*, 92.

<sup>331</sup> J. E. Esquirol, *Dictionnaire des sciences médicales. Par une société de médecins et de chirurgiens*, 60 vols (Paris: Panckoucke 1812-1822).

continuation of the medieval caricaturing of the insane, which can, for instance, be seen in the scruffy hair seen in Esquirol's representation of a so-called maniac (see Figure 4.1)

These various efforts to visualize madness through skillful depictions of physiognomic manifestations can be seen to have undergone a transformation during the disciplinary era described above, as a new impetus to medicalize madness resulted in a need to develop more exacting representations of the physiognomic effects of madness than those found in prototypes of physiognomic disciplinary discourse in Pinel and Esquirol. For instance, the British neurologist Sir Charles Bell highlighted the limitation of these art forms in his 1806 *Essays on the Anatomy of Expression in Paintings*:

The error into which a painter would naturally fall is to represent this expression by the swelling features of passion and the frowning eyebrow; but this would only convey the idea of passion, not of madness.<sup>332</sup>

A new mode of representation was now needed. As one of the major reformers of the British asylum, John Conolly, argued: clinical representation needed a visual medium that would distinguish “the ordinary expression of passions and emotions” and “its exaggeration in those whose reason is beginning to remit its control, and whose wits are just beginning to wander away from the truthful recognition of things.”<sup>333</sup> Photography with its mechanical and objective nature offered the potential to make precisely these distinctions: not only could it capture with a greater deal of accuracy and veracity the specific physiognomic details than a work of draughtsmanship could; it could also entail careful selection of photographer subjects so those distinctions could be made between the supposedly genuinely mentally ill and those in a state

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<sup>332</sup> S. Bell, *Essays on the Anatomy of Expression in Paintings* (London: Longmans, 1806).

<sup>333</sup> Gilman, *Disease, and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS*, 167.

of passion (distinctions perhaps less easily drawn from pictorial representations). In short, the medium of photography offered something drawing could not, in the process answering the criticism of Bell and others about the limitations of painting as a tool for illustrating the science of physiognomy.

Clearly, Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault – as someone who operated both within the domain of psychiatry and photography – was well-positioned to contribute to this emerging discursive trend of using photography to further the taxonomical and disciplinary objective of medicalizing those considered to be insane. As suggested previously, this chapter aims to explore how we might come to identify Clérambault in the context of this wider trend by considering his photographic work in conjunction with an analysis of his medical research, reflecting upon how they are linked and, in turn, how they might be understood. This approach aims to show how Clérambault’s education and psychiatric research influenced his photographic practice, and potentially vice versa. To begin with, therefore, we must offer an assessment of Clérambault’s background as medical training as a psychiatrist.

### **4.3 Clérambault’s medical training**

An in-depth analysis of Clérambault’s medical training will help us to understand his direct influences and the research that he was exposed to, in turn giving us a clearer idea of the background behind his photographic investigation of Moroccan drapery.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1898, Clérambault was received as an intern at the asylums of the Seine.<sup>334</sup> By then the institution encapsulated several asylums including Bicêtre, la Salpêtrière,

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<sup>334</sup> “Dossier Clérambault,” Archives of the Archaeological Society de Touraine, Tour.

Saint-Anne, Ville-Évrard, Perray-Vaucluse and Villejuif.<sup>335</sup> A year later, Clérambault defended his thesis entitled *Contribution à l'étude de l'Othématome (pathogenies, anatomie pathologique et traitement)* [*Contribution to the study of Othematoma, pathogenies, pathological anatomy and treatment*]. Othematoma (also known as an Auricular Hematoma) is a term that describes the collection of blood underneath the perichondrium of the ear caused by trauma and resulting in ear the swelling of the pinna.<sup>336</sup> This ear deformation is most commonly referred to as cauliflower ear. Clérambault's thesis constituted his first major contribution to psychiatric knowledge. By focusing on patients from the Vaucluse, Ville-Évrard, and Sainte-Anne who were affected with cachexia<sup>337</sup> when studying the phenomenon of othematoma, Clérambault embraced a leading theory within the psychiatric practice at the time: namely, the attribution of endogenous (or biological) phenomena to psychiatric problems and mental illnesses.<sup>338</sup> In other words, Clérambault held that Auricular Hematomas are manifestations that appear because of the debilitated personality of a given patient. From his earliest psychiatric research, Clérambault was convinced that mental illness was an internal phenomenon that could be detected and would leave marks on the body.

Before Clérambault finished his psychiatric internship at Sainte-Anne's clinical asylum, he crossed paths with reputable practitioners who would shape his own medical practice, most notably Dr. Valentin Magnan. Magnan was the director of the admission service since 1870 and occupied the function of "médecin répartiteur" (allocation physician). That is to say; he was in charge of identifying the patients that arrived at the clinical asylum and distributing them to the corresponding services according to their pathologies. Throughout his time at

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<sup>335</sup> Lerner and Witztum, "Gaétan Gatian de Clérambault, 1872–1934," 442.

<sup>336</sup> The pinna is the largely cartilaginous projecting portion of the external ear.

<sup>337</sup> Cachexia is a wasting disorder that causes extreme weight loss and muscle wasting.

<sup>338</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaétan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 72.

Sainte-Anne, Clérambault regularly attended Magnan's bi-weekly clinical lessons on mental illness.<sup>339</sup> Magnan fought his entire life to humanize as much as possible the conditions of the internment of the insane, a practice that he incorporated into his writings on the subject of how best to determine a patient's pathology.<sup>340</sup> Magnan's method consisted of never approaching a patient frontally. Seated on an ordinary chair behind a table so as to not bring out a sense of there being a difference between himself and the patient, Magnan questioned the patient, asking about their symptoms, the themes of the experienced deliriums, and their maladjusted moods. For Magnan, it was imperative to progress slowly to avoid sudden reluctance on the part of the patient, leading to his or her silence. Magnan held that it takes tact and unparalleled dexterity on the part of the psychiatrist to encourage the patient to confess. Magnan remained faithful to a proven process that sought to determine discreet signs that betrayed the patient's pathology rather than using intrusive measures. Paul Serieux explained:

Above all, he learned how to interrogate; his interrogations were a real treat for connoisseurs and an unequalled lesson for beginners. His precise questions gradually brought the patients to the revelation of their essential symptoms, and it was the patient himself who, by his answers, dictated to the auditors [of the lectures] the diagnoses before Magnan had time to formulate it.<sup>341</sup>

Inspired by the efficacy of Magnan's method, Clérambault would at the l'Infirmerie Spéciale près de la préfecture de police also come to use the tactic of gentle questioning to identify and reveal the pathologies inflicting his patients.

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<sup>339</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 73.

<sup>340</sup> P. Serieux, *Paul V. Magnan: sa vie et son œuvre (1835-1916)* (Paris: Masson, 1921), 153.

<sup>341</sup> "Il apprenait surtout à interroger; ses interrogatoires étaient pour les connoisseurs, un régal et pour les débutant une leçon inégalable. Ses questions précises amenaient peu à peu l'aliéné à la révélation de ses symptômes essentiels; et c'était le malade lui-même qui par ses réponses dictait aux auditeurs le diagnostic avant que Magnan l'eut formulé." in Serieux, *Paul V. Magnan: sa vie et son œuvre (1835-1916)*, 163.



A year later, Clérambault started his final internship with Dr. Paul Garnier, chief physician at the Spéciale l'Infirmerie près de la préfecture de Police. This was undoubtedly a crucial decision that forever changed Clérambault's career as he remained at the institution for the rest of his working life. Garnier introduced weekly public presentations of patients at the Infirmary. The purpose of the lectures was to educate students regarding the challenges confronting psychiatric practice, and they were attended by both physicians and jurists alike.<sup>342</sup> On the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1913, at the age of 41, Clérambault was named head of the Special Infirmary.<sup>343</sup> The psychiatrist had built a great reputation in the medical world since 1905 by intensely studying the behaviours and hallucinations of a whole population of alcoholics, chloral, and ether users.<sup>344</sup> The Infirmary was made of 11 cells for men and seven cells for women. Of these 18 cells, three were padded, one had three beds, and two had two beds. Portholes allowed supervisors to keep an eye on the patients at all times.<sup>345</sup> Clérambault's ward was very small, considering that between 2500 to 3000 people came through the infirmary system in a given year. Supervising this population demanded diligence and efficaciousness. In fact, the first rule at the Special Infirmary was that "the law that dominates our medical activity is rapidity [...] we have to go fast without ever forgetting that we have to do it well."<sup>346</sup>

In this context, the interrogations and the establishment of a *certificate* become the centrepiece of Clérambault's facility. In the process of developing a certification process to enable the speedy assessment of patients and ease the workload of the Infirmary, Clérambault also

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<sup>342</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés : Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault [1872-1934]*, 82.

<sup>343</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 101.

<sup>344</sup> Clérambault's entire research and findings have been regrouped in G. G. de Clérambault, *Oeuvre Psychiatrique* (Paris: Frénésie, 1987).

<sup>345</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 83.

<sup>346</sup> "la loi qui domine ici toute notre activité médicale est la loi de la vitesse [...] il nous aller vite en besogne sans pourtant jamais oublier qu'il faut aller droit et faire bien" in Dr. E. Dupré, *L'œuvre psychiatrique et médico-légale de l'infirmerie spéciale de la préfecture de police* (Paris: Infirmerie Spéciale, 1905), 10.

followed in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor Henri Legrand du Saulle, the first psychiatrist to take a serious interest in the application of aerial photography to determine the development of mental illness, as Clérambault sought to make use of photography to validate the certification process.<sup>347</sup> Garnier insisted on the irrefutable validity of the certification process:

This certificate will be a real report; it will be detailed, and therefore it will state the date of the last visit made to the patient by the signatory [...] the symptoms observed and the proofs of the insanity noted by the signatory, the progress of the disease, as well as the reasons for the need to have the patient treated in an establishment for the insane and to keep him or her locked up there.<sup>348</sup>

#### 4.4 Infirmerie Spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police

Having thus established a sense of the influences that worked upon Clérambault as an intern at the l'Infirmerie Spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police, this section will now consider Clérambault's work at the Infirmerie Spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police, and in particular his innovations in the art of certification. By comparing some of the certificates written by Clérambault with those of Marc Briand, we will gain a sense of how Clérambault developed a new approach to writing certificates for patients that both foreshadowed and mirrored his photographic and psychiatric practices in their novelistic attention to detail.

At its inception, the *Le Dépôt du Tribunal de grande instance de Paris* (the criminal court of Paris) was a prison under the prefectural authority located in the basement of the Palais de

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<sup>347</sup> H. Legrand du Saulle, *La folie devant les tribunaux* (Paris: Savy, 1864).

<sup>348</sup> P. Garnier, "L'internement des aliénés," *Congrès des médecins aliénistes et neurologistes de France et des pays de langue française*, Crépain-Leblond (1896), 79-80.

Justice in Paris. The prison had an influx of patients from colourful backgrounds: from criminals and wandering prostitutes to misguided children and disabled individuals without shelters. It also housed individuals with mental illnesses who had been arrested by the police for their disorderly conduct.<sup>349</sup> However, the members of the bourgeoisie who determined the course of proceedings within the courts, including magistrates and physicians, ruled that those deemed insane should not be confused with other inhabitants of the prison.<sup>350</sup> In fact, Article 24 of the Esquirol law for the Alienated of the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 1838 stipulated: "the mentally deranged can under no circumstances be tried alongside convicted or accused individuals, nor can they be taken to prison."<sup>351</sup> It would thus be a direct affront to the law to incarcerate the insane in prison. As a result, the *Infirmerie Spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police* (*Special Infirmary near the police prefecture*) was created by police commissioner Louis Ernest Valentin on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 1871. Léon Renault, Valentin's successor, defined the Special Infirmary in the following terms:

This place, where the mental patients and certain categories of the infirm are deposited, is now equipped with the appropriate personnel and is served by a private entrance. This prohibits the confusion with the so-called depot house, where the accused are received; this district is called the special Infirmary of the Police.<sup>352</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> M. Du Camp, *Paris: ses organes, ses fonctions et sa vie*, Vol. 4 (Paris: Hachette, 1875), 118.

<sup>350</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault*, [1872-1934, 80.

<sup>351</sup> "Dans aucun cas, les aliénés ne pourront être ni conduits avec les condamnés ou les prévenues, ni déposés dans une prison" in Article 24, *Loi Esquirol sur les Aliénés du 30 Juin 1838*, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/jorf/id/JORFTEXT000000882534>.

<sup>352</sup> "Ce local, où sont déposés les aliénés et certaines catégories d'indigents infirmes, est aujourd'hui pourvu d'un personnel approprié à sa destination, et il est desservi par une entrée particulière. Afin qu'on ne puisse le confondre avec la maison dite du Dépôt, où sont reçus des inculpés, ce quartier porte la dénomination d'*infirmerie spéciale près la Préfecture de police*." in "Dossier Clérambault," 84W74, Archive de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, Paris.

The orientalist photographer Maxime du Camp, a contemporary witness of the creation of the Special Infirmary, was aware of the importance of this development and pointed out that the independent Infirmary had its very own entrance with "its own service and was supervised by an employee of the prefecture exclusively responsible for mental patients [...] It was sad, clean and cold".<sup>353</sup> On paper, the two provisory detention places (the Dépôt and the Infirmerie spéciale près de la Préfecture de Police) were completely separate entities, but in reality, the dividing line between the two was limited. Clérambault himself never really made a clear distinction between the two, with his business cards, for instance stating "Médecin de l'Infirmerie Spéciale du Dépôt. Expert près Les Tribunaux" (Doctor of the Special Infirmary of the Dépôt. Expert to the courts).

The Special Infirmary was a place bursting with a variety of unknown mental pathologies, and Clérambault, as a forensic psychiatrist, made it his mission to uncover them, much like he later made it his mission to uncover the mysteries of the draperies. It was at the Special Infirmary that Clérambault created his entire psychiatric oeuvre: he was there that for 29 years, and it was in this capacity that he developed his skills as a psychiatrist to manoeuvre "with a word, a simple gesture or a moment of silence [...] the reluctant confession of the insane".<sup>354</sup> As already stated, continuing in the tradition established by Garnier, Clérambault created a forensic certificate for each observation. Over the course of his career, he would, in total, write over

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<sup>353</sup> "Une infirmerie indépendante, ayant une entrée spéciale, un service particulier, et que surveille un employé du bureau de la préfecture exclusivement chargé de tout ce qui concerne les aliénés. C'est triste, propre et froid." in Du Camp, *Paris: ses organes, ses fonctions et sa vie*, 336-337.

<sup>354</sup> "manœuvre [...] par un mot, par un simple geste ou un silence, il guidait l'aveu réticent d'un délirant" in Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 45.

13,000 certificates, an colossal number that earned him the status of “old virgin”.<sup>355</sup> Clérambault had developed a keen sense of clinical observation throughout the course of his psychiatric training and, from the beginning, established a reputation for the precision, conciseness, and literary quality of his certificates. He was able to create a clinical tableau encapsulating the insane in only a few lines. The following examples of certificates written by Clérambault will help to demonstrate this point:

Clémentine D... Approximately 50 years old, ex-modiste. Polymorphic delirium. Eroticism, grandeur, future wealth; erotomaniac; physical and psychological hostility [...] Tall, shows style and manners, liveliness, Pulse 100. Interval refusal of food; fear of poison.<sup>356</sup>

Similarly, in 1923, observing a 42-year-old-woman named Louise Edith, Clérambault wrote:

Affected by mental retardation. Atypical psychosis. Carelessness, fabulation, imaginative remarks, extreme poverty. Intense and playful conversation. Found naked in a quarry. Linear bruises. Said to have been hit with a rod by a stranger (maybe sadistic; abuse even after sex). Acceptable storytelling in this case. Uncleanliness. Wandering for weeks. Previously treated in Nanterre for imprecise causes. Hoarseness.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> C. Dewambrechies-La Sagna, "Clérambault, une anatomie des passions," *La Cause freudienne*, no. 74 (2010/1), 226.; L. Michaux, "G. G. de Clérambault et l'infirmier Spéciale," *Confrontations psychiatriques*, no.11 (1974): 42.

<sup>356</sup> "Clémentine D..., 50 ans environ, ex-modiste. Délire polymorphe ; Erotisme, grandeur, richesse future ; appoint érotomaniac ; persécution, influences physiques et psychiques [...] Hauteur, attitudes de style, maniérisme, vivacité. Pouls 100. Refus de nourriture par intervalle ; craintes de poison." in G. G. de Clérambault, *L'Erotomanie* (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2002), 84-85.

<sup>357</sup> "Atteinte de débilité mentale. Psychose atypique. Incurie, fabulation, propos de type imaginatifs mais pauvreté idéique extrême. Cachexie peut-être basale. Conservation de la tension et de l'enjouement. Trouvée nue dans une carrière. Contusions et ecchymoses linéaires stéréotypées. Dit avoir été frappée d'une verge par un inconnu (peut-être sadique; sévices même après rapport). Narration admissible sur ce point. Malpropreté. Errance depuis des semaines. Antérieurement hébergée à Nanterre. Traitée pour cause imprécise. Enrouement." in Y. Edel, "Les photographisme de G. G. de Clérambault ou Les passions d'un manigraphe," (paper

By comparing the above certificates with the below from the *Archives médicales du Centre Henri Rousselle à l'Hôpital Sainte Anne* in Paris, written by Dr. Marc Briand, we can gain a sense of the distinctiveness of Clérambault's certificate and of the almost photographic detail with which he expounded the details of his patient's lives:

Affected by mental retardation. Contusion and signs of beating. Flagellated at night in Romainville after three sexual intercourses by a sadistic stranger, assisted by a third party as a lookout. No fabulation because she presents certain signs. Not justified to keep her at the asylum.<sup>358</sup>

Clearly, Clérambault's certificate is of a different calibre: while Briand's account is more formulaic, as a focus upon her physical condition and the trauma she has suffered is neatly summarized preceding his assessment of the needfulness of her release, Clérambault's account paints a more vivid picture of the character in question. We learn that the patient “shows style and manners, liveliness”; “extreme poverty”; “uncleanliness” we are given a hint of their professional background ('ex-modiste'), and perhaps most importantly, their psychological characteristics are deftly summarized in a shortlist: 'Eroticism, grandeur, fantasies of future wealth; erotomania'; “affected by mental retardation, atypical psychosis, carelessness, fabulation, imaginative remarks”. Clérambault's account contains more information and more novelistic detail. Already we see evidence of the beady eye of the photographer and psychiatrist determined to capture the minutiae of the patient's history and condition in photographic detail.

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presented at the Colloque de Ceris, Centre Culturel International de Cerisy-La-Salle, 14 August 1993), <http://psychiatrie.histoire.free.fr/pers/cleram.htm>.

<sup>358</sup>“Est atteinte de débilité mentale. Contusions et traces de coups. Flagellation subie la nuit sur le glacis de Romainville après rapport sexuel à 3 reprises par un inconnu sadique qui aurait été assisté d'un tiers faisant le guet. Il ne me semble pas s'agir de fabulation car elle présente des signes certains. Il ne semble pas non plus justifié qu'on la maintienne à l'asile des aliénés.” in Y. Edel, “Les photographisme de G. G. de Clérambault ou Les passions d'un manigraphe”.

#### **4.5 Medical photography and the influence of Jean-Martin Charcot**

This section will add a layer of complexity to the analysis in the previous section by considering in greater detail the use of photography at the asylums of the Seine. This analysis will begin with a consideration of how photographs at the Special Infirmary were often staged, or seemingly manipulated, in line with a wider psychiatric practice identified by critics of Clérambault sometimes using patients in order to illustrate and prove his psychiatric theories. In seeking to understand this phenomenon, this section will trace this development to the practice of Jean-Martin Charcot, and before that to the innovations of Hugh W. Diamond – again exploring existing criticism of these two practitioners that similarly suggests that they incorporated photography into psychiatric practice in a manner designed to illustrate their theories – and that this often entailed the manipulation of their subject matter. In relation to this point, Foucault's account of how Charcot's practice of adopting a paternalistic role can be seen to have constituted a shift whereby the power of the physician was translated from one of direct control to one of control through knowledge will be applied to a consideration of both Charcot and Clérambault's use of photography as a means of generating and validating knowledge ostensibly on humanitarian grounds but in reality in order to exercise authority and control over subjugated patients.

The forensic psychiatry practiced at the Special Infirmary also made use of photography. In fact, the patients sent to Clérambault were photographed upon their arrival at this institution. The photography legacy of the Special Infirmary was in part revealed by a letter written by Clérambault and dated on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January 1914 to Dr. Briand, the successor of Dr. Magnan as the Chief of Admission at the Special Infirmary. Clérambault asked his colleague to keep a "picturesque" female patient that was about to be released for a few more days so that she could be photographed. This was not a strictly official photograph, nor did it embody a procedure

that might be deemed fitting for the purpose of merely documenting patients. Clérambault stipulated in his letter that the woman should have "her hair undone, bristling on all sides, without any pins so as to not restrict its flamboyance", or in other words the clichés of a madwoman.<sup>359</sup> No records of this photograph has been found in the course of my archival research. However, this letter does reveal Clérambault's authority over the patients brought to his clinic and is indicative of an interest in manipulating the photographed subjects in a manner that is at odds with what we have seen elsewhere in Clérambault's photographic representations of veiled men and women in Morocco and elsewhere, of which it was observed that there was an avoidance of intervening and manipulating the photographed subjects.

Confirming this sense that in photographing patients at the Special Infirmary, Clérambault deployed an approach that was distinct from the sensitive approach developed in his photographs of the veil, the roughness of Clérambault's procedure when admitting and diagnosing patients has been described in the following terms by Elisabeth Roudinesco:

[Clérambault] was a superb emblem for the function of a state apparatus and his position as chief physician of the special Infirmary reflected his doctrinal stance [...] He spent his life perfecting his eagle-eye gaze; he manipulated and observed his patients without ever listening to them, did not judge, but noted and obtained admissions in the manner of a confessor of genius.<sup>360</sup>

Clérambault's request to retain a patient for a photography opportunity not only reveals his early interest in photography (pre-dating his later work in North Africa) but is also reminiscent

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<sup>359</sup> "Toute sa chevelure, bien hérissée de toutes parts, sans une épingle ni un nœud qui restreignent la flamboyance." in Y. Edel, "Les photographisme de G. G. de Clérambault ou Les passions d'un manigraphe."

<sup>360</sup> E. Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 106.



of his predecessor Jean-Martin Charcot's earlier photographic practice. In fact, Clérambault would have been familiar with Charcot's *Iconographie photographique de la Salpêtrière* series dedicated to documenting and studying the various manifestations and cycles of specific neurological pathologies, most notably *hystéro-épilepsie*, the form of hysteria most interesting to the neurologist.

Charcot believed hysteria was a purely physical, neurological phenomenon that was universal and could afflict both men and women. However, it must be noted here that the Salpêtrière was a women's hospital, and despite Charcot's insistence on the genderless nature of hysteria, the vast majority of his case studies and photography in the *Iconographie* series was of women, which is also true in the case of Clérambault's Moroccan photography. Charcot believed hysteria had been historically misunderstood and that a greater understanding of it could only be gained through medical observation and study aided by modern scientific knowledge, methods, and tools. Accordingly, Charcot set a new standard for the use of photography in medicine when he equipped the Salpêtrière with a studio photography studio for the sole purpose of documenting his investigations into hysteria, neurological phenomena, and other pathological conditions. In doing so, Charcot was carrying on the recently institutionalized tradition of applying photographic methods to the process of clinical diagnosis.

The first physician to investigate the uses of photography in relation to medical diagnosis – known as being the father of psychiatric photography – was Hugh W. Diamond. In 1856, Diamond presented a paper before the Royal Society entitled *On the Application of Photography to the Physiognomic and Mental Phenomena of Insanity* in which he outlined

photography's ability to study, treat, and identify psychiatric diseases.<sup>361</sup> While Charcot's and Diamond's photographs were created and collected in the same empirical and positivist spirit, however, Charcot's images were intended to construct a taxonomy of different psychopathologies. In doing so, Charcot's collection of the various manifestations and cycles of neurological pathologies shifted the focus of psychiatry's gaze from the static presentation of clinical subjects to more of a theatrical spectacle. Out of the large number of photographs that are part of the series of *Iconographies*, many underwent extensive touch-ups to enhance particular qualities. For instance, discussing Charcot's photograph of Augustine (see Figure 4.2), De Marneffe argued:

A striking feature of the series taken as a whole is the liberal use of white paint or gouache on the surfaces of the drapery, and in some cases, on Augustine's hair. Paint may have been applied in some cases to compensate for variable depth of field or badly focused shots; however, its application constitutes an aesthetic choice. The application of paint to the drapery creates a sculptural effect [...] [They images] are made weighty and solid, and Augustine, surrounded by her heavy drapery, is imbued with static permanence. The addition of paint creates a contrast in dimensions and surfaces that renders Augustine's skin comparatively soft and luminous. Her vitality becomes tender and seductive in juxtaposition against the painted fabric.<sup>362</sup>

Using Charcot's written report about the details of the hysterical attack of the depicted subject to question the assertion of the progression that is documented in the photographs, de Marneffe concludes that the abundance of hysterical symptoms would result in more chaotic expressions than the orderly sequences shown in the photographs. She further argues that the arranged

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<sup>361</sup> S. L. Gilman, *The Face of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography* (New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1976), 7-8.

<sup>362</sup> D. de Marneffe, "Looking and Listening: the construction of clinical knowledge in Charcot and Freud," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (1997), 84.

presentation of the various stages of the patient's condition in the photographs is a contrivance designed to communicate a sense of "the perfect attack" rather than a realistic representation of the patient's condition.<sup>363</sup> In other words, de Marneffe uses Charcot's own report and her own expert knowledge of hysteria to question the veracity of Charcot's photographic representations, suggesting that the photographed subject has been manipulated to support Charcot's own thesis. In many ways, Augustine knew what Charcot wished to see and performed for his camera which might have given her some privileges or at least a break from the monotony of her hospital life. Here, then, we see a foreshadowing of what has been observed about Clérambault's photographic practice.

Further traces of Charcot's approach can be found in Clérambault's process. For instance, Charcot's insistence on prolonged visual interrogation – "look, look again, always look: it is only by this means that one come to see."<sup>364</sup> – can be seen to be mirrored by the intensity of the gaze that Clérambault exercises on his patients, and also when it comes to representing drapery.

In addition to this, as already indicated, we may also note a strong link between the process pioneered by Charcot (and mirrored by Clérambault in his work at the Special Infirmary) and aspects of Clérambault's photography investigating the Moroccan haik. Although we have just argued that there appears to be a fundamental difference in the sense that Clérambault allowed his subject matter to speak for itself when photographing the haik, whereas, in his work at the Special Infirmary, there appears to be evidence of a tendency to manipulate it. How can we be

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<sup>363</sup> Marneffe, "Looking and Listening: the construction of clinical knowledge in Charcot and Freud," 80.

<sup>364</sup> A. Callen, "The body and the Difference: Anatomy training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in the later Nineteenth Century," *Art History* (1997), 45.

certain? Clérambault could have also directed his subjects to perform his script, fitting his desires. Nonetheless a continuity in the sense that within both domains there is a clear emphasis on taxonomy, or in categorizing in vivid detail specific classificatory attributes of the subject in question. In his photographic practice, Charcot analysed and categorized clinical phenomena into "archetypes" to detect their anatomical bases. The differentiation of archetypes emerged from the careful observation of numerous cases. As we saw in the previous chapter, Clérambault's method with his photographs taken in Morocco and his close attention to the drapery and different ways of wearing it may be seen to mirror Charcot's approach in this sense. The taxonomical fixation is in turn reminiscent of Freud's descriptions, published in 1893, of the helpfulness within the psychoanalytic practice of defining archetypes as a "point of departure" – enabling the eye to "travel over the long series of ill-defined cases – the *'forme frutes'* – which branching off from one or other characteristic feature of the type, melt away into indistinctness."<sup>365</sup>

In his lecture *Policing Psychiatry*, Michel Foucault argued that Charcot's work with hysterics could be seen to exemplify a new 19<sup>th</sup> century approach to psychiatry: far from having the effect of "neutralizing the physician's power," he argued that the newly paternalistic role of the psychiatrist, ostensibly interested, now, in the patient's welfare, and in finding a "cure" for them. In fact, had the result of "displacing" the physician's power so that it was now to be found in the "more exact knowledge" of the psychiatrist, and in how this could be used to exert control over patients.<sup>366</sup> Clearly, then, it is possible to theorize that Charcot, and in turn Clérambault, can be interpreted as having used photography as a means of furthering the ambition of more

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<sup>365</sup> S. Freud, "Charcot," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1962), 12.

<sup>366</sup> M. Foucault, "Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth," Trans. P. Rabinow, *Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (London: New Press, 1997), 45.

closely and accurately documenting aberrations, ostensibly with the interests of the patients at heart, and yet in the manner with which they both encouraged patients to perform certain maladies, it is clearly the case that there was a broader agenda at play to do with confirming existing knowledge and thereby exerting greater control over the marginalized and medicalized subject. With this in mind, Clérambault's photography and his exacting interrogations of madness and of draping – both forms of otherness to his identity as a French civilized psychiatrist – can be seen to not only exhibit the influence of Charcot but also to serve as evidence of a disciplinary undertone indicative of a wider tendency within which the primary objective was to develop and reinforce knowledge around the subject in order to exert power and control over them (even if ostensibly in their best interests, just as in colonial dominance).

Elisabeth Roudinesco has similarly argued both that Clérambault was heavily influenced by the teachings and methods of Charcot, and that both can be viewed through a disciplinary lens:

At the time when French clinical practice was completing its dismemberment of Charcot's teaching, Clérambault rechannelled the archaic passion of hysteria into the psychotic register [...] Gaëtan, the bachelor, Gaëtan the paranoid, Gaëtan the cop, Gaëtan the misogynist remade contact with the world of Salpêtrière and transposed into the colonial universe of the first third of the century a vision of women that his contemporaries have abandoned. Whether it took the name of "delusional love" or a "love of draping," it was no less sexualized through and through.<sup>367</sup>

For Roudinesco, the similarities between Charcot and Clérambault revolved around Clérambault's attack on the feminine and his displacement of the psychiatric graze from

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<sup>367</sup> E. Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 107-108.

Charcot's poor and working-class European women to veiled bodies of Moroccans, thus serving a subjugatory and disciplinary purpose in line with Foucault's description of how the generation of knowledge can provide a prop for power.

#### 4.6 Passions, photography, and movement in French 19<sup>th</sup> century sciences

This section aims to strengthen this analysis by offering a fuller description of photographic practice within the domains of psychology, psychiatry, and physiology that within the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France, in particular thinking about a specific discursive interest in external bodily signs of what were described within the discourse as "passions." The following analysis thus focuses on the photographic production of scientists and photographers who made a significant contribution to the study of expression and gestures: most notably, Guillaume Benjamin Duchenne. In the process, it will map the diverse approaches to depicting and exploring what was referred to as "passions" that were developed within fields of psychology, psychiatry, and physiology, as well as in photography, in France in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Though Clérambault's photographs were created at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it will be argued that these earlier developments may be seen to have influenced Clérambault's photographic journey. Several authors have explored the way in which 19<sup>th</sup> century photography may be seen to have functioned as an instrument of observation and experimentation. The medium was not only used to create scientific knowledge, and it simultaneously became the scientific object.<sup>368</sup> In tracing the influence of these developments upon Clérambault in greater detail, the hope is to paint a complete picture of the basis of his taxonomical inclinations, and how this may be

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<sup>368</sup> J. Tucker. *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).; M. Brosius, Dean, K., and Ramalingam, C. *William Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).; K. Wilder, 'Visualizing Radiation: The Photographs of Henry Becquerel', in L. Daston and E. Lunbeck eds., *Histories of Scientific Observation* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2011)., 349–68.

seen to offer a fuller explanation not just for his interest in documenting psychiatric patients, but also for his interest in chronicling in detail specific attributes of the veil, a possibility that will be explored in greater detail in the following section.

The first scientific studies of expression using photography as a tool were by done the French physician Guillaume Benjamin Duchenne, as documented in his *Mécanisme de la physionomie Humaine, ou analyse électrophysiologique de l'expression des passions*, published in 1862.<sup>369</sup> Duchenne de Boulogne's study belonged to the discourse on the representation of the forms passions within the field of physiognomy which saw a renewed interest during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>370</sup> His publication began with a review of the works of Camper, Lavater, Bell, and Sarlandière, who had already used sketches and drawings to exemplify their theories on the expression of passion through facial muscles. However, contrarily to these practitioners, Duchenne argued that facial expressions were produced by the simultaneous contraction of several muscles. He proposed that a classificatory system in order to understand which emotions triggered which facial muscles into the movement was necessary. With this in mind, Duchenne suggested the application of localized electricity to various facial muscles that would be recorded through photography (see Figure 4.3).

Duchenne developed two lines of argument in order to defend the choice of photography as a means of documenting what he termed the human passions. First, he insisted that "vision of the photographic figures that represent, in a truth-to-nature way, the expressive traits that are specific to the muscles of the passions could teach us much more than long considerations and

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<sup>369</sup> F. Delaporte, *Anatomie des Passions [Anatomy of the Passions]* (Paris: PUF, 2003); A. Cuthbertson, "The Highly Original Dr. Duchenne," in A. Cuthbertson, *Duchenne de Boulogne, the Mechanism of Facial Expression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 225–4.

<sup>370</sup> L. Hartley, *Physiognomy and the Meaning of Expression in Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

descriptions of facial movement can"<sup>371</sup>. In other words, for Duchenne, the capacity of the camera to capture movement in precise detail guaranteed that the image would replicate what had happened in front of it. It is worth noting that Duchenne's practice cannot, however, be seen to directly exemplify the ideal of objectivity described by Daston and Galison and hinted at in this defence of its use.<sup>372</sup> While it is true that for Duchenne as for any other photographer, the photo-image captured a real moment in time, in terms of Duchenne's actual practice, the manipulation of the photographs reveal how the photographer could, in fact, intervene in the process, thus rendering it a less scientifically exact form as Duchenne appears to claim. Duchenne's second defence of the use of photography was related to his contention that the duration of the event he was interested in recording (namely, the response to small electric shocks upon the facial muscles) was suited to the speed of the camera. Duchenne's faradizations only lasted for a few seconds. Similarly, the camera needed a few seconds to capture its subject. Coupled with its "truthful" quality and the coinciding period of the camera exposure time with the faradization time made photography the perfect medium to record expressions.

Albeit not exact, the synchronization between the camera and the electrical device became a crucial component in the photographic reproduction of facial expressions. The expressions created utilizing electricity appeared to be "real" when they were, in fact, only frozen in time by the photographic device. In any case, photography paralyzes and freezes the expression, even when it is natural. As Beatrice Pichel pointed out, this obvious fact reveals the inherent paradox of Duchenne's project, and one of the main characteristics that shaped later understanding of the photographic capture of facial expressions.<sup>373</sup> Despite the title,

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<sup>371</sup> F. Delaporte, E. Fournier and B. Devauchelle, *La fabrique du visage. De la physiognomonie antique à la première greffe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 31–105.

<sup>372</sup> Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*.

<sup>373</sup> B. Pichel, "From facial expression to bodily gestures: Passions, movement in French 19th century sciences" *History of the Human Science* 29, no.1 (February 2016): 27-48.



*Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine, ou analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions*, Duchenne did not demonstrate the mechanism of the expression of passion. He did not show how the muscles contracted, but rather he showed the instant of contraction, the moment when the expression was held in time. This paralyzed instant produced by faradization and captured by the camera at the same time that became known in the scientific tradition as the 'expression.'<sup>374</sup> Duchenne and his novel approach to expression remained largely unknown. In fact, his photographs only became famous due to their reproduction in Charles Darwin's *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* 10 years later.

Another seminal work, impossible to omit in this context, is the illustrated journal *Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière*. Created under the direction of the neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, Désiré Bourneville, and Paul Regnard disseminated photographs of hysterical women taken at the hospital. *The Iconographie* published three volumes from 1877 to 1880 and when Albert Londe became the director of the photographic service in 1888 changed to the *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*. A whole section of this chapter is dedicated to Charcot's photography that documented the hysterical attacks on his female patients and its links to Clérambault.<sup>375</sup> The following section thus will look into the production of images investigating the bodily gestures in the performance of passion and, most specifically, the so-called "attitudes passionless" executed at the Parisian women's asylum, between 1881 and 1885.<sup>376</sup> In the process, Charcot and Richer reinterpreted Duchenne's work by applying

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<sup>374</sup> D. de Boulogne, *Mécanisme de la physionomie humaine, ou analyse électro-physiologique de l'expression des passions* (Paris : Jules Renouard, 1862).

<sup>375</sup> R. B. Gordon, "From Charcot to Charlot: Unconscious Imitation and Spectatorship in French Cabaret and Early Cinema" *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 27, no. 3 (Spring, 2001): 515-549.; R. Justice-Mallow, "Charcot and the Theatre of Hysteria." *Journal of Popular Culture*, Vol. 28, no. 4 (1995): 133–138.; G. Didi-Huberman, *Invention de l'hystérie* (Paris: Editions Macula, 1982).

<sup>376</sup> P. Richer, *Etudes cliniques sur la grande hystérie, ou hystéro-épilepsie*, (Paris: A. Delahaye and E. Lecrosnier, 1885).

electricity to the faces of patients, which provoked facial expressions, while bodily gestures accompanying these facial movements completed the expression. The photographs were taken with the electrodes supplying electricity on the patient's face to show the exact faradization moment.<sup>377</sup> Richer, pleased with this method, described the patients as "expressive statues".<sup>378</sup> Londe, in an article entitled "Photographies médicales" in the *Bulletin de la Société Française de la photographie*, recognized the challenges involved in depicting nuances of expression intensity and presented photography as the most suitable technology for its reproduction.<sup>379</sup> The correspondence between the exposure time to the duration of the gestures but also because of the detailed precision of the replicated image (echoing Duchenne's reasoning) exceeded the quality and prevision of any sketches by the most talented artists. In order to record the evolution of the facial muscles stimulated, Londe created his own stereoscopic camera, which he then mounted on cardboard and regrouped according to the facial muscles stimulated.<sup>380</sup> The portraits were arranged in this way to demonstrate how differing levels of electricity affect bodily gestures (see Figure 4.4).

Londe's defence of the use of photography and his development of more advanced processes led to a conceptual shift of the role of photography in the study of expressions. However, photographing gestures challenged the way the medium had been used until then. For the first time, photography did not seek to capture a single instant in time but rather, it wished to record movement in a sequence. Londe was well aware of this problem – and built upon it – and was manifested in the photographs he took of hysterical attacks at the Salpêtrière. Rather than arranging photographs according to groups, Londe arranged photographs in a chronological

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<sup>377</sup> Richer, *Etudes cliniques sur la grande hystérie, ou hystéro-épilepsie*, 671.

<sup>378</sup> Richer, *Etudes cliniques sur la grande hystérie, ou hystéro-épilepsie*, 670.

<sup>379</sup> A. Londe, "Photographies médicales," *Bulletin de la Société française de la photographie* (January 1884): 10.

<sup>380</sup> Londe, "Photographies médicales," 10.

order that emphasized the temporal continuity among the represented events.<sup>381</sup> The photographs ceased to be isolated items and became a fragment of a series within which they made sense. These serial compositions gave the impression of movement, but they were still, in essence, a series of random instants, meaning that he remained dissatisfied about the value of a single isolated series. According to Londe, "we need a special device that allows taking a certain number of pictures within particular intervals as close or apart from each other as we want them to be."<sup>382</sup> In effect, Londe wanted a series of series to counteract the randomness and the transience of the photograph as comprehensively as possible.

Londe presented his first photo-electrical camera before the Société Française de la Photographie in that same year (1883).<sup>383</sup> Inspired by Etienne-Jules Marey's "fusil photographique," the nine images were arranged in a ring on the same plate. Unlike other chronophotographic devices working with fixed times, Londe's camera allowed the manual regulation of both the time intervals between each exposure and the shutters' speed, which made it particularly suited to portraying hysterical attacks.<sup>384</sup> Londe built a second chronophotographic camera, which created images of an eight-by-eight format ten years later. Londe's 12-lens camera created a plate which provided 12 images organized in 3 rows of 4 images each.

Londe applied his chronophotography to Paul Richer's research on the physiology of movement investigating the mechanisms of muscles and bones. Amongst the gestures studied,

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<sup>381</sup> D. Bernard and A. Gunthert, *L'instant rêvé: Albert Londe* (Paris: J. Chambon, 1993), 99–136.

<sup>382</sup> A. Londe, "Appareil photo-électrique," *Bulletin de la Société française de la photographie* (May 1883), 127.

<sup>383</sup> Bernard and Gunther, *L'instant rêvé: Albert Londe*, 123.

<sup>384</sup> B. Pichel, "From facial expression to bodily gestures: Passions, movement in French 19th century sciences," 41.

there was the so-called “expressive gait” – an enthusiastic walk in which the passions of a man can be seen in his gestures and bodily expressions. *Marche Enthousiaste (Enthusiastic Gait)* shows this gait is translated by a forward torso, expressive arm gestures, but most curiously energetic legs, through which the passions were expressed (see Figure 4.5). This photograph captures what Richer defined as an “antique warrior returning from a victory, or better yet, more simply, he is a man singing the Marseillaise” reinforced what has been established at the Salpêtrière.<sup>385</sup> Photography is a crucial tool to capture and freeze the movements and the gestures of the expression of passions.

At the turn of the 19th century, the scientific study of expression through photography was not limited to Londe and Richer. Georges Demenÿ, the assistant to the well-known physiologist and chronophotographer Etienne-Jules Marey, experimented with chronophotography to analyze speech.<sup>386</sup> In his 1891 *Je Vous aime [I love you]* he captured several stages of the movement of his lips while he was saying ‘Je -Vous-aime’ (see Figure 4.6).<sup>387</sup> It is important to note that Demenÿ was not directly interested in the study of the passions. He did, however, see the benefits of chronophotography of expression for commercial use.<sup>388</sup> Nonetheless, there are clear parallels between these two photographers, instead of them having quite distinct purposes: like Londe, Demenÿ insisted that “if we accept only one instantaneous image, it usually happens that we capture an unstable attitude of the movement that the eye cannot naturally perceive.”<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> P. Richer, *Physiologie artistique de l’homme en mouvement* (Paris: Octave Doin, 1895), 302.

<sup>386</sup> D. Rossell, *Living Pictures, The origins of the Movies* (Albany, NY: State University New York Press, 1998), 50.

<sup>387</sup> G. Demenÿ, *La photographie de la parole* (Paris: Impr. de Lahure. 1892).

<sup>388</sup> Pichel, “From facial expression to bodily gestures: Passions, movement in French 19th century sciences,” 41.

<sup>389</sup> Demenÿ, *La photographie de la parole*, 3.

This development is indicative of the fact that by the 20th century, it was photographically possible to document the movement of the gestures of the body and the face rather than capturing a single instance. However, chronophotographs were not taken further in this field. Neither Demenÿ nor Londe developed this practice. Although, it would have a great fit for Clérambault's investigation in the haik, he too, did not pursue it.

#### 4.7 Choice of photography to record the drapery

As indicated, this step-by-step aspect of recording movement is something that may be seen to have influenced Clérambault's creative practice, in particular, in his depictions of drapery. Just as in the case of the use of photography for medical research in Londe and others, Clérambault followed a protocol for his photographs in order to capture a sense of movement through a sequence, thus eliminating the role of randomness that renders a single photographic image unrepresentative:

The observation must be accompanied by figures. Cinematographic views of, 1. Various times of dressing. 2. Draping in these varied and moving postures would be useful: well-serialized photographs should be added, we do not have any other resources. It would be good to attach both cinematic and static diagrams to the renderings.<sup>390</sup>

This extract confirms Clérambault's wish to produce cinematographic images when documenting Moroccan drapery. Indeed, Clérambault photographed models alone and in

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<sup>390</sup> “L’observation doit être accompagnée de figure. Des vues cinématographiques, 1. Des divers temps de l’habillage. 2. Du drapé dans ces postures variées et en mouvement seraient utiles ; des photographies bien sériées peuvent y suppléer, nous n’avons pas eu d’autres ressources. Il serait bon de joindre aux rendus des schémas tant cinématiques que statiques,” in “Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l’École des Beaux-Arts,” *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

series, with the latter tendency arguably serving the purpose of de-structuring and breaking down the movement of the drapery. At the same time, during my archival research, I have found several hand-drawn sketches made by Clérambault. *Sketches*, already briefly discussed in the first chapter of this thesis (see Figure 1.11), shows five drawings depicting sketched figures. It is interesting to observe that this sequential depiction of the different stages of movement of the bodies echoes the serial aspect of the psychiatric photography of Londe and others, with which Clérambault was, of course, familiar. These images are a clear indication of the assurance and mastery of Clérambault's sketching, in the process attesting to the conscious choice of photography on Clérambault's part in order to document the movement of the veil (in line with the general assertion within the discourse represented by Londe and others that it is a superior art form for capturing movement). Clearly, given the fact that in spite of being an able draughtsman, Clérambault elected to use photography, he felt that drawing failed to represent the details of drapery and of its movements as accurately as photography (attesting to the influence of developments within psychiatric photography). Yet Clérambault's prints are not consistently very detailed. The sunlight on the white clothes tends to bleach out details through overexposure, his photos are all quite high key and soft in focus, as if he was trying to use Pictorialist idiom. In that, the formal qualities of the photographs in Clérambault's corpus seem to be resisting the meaning assigned to them.

The formal resemblance between each sketch leads to the understanding that these were based on the same model or perhaps a statue at a museum. It appears that Clérambault wished to capture different perspectives of the fabric, meaning that he must have had to move around the statue in order to capture the five different angles of the drapery. This is a procedural detail that is important here because Clérambault did not elect to do this in his photographs, as in the photographs, the model moved for Clérambault rather than him moving around them.

#### 4.8 Seductions of a material

Having now established the discursive preconditions within the domain of psychiatric photography that may be seen to have influenced Clérambault's creative practice, this section and the following what remains of this chapter will now adopt a different perspective in order to attempt to trace the influence of Clérambault's status as a psychiatrist upon his photographic practice. In particular, it will explore the possibility that Clérambault's interest in depicting draperies can be seen to be related to his own exploration as a psychiatrist into the phenomenon of the fetishization of drapery and cloth. In order to develop this analysis, this section will begin with an exploration of the wider societal phenomenon of a perceived fetishization of clothing materials on the part of women, together with the possible causal explanations for this: one is that it is indicative of a misogynistic attempt to medicalize and ostracize the female sex; the other being that it reflects the emergence of a commodity culture in which the fetishization of the everyday became commonplace.

The conjunction in the 19<sup>th</sup> century of the invention and the mass production of clothing with the introduction of department stores resulted in the democratization of an experience that had previously only been available only to the elite.<sup>391</sup> The spectacular display and exhibition of new material in large department stores commodified clothing and made it accessible to the masses. The subsequent erotization of clothing under these circumstances is perhaps not a strange as it may first appear. In fact, it was echoed by similar phenomena within other cultural and social contexts. A look at the emergence of psychiatric case studies will help to illustrate this point. Forensic medicine in France was just beginning to establish itself in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and as a result, case studies were produced and published for the purposes of teaching, but also

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<sup>391</sup> K. Ross, *The Ladies' Paradise* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).; R. William, *Dream Worlds: Mass Consumptions in the Late Nineteenth-Century France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

as a method of validation for the construction of the category of "expert witness." This strategy worked because, by the mid-century, the courts increasingly commissioned case studies, meaning that psychiatry gradually became an integral part of the workings of the judicial system. The issue of legal responsibility was the mechanism by which psychiatry was able to insert itself into the judicial system. In fact, at this time, much of the emphasis in the determination of guilt revolved around the designation of legal responsibility, meaning whether or not a person was held legally responsible for their actions.<sup>392</sup> Accordingly, Clérambault diagnosed, certified, and incarcerated women for crimes involving "erotic passions for the cloth" – typically involving the theft of cloths, supposedly in order to serve a fetishized function. In order to understand this fixation upon women supposed "erotic passions for the cloth" – and thus to gain a clearer insight into the context within which Clérambault's professional work concerning fetishist fixations upon drapery took place, it is worth considering in greater detail the emergence of this phenomenon.

Though the diagnosis of stealing as a form of madness had long been recognized in psychiatry, it was Swiss doctor André Matthey who first theorized and coined the term kleptomania in 1816.<sup>393</sup> Dr. Marc further developed the concept of kleptomania as a legal designation for an extenuating circumstance in the commission of a crime. Initially, it was exclusively used in relation to women and defined as "a distinctive irresistible tendency to steal." However, it rapidly progressed into an investigation of women's sexuality and apparent hereditary dispositions to the extent that "the theft itself was nearly lost sight of amidst the psychiatrist's concern with pathology – those diseased events that preceded, resulted in, and survived the act

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<sup>392</sup> P. O'Brien, "The Kleptomania Diagnosis: Bourgeois Women and Theft in Late Nineteenth-Century France," *Journal of Social History* (Fall 1983): 65-77.

<sup>393</sup> A. Matthey, *Nouvelle recherches sur les maladies de l'esprit, précédées de considérations sur les difficultés de l'art de guérir* (Paris, 1816).



of theft and were woven together to form the fabric of pathological condition."<sup>394</sup> Furthermore, alongside the focus upon hereditary degeneration, a version of Clérambault's fixation upon women's "erotic passion for cloth" was consistently factored into the diagnoses of bourgeois women caught stealing: the actual event of stealing itself come to be wrapped in terms that connoted women's physiological condition, and that often had a sexual aspect.

There are two clear possible explanations for this preoccupation with the fetishist dimension of the cloth during this period: the first is that it is indicative of a disciplinary tendency to attempt to medicalize aberrant forms of behaviour, and thus to subjugate and marginalize through the production of medical knowledge; the other is that the fetishization of cloth represented an actual sociological phenomenon linked to the commodification of clothing. Whichever explanation we find most valid, it is clear that women's supposed erotic experiences with cloth were increasingly a subject that preoccupied men like Clérambault, and that this was an issue that had a place within public discourse. For instance, the merchandising strategies of large department stores came under attack for supposedly precipitating the perversion of susceptible customers.<sup>395</sup> Cloth in all its kinds and variations is figured at the centre of these discussions.

Further evidence for this phenomenon can be found in the fact that the psychiatrist Pierre Janet described the passion for silk and the extreme behaviour, moods, and emotions it was capable of inciting.<sup>396</sup> Similarly, Emile Zola in *Aux Bonheur des Dames* (*A Ladies' Paradise*) wrote

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<sup>394</sup> O'Brien, "The Kleptomania Diagnosis: Bourgeois Women and Theft in Late Nineteenth-Century France," 70.

<sup>395</sup> L. Tiersten, "Marianne in the department store: gender and the politics of consumption in turn-of-the-century Paris," in J. Crossick, ed., *Cathedrals of consumption. The European Department Store, 1850-1939* (New York, Routledge, 2003), 116-134.; D. Harvey, *Paris, capital of modernity* (New York, Routledge, 2003).

<sup>396</sup> E. Mayo. *The Psychology of Pierre Janet* (London: Routledge, 2014).

about the strategic seduction of women used by department stores and provided erotic language to characterize the different types of cloth:

An exhibition of silks, satins, and velvets, arranged so as to produce by a skilful artistic arrangement of colours, the most delicious shades imaginable. At the top were the velvets, from a deep black to a milky white: lower down, the satins – pink, blue, fading away into shades of wondrous delicacy; still lower down were the silks, all the colours of the rainbow, pieces set up in the form of shells, others folded as if round a pretty figure, arranged in a life-like natural manner by the clever fingers of the window dressers.<sup>397</sup>

The use of light and the treatment of fabric in Clérambault's photographs are reminiscent of the displays of fabric in department stores, as represented by Zola's descriptions of the environments and practices of large department stores in *A Ladies' Paradise*. Zola spent years researching for his book in order to depict a reality generally recognized as being accurate and dependable, although according to Kristin Ross, it was "unavoidable" for anyone living in Paris at the time to ignore the "spectacle" represented by large department stores.<sup>398</sup>

Seen in this light, Clérambault and his research on the cloth appears to be in keeping with a wider general social and cultural obsession with the fetishization of clothing material: a phenomenon that can again either be explained as a by-product of disciplinary and patriarchal impulses to subjugate and medicalize aberrant forms of behaviour in women or as a reflection upon the commodification of everyday items such as clothing. Furthermore, the uncanny lighting and meticulous attention to cloth displayed in Clérambault's photographs of the Moroccan haik may be seen to correspond with the concerns of the window-dressers who

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<sup>397</sup> E. Zola, *Au Bonheur des dames* (Paris: Flammarion, 2009).

<sup>398</sup> R. Krauss, "Corpus delicti," *October*, 33, Summer (1985): 32-72.

turned splendid visions of mannequins draped in cloth and other kinds of clothing, as depicted in the Zola passage above. It is also reminiscent of pre-Raphaelite figures draped in antique garb such as Sir Frederic Leighton's *Flaming June* executed in 1895 (see Figure 4.9) but also is Pictorialist in style: low contrast, soft focus, high key, brown and cream rather than black and white.

#### **4.9 *Passion érotique chez la femme, 1908***

In this and the following section, a detailed analysis of Clérambault's *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* will be offered in order to test the claim that his interest in the subject of fabric may be related to his own explorations as a psychiatrist into the phenomenon of the fetishization of drapery and cloth. This section begins with an account of the discursive context of Clérambault's interest in this subject by suggesting that it is tied to a wider discursive interest rooted in the newly emerged discipline of criminology. By then exploring *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* in detail, a hypothesis will emerge: in particular that in following this example by exploring the psychology of those whose fixation upon cloths, fabrics, and draperies led them to criminal activities, we have an explanation beyond but related to that represented by Clérambault's interest in the ethnographic value of drapery and his interest in its aesthetic qualities: namely, that Clérambault's investigations of draperies and drapery culture can be seen to have reflected his interest in mental illness, and that his attempts to document in precise detail the specific attributes of drapery can be seen to mirror his interest in documenting aspects of human behaviour. In short, it will be argued that Clérambault viewed the veil as if it was a mental illness: documenting and analysing aspects of drapery in the same manner that he documented and analysed his patients.

A few years before his deployment to Morocco, Clérambault encountered the case of four curious yet intriguing patients at the Spécial Infirmierie du Dépôt de Paris. According to the psychiatrist, these women experienced "a morbid, mainly sexual obsession for certain fabrics, silk especially, and on occasions this passion for the fabric led to kleptomaniac impulses."<sup>399</sup> The surprising testimonies confused yet at the same time fascinated and captivated Clérambault so much that he dedicated a whole publication to their study. This publication entitled *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* (*Erotic passion for fabrics in women*), dated 1908, was followed in 1910 by a second publication.<sup>400</sup> It is important to stress that the conversations upon which these publications were based did not stem from therapy sessions, nor were they voluntary. In fact, the four women found themselves in the hands of the psychiatrist because they had in one way or another disturbed the public order, resulting in their arrest.

Before offering a detailed analysis of *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, it is useful to place the publication in its general context, in particular by taking into consideration the fact that during this era, psychiatry participated in the development of the new science of criminology: a discipline imbued with a positivist outlook and anthropometric ideas. Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising to learn that *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* was not a diagnostic invention but rather a new contribution to an already established discursive domain within the field of criminology. Multiple such examples exist (including texts by Garner and Emile Laurent), but perhaps the clearest example is J.M Charcot and V. Magnan's "Inverstion du sens génital et autres perversion sexuelle" in *Archive de Neurologie*.<sup>401</sup> Cumulatively,

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<sup>399</sup>"Trois femmes ayant éprouvé une attraction morbide, principalement sexuelle, pour certaines étoffes, la soie et surtout et, à l'occasion de cette passion, des impulsions cleptomanes." in Clérambault, *Passion érotique chez la femme*, 19.

<sup>400</sup> G. G. de Clérambault, *Passion érotique chez la femme*, 17 and 99.

<sup>401</sup> J.M Charcot & V. Magna, "Inverstion du sens génital et autres perversion sexuelle," *Archive de Neurologie*, Vol. 3 (1882): 53-60,

authors exploring this phenomenon collected and published nearly a hundred very detailed clinical observations of fetishists of all kinds.

The term fetishism was first mentioned by Alfred Binet in an essay entitled *Le fétichisme Dans l'amour (Fetishism in Love)* and was described as the following:

normal love appears as the results of a complicated fetishism: one could say that in normal love, fetishism is polytheistic: it results not from a single excitement but from myriad excitements: it is a symphony. Where does the pathology begin? It is at the moment that a detail becomes preponderant to the point of erasing all the others [...] Here, the detail replaces everything; the accessory becomes the main. Polytheism becomes monotheism.<sup>402</sup>

In accordance with Binet's definition, Emile Laurent specified that for fetishists of the cloth, "it is the fabric used for the adornment of women that is usually sexualized in this way."<sup>403</sup>

Clérambault, in his text, added to this remark with the comment:

The palpation of the fabric is necessary, its mental representation and even its noise cannot be replaced. The notion of possessing the fabric is insignificant; however, the epidermal touch is necessary [...] The elective tactile hyperesthesia is only a pathological phenomenon on the grounds of its intensity here because it is normally

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<sup>402</sup> "L'amour normal apparaît comme le résultat d'un fétichisme compliqué : on pourrait dire que dans l'amour normal le fétichisme est polythéiste : il résulte non pas d'une excitation unique mais d'une myriade d'excitation : c'est une symphonie. Ou commence la pathologie ? C'est au moment où l'amour d'un détail quelconque devient prépondérant au point d'effacer tous les autres [...] Ici, la partie se substitue au tout ; l'accessoire devient le principal. Au polythéisme répond le monothéisme." in B. Alfred, "Le fétichisme dans l'amour," *Revue philosophique de France et de l'étranger* 24, (1887) : 252-274.

<sup>403</sup> "En général les tissus servant à la parure de la femme qui sont ainsi en quelque sorte sexualisés" in E. Laurent, *Les perversions sexuelles, Fétichistes et érotomates*, Vol. XII, (Paris: Vigot, 1905).

found to a low degree in almost all refined individuals: we can even say that is it sometimes part of the 'artistic sensibility'.<sup>404</sup>

These two sentences summarize the classical positions within the views on cloth fetishism at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Psychiatrists believed themselves to be "refined individuals" with artistic sensibility" in contrast against the victims of hysteria they observed, while at the same time apparently able to recognize within themselves muted and less extreme forms of the impulses that drive their patients.

In his first observation, Clérambault goes on to reveal what drove his first case, the 40-year-old "V.B.", to prison and later to the Infirmerie Spéciale du Dépôt:

we learned that she stole as a sort of impulsion during an extremely strong temptation, that silk particularly charmed her, that sometimes she used stolen coupons, sometimes threw them away, sometimes gave them away, that she was sexually frigid yet had a lover, or lovers, and was masturbating; after the theft, she handled silk with pleasure, and we seemed to understand that by handling it she defiled it, obviously by holding it against her genitals.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> "La palpation de l'étoffe est ici nécessaire, sa représentation mentale, son bruit même ne peuvent y suppléer, la notion de possession de l'étoffe est ordinairement négligeable ; les sensations épidermiques sont nécessaires et décisives [...] L'hyperesthésie tactile élective n'est ici un fait pathologique que par son intensité car elle se rencontre normalement à un faible degré chez presque tous les individus affinés, on peut même dire qu'elle fait partie du 'sens artiste.'" in Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 56-57.

<sup>405</sup> "Nous apprîmes qu'elle volait par une sorte d'impulsion au cours d'une tentation trop forte, que la soie la charmait particulièrement, que tantôt elle utilisait les coupons volés, tantôt les jetait, et tantôt les donnait, qu'elle était sexuellement frigide avait eu d'ailleurs un amant, ou des amants et se masturbait ; qu'après le vol elle maniait la soie avec plaisir et nous sembla bien comprendre qu'en la maniant elle la souillait, évidemment en l'appliquant contre ses parties génitales." In Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 22.

This impulse on the part of the patient to steal and to pleasure herself with a piece of silk is clearly characterized here in a distinctly medicalized fashion, and yet in a manner that is typical of Clérambault, there is at the same time a vivid sense of novelistic detail: almost of complicity in the eroticization of the fabric as we learn of her "extremely strong temptation." Clérambault goes on to describe how the cloth seemed to have exercised a form of attraction on her mind and her body so strong that it led her to commit several crimes. In effect, he proposes that the fabric held a real power of seduction and pushed the patient to commit crimes to satisfy her compulsion repeatedly. However, what was this power of seduction that led this otherwise sane woman to commit crimes of passion?

The answer, namely the cloth, was at the centre of the photographic investigation of Clérambault. In fact, it is this dominant form of seduction of the cloth over the human subject that – as we have seen throughout the course of this thesis – can be found in Clérambault's photographs of the haik. In these photographs, the subject is swallowed by the heavy fabric. In Clérambault's images, the drapery is a shadow that refuses to be identified. Just like the mental illnesses that Clérambault spent a lifetime trying to identify, the drapery was complex and affected the body of the patient in a profound way.

This conclusion, we might speculate, can be seen to offer us a new line of interpretation regarding Clérambault's investigation of draperies, complementing our analysis of his interest in its ethnographic value and his interest in its aesthetic qualities and what it might be seen to say about cultures of the past. This is in the sense that it suggests that Clérambault may have been interested in the idea of drapery not just for its ethnographic value, or for its art historical value, but also as a metaphor for mental illness, visually manifesting the process documented in *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* of the seductive power of the veil, but not in a

fetishist way: more, in the manner of the claims made in *L'Érotomanie* and the idea of "mental automatism," as an underlying driving principle behind all mental derangement, as a symbol, in short, of mental illness, and of the process through which the mentally ill patient is subsumed (like the wearer of the cloth) by their condition.

In Clérambault's photography, the subject literally disappears beneath the drapery that covers and de-materializes the body, mirroring the process carefully documented by Clérambault in his analysis of female patients in *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* who are fetishists of the cloth. This leads us to the inevitable conclusion that rather than succumbing to the fixation that he observed in his patients, Clérambault knowingly or perhaps unconsciously created – by using the drapery as a metaphor the mental illness – a visual representation of the effects of mental illness on the body, to in turn decipher the way in which mental illness functions. The suggestion that such a reading complements the analysis developed in the two previous chapters – namely, that Clérambault's interest in the veil derived from a determination to document it for ethnographic and art historical purposes – derives from a sense that in thus presenting the veil as a visual manifestation of mental illness in order to emblemize and explore the process documented in *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme* through which it subsumes its victims is indicative of the sense in which photography, for Clérambault, was a tool through which he sought to try and understand the world around him, and was thus contiguous and complementary to his psychiatric practices, not subordinate to it, or conflicted against it, as has been suggested by those critics who see in these photographs an erotic fixation that parallels what Clérambault observed in the female subjects of *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*.



In Clérambault's second observation in this text, *Patient F*, recalling her early confrontations with textile materials, reflects on her formative experiences of fabrics prior to them becoming the subject of her fetishist fantasies:

I clearly remember that at the age of six, I could not bear the contact with velvet and wool without feeling discomfort; I especially feared velvet. However, I liked silk a lot, I made it the preferred dress of my dolls, a seamstress sister gave me all her silk cut-outs.<sup>406</sup>

*Patient F*'s vivid memories testify to a predilection and fascination for the fabric from a very young age. What is perhaps most of interest here is this sense of simultaneous repulsion and attraction. This is reminiscent of Julia Kristeva's theorisation of abjectness in her 1982 essay *Powers of Horror*. In this essay Kristeva defines the abject as anything that while not being "a definable *object*" might be conceptualized as being "opposed to I".<sup>407</sup> In other words, she suggests that the abject is anything that we "permanently thrust aside in order to live"<sup>408</sup> Abjection is what occurs when the foundations of the ego are removed. Objects that induce states of abjection include "corpses" and "body fluids" – or things that expose the illusory nature of the ego.<sup>409</sup> The abject can therefore be defined as a "primal repression" that enables people to distinguish themselves apart from "fragile states where man strays on the territories of animal."<sup>410</sup> Rosine Jozef Perelberg thus interprets Kristeva's idea of abjection as "the eruption of the real into our lives" – referring to a Lacanian conception of "the Real" as that

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<sup>406</sup> "Je me rappelle très bien qu'à l'âge de six ans, je ne pouvais supporter sans malaises les contacts du velours et de la laine; je craignais surtout le velours. Par contre, j'aimais beaucoup la soie, j'en faisais de préférence l'habillement de mes poupées, une sœur couturière me donnait toutes ses coupures de soie." in Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 45.

<sup>407</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia UP, 1982), 1.

<sup>408</sup> Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3.

<sup>409</sup> Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 3.

<sup>410</sup> Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 12.

which exists outside of the symbolic.<sup>411</sup> As Kristeva puts it, although the object may be understood to be a “primal repression,” it manifests itself as a “pseudo-object that is made up *before* but appears only *within* the gaps of secondary repression.”<sup>412</sup> The experience of abjection, thus, in a sense, takes us back to before the formation of the ego and the intrusion of the Other (or the symbolic order). This sense that the abject takes us back to a non-estranged precondition is seen by Kristeva to explain how the abject both repels and attracts us, as she argues that abjection draws us “toward an elsewhere as tempting as it is condemned.”<sup>413</sup> The idea of something that simultaneously attracts and repels is clearly mirrored in *Patient F*'s vivid memories of her initial encounters with fabric. There is thus a clear sense of fabric as something that is “opposed to I” or as something that we “permanently thrust aside in order to live.”

This, we might argue, solidifies our sense that Clérambault's preoccupation with the haik may be seen to be emblematic of his perceived sense that it functioned as a metaphor for mental illness. In other words, it enables us to recognize that the haik represented something equivalent to an abject entity in that it embodies both attraction and repulsion in its simultaneous capacity to draw attention and conceal, covering up the human, and thus obscuring the human identity as instead what we are left with is veil, shroud, drape.

The haik, we might note, is a garment that wishes to go unnoticed: its whiteness and shapelessness have been designed to blend into the wearer's surroundings. In this way, the haik acts as a sort of invisibility cloak for women and men to walk freely and anonymously through their surroundings. By concealing wandering bodies, the haik is an embodiment of discretion.

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<sup>411</sup> R. Jozef Perelberg, *Murdered Father, Dead Father Revisiting the Oedipus Complex* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2015), 167.

<sup>412</sup> Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 12.

<sup>413</sup> Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, 1.

This idea of the disappearing subject beneath the veil was picked up on by Clérambault during his consultation with his first three patients:

In our three cases, it is clear that fabric does not intervene as a substitute for the masculine body, it does not possess any quality, and it is not charged to evoke it.<sup>414</sup>

In this extract, Clérambault brings forward the idea that silk-fetishism is quite distinct from other forms of fetishism (if it can even be defined as a fetish). According to Freud's definition, the fetish object serves as a direct substitute for the true object of a person's desire.<sup>415</sup> However, according to Clérambault's definition, the fabric is not a substitute for anything – for instance, for "the masculine body" – and it in fact "does not possess any quality." Like an abject entity, the symbolic function of the fabric is that it conceals, and thus that it is outside of the objective world and "opposed to I." This, then, is what renders it both mesmerizing and threatening: it stands outside of the symbolic realm, and in Lacanian terms, represents the intrusion of the Real. In short, the fetish for the silk is self-sufficient as its existence is independent of any other association. It is consequently a very specific perversion which up until then was totally unknown to Clérambault.

In Clérambault's fourth observation, this sense in which the fetishization of fabric takes us into a realm beyond the objective and beyond the ego is rendered explicit. The last case study concerns Maris D., a 49-year-old widow who explains how she got married at the age of 26 for the sole purpose of wearing a silk dress:

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<sup>414</sup> “Dans nos trois cas, il est bien clair que l'étoffe n'intervient pas comme substitut du corps masculin, qu'elle n'en possède aucune qualité et qu'elle n'est pas chargée de l'évoquer” in Clérambault *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 58.

<sup>415</sup> S. Freud, 'Fetishism' in J. Strachey & A. Richards, (eds.), *On Sexuality: three essays on the theory of sexuality and other works* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1977).

I got married to have a beautiful black silk dress that stands on its own. After my wedding, I liked to dress my dolls, I still like it.<sup>416</sup>

Marie D. presents her wedding dress as a dress "that stands on its own."<sup>417</sup> In doing so, the patient anthropomorphizes the dress so that it does not require the support of her body, as it is an individual entity that stands upon its own devices. There is here a total occlusion of the self and extrication of the ego-identity so that what is valorised and fixated upon is a substitute in which the self no longer exists. Although ostensibly a fetish, and certainly bears all the hallmarks of a fetish, the object that is fixated upon is not a substitute for anything, it is rather a substitute in and of itself, signifying the obsolescence of the self and of the ego, in the process transporting us into a liminal space on the edge of madness.

This description given by Marie D. of a dress standing on its own can most certainly be seen to be reminiscent of Clérambault's photographs of the haik. *Untitled [veiled women]* (see Figure 4.7) portrays this instance particularly accurately. The photograph illustrates one of Clérambault's models facing the wall and showing her back. Though barely noticeable through the darkness of the background and the brightness of the haik, the model stands on the geometrical patterned mosaic floor enshrouded in a fabric that has powerful materiality with contrasting tones, folds, and creases, almost rendering the wearer invisible. The whiteness of the drape further accentuates the contrasts between light and shadow creating new forms but also hiding others. The viewer will not ponder on whether there is a body beneath the drapes: the fabric dominates, and the haik stands on its own. Therefore, the body beneath this mass of

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<sup>416</sup> "Je me suis mariée pour avoir une belle robe de soie noire, qui tienne debout. Après mon mariage, j'habillais encore des poupées, j'aime encore cela." in Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 102.

<sup>417</sup> Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 102.

folds and textile material seems to have simply ceased to exist: it has become submerged by the density of the fabric.

Clérambault was not the only psychiatrist to investigate the psychological ramifications of a mental fixation upon the fabric. In 1902 Dr. Paul Dubuisson, at the time head of the clinical asylum of Saint Anne in Paris, published a text entitled *Les Voleuses de grands magasins*, which presented an account of the psychology of those who impulsively stole from department stores. The frenzied shoplifters were, according to Dubuisson, frequently hoarders of fabrics:

Similarly, to all the shoplifters of this category who steal, besides the pleasure of stealing, there is accumulating, Mrs. G. does not steal one sort of object: fabric cut-offs, stockings, booties, which she does not use, and that will pile up in her closets and remain there, unaltered with the tag of the store.<sup>418</sup>

This anonymous shoplifter referred to as Mrs. G. by Dubuisson was also known and cited by Clérambault in his own research on the fetishism of the cloth, although there is no way of knowing whether the two doctors consulted each other's research.<sup>419</sup> In addition to this case, Dubuisson also investigated the repeated thefts that occurred at the Galeries Lafayette in Paris. In his remarks on these shoplifters, he suggests that – like the women photographed by Clérambault wearing the haik whose bodies and identities are concealed and taken away by the fabric – shoplifters similarly lose their sense of self, reason, and morality during the time of the thefts:

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<sup>418</sup> “Comme toutes les voleuses de ce genre pour lesquelles il y a vol, outre le plaisir de voler, celui d’emmagasiner, Mme G. ne vole guère qu’une sorte d’objets : coupon d’étoffes bas, bottines, dont elle ne fait aucun usage et qui vont s’entasser dans ses armoires pour y demeurer tels qu’elle les a pris avec l’étiquette du magasin.” in P. Dubuisson, *Les voleuses de grands magasins* (Lyon: Hachette, 1902), 75.

<sup>419</sup> Clérambault, *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*, 102.

Once immersed in this heady atmosphere of the department store," said a respectable lady from the countryside freshly arrived in Paris whose first outing was a double visit to the Louvre and at the Bon-Marché, "I felt a little overwhelmed by a sentiment of unrest comparable to intoxication, with the carelessness and the excitation that accompanies it. I saw things as if through a cloud, all the objects provoked my desire and became for me an extraordinary appeal. I felt lead to them and I seized them without any foreign and superior consideration intervened to contain me.<sup>420</sup>

This kleptomaniac committed several thefts in various department stores in Paris. Her obsession with acquiring and possessing fabric objects can again be attributed to commodity desire, or it can be argued that Dubuisson's fixation upon it is indicative of his determination to pathologize and medicalize his female subject. Alternatively, we might speculate that her "intoxication," "carelessness," and "excitation" – all "without any foreign and superior consideration" – is indicative of a transcendent sense of a rendering of self-obsolence, as this symbol of concealment and shroudedness takes possession of the patient.

#### **4.10 Anatomy of the cloth**

This suggestion that Clérambault's photographic practice may be seen to have consisted of an attempt to mirror processes observed in his psychiatric practice by capturing visually a sense of the subsumption of the self, a phenomenon observed throughout his psychiatric writings, as

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<sup>420</sup> "Une fois plongée dans cette atmosphère capiteuse du grand magasin', nous disait une très respectable dame de province fraîchement débarquée à Paris et dont la première sortie avait été une double visite au Louvre et au Bon-Marché, je me suis senti peu à peu envahie par un trouble qui ne peut se comparer qu'à l'ivresse, avec l'étourdissement et l'excitation qui lui sont propres. Je voyais des choses comme à travers un nuage, tous les objets provoquaient mon désir et prenaient pour moi un attrait extraordinaire. Je me sentais entraînée vers eux et je m'en emparais sans qu'aucune considération étrangère et supérieure n'intervienne pour me contenir." in Dubuisson, *Les voleuses de grands magasins*, 75.

just seen, is complimented if we at to this observation by noting the influence of Alphonse Bertillon.

Clérambault's interest in photography must first be considered as a technical answer to the quest underlying his research. In his doctoral thesis, Clérambault studied microphotographic images of othematous lesions of patients taken to the laboratory of M. Marce, in charge of microphotography at the Pathological Anatomy Laboratory at the clinical asylum of Saint-Anne.<sup>421</sup> It is also important to mention that Clérambault's office in the Special Infirmary was adjacent to that of the judicial identification service at the Paris Prefecture de Police, where Bertillon pioneered the science of identification through the use of photography in conjunction with both statistical and anthropometric methodology.<sup>422</sup> Furthermore, in his *Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes*, Clérambault explicitly mentions the use of "portrait parlé", borrowing the expression from Bertillon.<sup>423</sup>

The commonly known "Bertillon System" aimed to identify criminals through their unique observable physical characteristics (see Figure 4.8). The system contained two primary parts: the first was the individual card of each criminal, which contained a photographic portrait, anthropometric description, and measurements on a card; the second was the accumulation of the cards into a highly detailed, statistically-based filing system.<sup>424</sup> The information contained on each card was based on accurate, repeatable measurements and would take eleven measurements for each individual, including height, diameter, and width of the head. The

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<sup>421</sup> G. G. de Clérambault, "Contribution à l'étude de l'Othématome (pathogenies, anatomie pathologique et traitemen)" in *Chirurgie des Aliénés recueil de travaux*, Vol. 2 (Paris: Edition Masson, 1903).

<sup>422</sup> S. Kember, "Face Re-cognition" in G. McDonald, *Photoworks*, no. 17 (2011), 52.

<sup>423</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>424</sup> A. Sekula, "The Body and the Archive" in *October*, Vol. 39 (Winter 1986): 3-64.

measurements were accompanied by two photographs – frontal and profile – called the "portrait parlé" (speaking likeness). While Bertillon used this terminology to identify this type of photographic imagery, this style of the image became colloquially known as the "mug shot."<sup>425</sup>

The photographs initially only played a secondary role in Bertillon's classification process, they were an attempt to resolve the limitations of a system that was purely visual or purely word-based.<sup>426</sup> These photographs were accompanied by detailed descriptions of a given individual's characteristics and any other unique features that they might be seen to have.<sup>427</sup> Bertillon was critical of the inconsistent photography and argued at length for an aesthetically neutral standard of representation:

In commercial and artistic portraits, questions of fashion and taste are all important. Judicial photography, liberated from these considerations, allows us to look at the problem from a simpler point of view: which pose is theoretically the best for such and such case?<sup>428</sup>

By 1890, with a file containing over 80,000 photographs, identification, by comparison, became impossible, leading to the creation of tables composed of series of details focusing on various parts of the face. One can easily imagine that this service allowed Clérambault to become familiar with these technical possibilities and various applications of the medium of photography.

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<sup>425</sup> B. Wood, "Photo Mortis: Resurrecting Photographs of Crime and Death" in *Art Papers* 24, no. 2 (2000): 18-24.

<sup>426</sup> A. Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 18.

<sup>427</sup> A. Bertillon, *Alphonse Bertillon's Instructions for Taking Descriptions of the identification of criminals and Others by the means of anthropometric indications* (New York: AMS Press, Inc. 1977).

<sup>428</sup> A. Bertillon, *La photographie judiciaire* (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1890), 2.



This sense that Clérambault's photographic practice may have been shaped by Bertillon unlocks a key dimension to his work, reinforcing the sense that for Clérambault, the function of photography was ultimately to *document*. Much like Bertillon, Clérambault initially manifested a purely functional requirement for his photographs by producing a document that would exemplify his writing on the drapery, and that would be more accurate than his sketches. While this is not true for every photographic documentation of the drapery, Clérambault also produced images of a neutral setting that was meant to be seen in a series. By referring to Bertillon's "portrait parlé," Clérambault referred to the conciseness of the information that he relayed through his photographs of drapery. Again, there is a clear sense in which Clérambault's photographic efforts may be seen to have been shaped by his psychiatric practice, indicating that rather than succumbing to the fixations that Clérambault observed in his patients, his photographic practice was born out of the same impulse to document that drove his psychiatric professional practice.

In his text, *L'érotomanie* Clérambault developed a theory concerning the phenomenon of a patient who is deluded into believing that an individual with higher social status is in love with them. In this text, he hypothesizes that the "passionate delirium" of the sufferer of Erotomania<sup>429</sup> is held in place by what he terms the "postulate", or the belief that sustains the fantasy ' leading him to argue: "if you remove what I have called the postulate in passionate delirium, then all the delirium falls."<sup>430</sup> In other words, what Clérambault termed the

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<sup>429</sup> "Nous appelons Délire Passionels, tous les delires qui ont pour base une emotions prolongée, a forme de désir ou de colère, quels qu'en soient le thème ou l'occasion. Toute conviction émue peut servir de noyau à un Délire Passionel ; sentiment de priorité, sentiment théorique de la justice, amour maternel, religiosité sous toutes ses formes, etc." in Clérambault, *L'Érotomanie*, 199.

<sup>430</sup> "Les premières et les principales des convictions de l'érotomane sont obtenues par déduction du postulat. On n'observe rien d'équivalent chez l'interpréteur [...] Supprimez du délire d'un interpréteur telle conviction qui vous semble la plus importante, supprimez-en

“postulate” designated the driving principle which was at the origin of a patient’s passion: the catalyst of the delusional belief that one is loved by an inaccessible person, while Clérambault maintained that if the postulate is broken, the passionate delirium stops. In his study of Clérambault’s work, *Le maître des insensés, Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault*, Alain Rubens notes that in theorizing about the locus of Erotomania in this way, Clérambault follows a general pattern discernible throughout his writing of attempting to in a taxonomical fashion identify the characteristics of a given structure, and to determine the driving engine at the heart of it. Rubens writes:

It is the obstinate and determined quest for the structure [...] Erotomania, mental automatism, the drape. The pillars of Clérambaultian research. All three are tied up at a fixed point. Erotomania is deduced from the infrangible postulate, the mental automatism is activated by the small mental automatism, the drape stem from the position of the hinging point.<sup>431</sup>

It is this determination, we might argue, to *get to the bottom*: to meticulously document with a view to uncovering the underlying driving force, that explains the relationship between the three dimensions explored in this thesis that explain in greater detail the discursive influences that worked upon Clérambault: namely, the ethnographic, the art historical and the psychiatric. In each instance, there is a desire to carefully observe and document in order to arrive at a "fixed point." In addition to this, in this chapter, it has been proposed that in seeking to

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même un grand nombre, vous aurez percé un réseau, vous n’aurez pas rompu les chaînes, réseau persistera immense et d’autres mailles se referont d’elles-mêmes. Supprimez, au contraire, dans le délire du passionnel cette seule idée que j’ai appelé postulat, tout le délire tombe.” in Clérambault, *Œuvres psychiatriques*, 343.

<sup>431</sup> “C’est pas quête obstinée, acharner de la structure [...] L’erotomanie, l’Automatisme mental, le drapé. Les piliers de la recherche clérambaultienne. Tous trois sont arrimés à un point fixe. L’erotomanie se déduit de l’infrangible Postulat, l’Automatisme mental est activé par le petit Automatisme mental, le drapé découle de la position du point d’appui.” in Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 51.

document the drapery, the driving force that is suggested by Clérambault's professional background as a psychiatrist is a sense that the veil functioned as a kind of metaphor for mental illness, in particular for the way in which its victims are subsumed by it, and lose their identity amidst its folds. Just as this sense of self-erasure is at the heart of his analysis of the patients, he writes about who develop fixations upon fabrics, so does Clérambault's own photographic practice exhibit a preoccupation with this motif. Interestingly, his theorization suggests that in his view at least, this is the by-product not of a fetish – with fabrics functioning as a substitute for an ulterior desire – but rather it is the result of the simultaneous fascination and repulsion of that which signifies the obsolescence or concealment of self, and that thus resides in a liminal space adjacent to madness.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

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As Serge Tisseron so correctly points out, “Clérambault’s entire oeuvre is forged on the gaze and the pleasure [...] He is the meticulous inquisitor of others’ pleasures”. For Clérambault, everything was centred on the gaze, from his analysis of his medical patients to his scrutiny of the drapery.<sup>432</sup> Even in his death – suicide posed in front of a mirror – we see a preoccupation with the subject of the gaze. Elizabeth Renard argued that the darkly manner of his suicide was not coincidental but truly an outcome of his inability to proceed without being able to practice his life work, owing to blindness. Clérambault confided in his friend M. V. in 1919: “How, you believe that suicide is always an act of madness [...] here is an example: I, who only live for my work and who loves art, would become blind! I would be left with nothing; I commit suicide, would I be insane?”<sup>433</sup>

By January 1934, Clérambault was feeling insurmountable pressure. His worst fear had become a reality. He had cataracts: his vision was slowly disappearing, and he was at risk of becoming blind.<sup>434</sup> Professor Ignacio Barraquer, a renowned ophthalmologist and director of a private clinic in Barcelona, created a revolutionary method to treat cataracts, operated on Clérambault. After double cataract surgery, Clérambault returned to Paris with most of his sight recovered. Unfortunately, the success of the operation was short-lived as post-operation ailments lingered.

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<sup>432</sup> “Tout l’œuvre de Clérambault est tissé à partir du regard et de la jouissance [...] Il est l’inquisiteur minutieux des jouissances d’autrui.” in Papetti, Valier, De freminville and Tisseron, *La passion des étoffes chez un neuro-psychiatre. Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault*, np.

<sup>433</sup> “Comment, vous croyez que le suicide est toujours un acte de folie [...] mais voici un exemple: moi qui ne vis que pour le travail et qui aime l’art, je deviens aveugle! Il ne me reste rien; je me suicide, serais-je un aliéné?” in Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 74.

<sup>434</sup> Biographical account written by the Clérambault and published posthumously: G. G. de Clérambault, *Souvenirs d’un Médecin Opéré de la Cataracte* (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1992).

A blurred cast prevented Clérambault from effectively seeing distances, causing him to miss the sidewalk more than once. Simultaneously, his perception of colour was limited to a blue palette, and his view of the world was limited to geometric forms. His right eye seemed only to perceive diamond shapes, whereas the left projected squares. Clérambault, who used to take delight in observing the movement of drapery – creating thousands of various and harmonious folds – was left with a depthless view of the world. Fearing that his diminished health was linked to cancer, but also certainly in search for sympathy, Clérambault wrote to his friend Professor Barraquer:

I am bedridden and bilateral irradiation has made me think of the worst diagnosis for some time now [...] I write this to you as a wish to get closer to you and to help myself confront the depressing conditions of discomfort, of inaction, and of uselessness in which I see myself reduced to for a time that will not be short.<sup>435</sup>

For the first time since his entry into the establishment, Clérambault was no longer in charge of Paris's special infirmary: he was, in fact, title-less, leaving the once master psychiatrist feeling completely powerless and useless. By summer, his health had somewhat improved. Clérambault was able to resume his activities at the infirmary but with very limited mobility. Any position was insurmountable for the psychiatrist: he suffered when standing, he suffered when sitting, and only his pillowed filled coach seemed to calm his misery. Despite the virtuosity of Professor Barraquer and despite the remission of the summer, Clérambault's sight deteriorated further.<sup>436</sup> With immense efforts, aided by his renowned stubbornness and his passion for his work, Clérambault managed to assume his service's direction until the beginning

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<sup>435</sup> “Je suis alité et pendant quelque temps des irradiations bilatérales diverses m’ont fait envisager le pire diagnostic... Je vous écris tout ceci pour le plaisir de me rapprocher de vous et pour m’aider moi-même à me reconforter dans les conditions déprimantes de malaises, d’inaction et d’inutilité où je me vois réduit pour un temps qui ne peut être court.” in Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 265.

<sup>436</sup> Clérambault, *Souvenirs d’un médecin opéré de la cataracte*, 7-43.

of November. Reading became an overwhelming exercise; writing was almost worse, as he would lose the thread of his sentence, and getting back on track was a tremendous struggle. One day, after spent several hours overwriting and correcting much of his previous work, he desperately confessed to his secretary: "I am a done man, Mrs. Minard."<sup>437</sup> He perhaps was not exactly done just yet, however. Clérambault used his remaining energy to classify, sort, and organize his papers, innumerable notes, and numerous documents, assembled to create his treatise on the drapery. Around this time, he started to worry and inquire about the conservation of his research. He confessed to Ms. Hartmann, an employee at the Musée de L'Homme in Paris, to which Clérambault later gifted his research: "It is sad not have a family or someone who can preserve what we leave behind... What are the measures to take to prevent dispersion?"<sup>438</sup>

The day before his death, Clérambault held a clinical lecture at the Special Infirmary. It was the first lecture of the year, and the school forgot to hang the posters announcing the classes' resumption. The news has warned nobody; Clérambault's lecture hall was almost empty. The following day, in the last concern, to transmit his whole body of work – which was likely to disappear with him – he wrote in his will: "I am punished more than any other by the loss of the results of my work. The documents collected during 40 years will be dispersed [...] it would, however, be preferable if my ethnographic photographs (more than 4000) were deposited at the Trocadero Museum or at the Société des Africanistes (Muséum), or sold to an art publishing company."<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>437</sup> Rubens, *Le maître des insensés: Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, [1872-1934]*, 280.

<sup>438</sup> "C'est triste de ne pas avoir de famille, ou quelqu'un qui puisse préserver ce qu'on laisse derrière soi... Quelles mesures prendre pour en empêcher la dispersion?" Renard, *Le docteur Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault: sa vie et son oeuvre (1872-1934)*, 78.

<sup>439</sup> "Je suis punis plus que tout autre par la perte des résultats de tout mon labeur. Les documents amassés pendant 40 ans seront dispersés [...]. Il serait cependant souhaiter que mes clichés ethnographiques (plus de 4000) fussent déposés au Musée du Trocadéro ou à la Société des

## 5.2 Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, the aim has been to situate Clérambault's photographic images taken in Morocco in 1919 within a broader discursive context – namely in the context of Orientalist discourse, drapery and art history, and in the context of 20<sup>th</sup> century psychiatry – in order to demonstrate why this corpus and its creator deserves greater recognition, and why the assumption that his photographs of draperies as the by-product of a mere fetish or the eroticized depiction of Middle Eastern women is questionable. In order to do this, I have made extensive use of existing archives – most notably that of the Musée du Quai Branly- Jacques Chirac for Clérambault's photographs and that of the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle for Clérambault's writings and collectibles – to develop a clear account of the discursive influences that worked their way on Clérambault. I have been able to articulate a sense of Clérambault's intentions, through an exploration of numerous archival documents and an interrogation of those documents alongside the photographs. By analysing the images within the context of Orientalism, art history, and psychiatry, we have seen that Clérambault, very much a man of his time, considered the medium of photography as a means of documenting the haik.

I argue that Clérambault's photographs are both instruments and documentations of his investigation into the North African haik. They are instruments because they embody the thinking of his clinical practice (systematic documentation and classification), and they are also its results. The photographs are the documentation of a disappearing art Clérambault wished to record, remember and relay to artists as well as ethnographers. The ability to freeze the movements in revolution, made photography the ideal medium to record and the interpretate the various declination of this drapery. In the body of photographs, the haik is turned into

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Africanistes (Muséum), ou vendus à une société d'édition d'art" in Rubens, *Le maître des insensés : Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, 1872-1934*, 281.

images and these images are in turn transformed into language of which Clérambault was the translator.

This thesis has developed multiple possible explanations for Clérambault's interest in draperies. To begin with, we have seen how the photographs could be interpreted as documents for Clérambault to help illustrate his teaching on the subject of drapery. In this context, the photographs can be interpreted as visual support for lectures, in the same way, that living models and mannequins had been for others teaching similar subjects within the core domain of art history. From this perspective, it is the function that takes precedence and explains the objective behind the photography.

In Chapter Two, I examined Clérambault's photography as ethnographic testimonies. Clérambault documented the Moroccan haik in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by photographing the way in which it was assembled on the body, with his photographic series, in particular, enabling the viewer to gain a greater appreciation of the different stages of arrangement of the garment. Interpreting the photographs as efforts to record ritualistic gestures and practices of a given culture, we are thus able to situate Clérambault's photographic practice within a wider colonialist ethnographic tradition as an attempt to document, record and in turn, preserve the traditions of a disappearing way of life. Another possible explanation for Clérambault's interest in the drapery proposed is that it is expressive of Clérambault's interest in art history, particularly in drapery fashion as a long-standing cultural tradition with a vast cultural legacy. In this way, the photographs have been interpreted as an attempt to testify to the aesthetic value of the drapery and the living history of an ancient tradition, of interest for their art historical value. Clearly, this thesis has unearthed many different alternative interpretations of Clérambault's interest in the drapery. The perspective we choose to adopt or to privilege is inevitably bound to reflect, on some level, our priorities and our preferred critical approach.



Looking back on these different visions, this concluding chapter will situate them in relation to the knowledge acquired throughout this research.

This concluding section will reflect on the position adopted in this thesis, reiterating its core arguments and refreshing our memory of the interpretative framework adopted to negotiate our way through these different possible readings and establish an overarching critique of Clérambault's work. It will begin by refreshing our memory of how Clérambault's photographs have traditionally been interpreted – in particular returning to the idea that his interest in the veil is a product of a fetish on his part – before outlining once again the core claims of this thesis: namely that instead of seeing Clérambault as a fetishist who succumbed to fixations that he elsewhere observed, we might view his interest in the veil as the by-product of a determination (also characteristic of his psychiatric work) to locate the governing principle behind the observed matter. Thus, the claim will be restated that Clérambault – under the influences of discourses within the domain of ethnography, art history, and psychiatry – sought to document the veil as part of a wider project to document and understand the world around him, in a manner *continuous* with and *complementary* to his psychiatric work, but not in a manner that should be considered secondary to this. Rather, we will run over the argument once again that Clérambault's photography and psychiatry were two parts of a broader unified whole, or a *method* even, that in a sense superseded the subject matter: namely, the project of documentation, which was at once ethnographic, art historical and scientific.

Having reiterated this summative line of argument, this conclusion will move on to consider an altogether different line of inquiry that may be seen to be borne out of these claims. In particular, the question that will be asked is: does that fact that Clérambault's photographs can be interpreted as part of a broader discursive interest in documenting the veil – in line with

Clérambault's ethnographic, art, historical and scientific interests – limit our ability to view his photographs as works of art? In order to answer this question, this section will begin by offering an overview of how archivists and curators have preserved Clérambault's photographs over the years, and how, following an initial tendency to archive his photographs as historical documents, they have come to be recognized as works of art. The question of whether this is sufficient and whether we are still able to appreciate the aesthetic value of these images, given the line of argument developed in this thesis, will then be asked. Drawing on Clérambault's own remarks, but also offering my own interpretation of the images – it will be argued that far from the attempt to situate Clérambault's photographs within a broader discursive context discrediting them as works of art – this process actually helps us to understand the cause of their artistic merit better.

### **5.3 Clérambault's passion for drapery?**

Soon after the rediscovery of Clérambault's photographs and the exhibition at the 1990 BPI in Beaubourg, the critical consensus on Clérambault tended to be grounded upon a supposed link between the photographs and Clérambault's 1908 *Passion érotique des étoffes chez la femme*. It is probable that in order to present the photographs in a more appealing way to the public, the body of work was divorced from its original purpose as “testimony” or “document” in favour of the narrative of unveiling a long-lost and secret body of work, reflecting the Orientalist and fetishist predilections of its maker. This would further explain the decision not to fully acknowledge Clérambault's writing on the subject of drapery culture – as instead, the focus is upon the more salacious psychiatric text – in spite of the fact that Clérambault's writing on the subject of drapery culture clearly has firm connections to his interest in photographing the haik and was part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century discourse. Whatever the cause, the reading of these images has clearly been nourished by the mythology surrounding Clérambault that has perhaps

prevented critics from developing a more nuanced reading of his photography. Serge Tisseron in particular has noted that Clérambault's personality gave rise to the edification of a sort of legend: "a legend to which his suicide added a touch of scandal inclined to ignite the imagination."<sup>440</sup> Clérambault's mysterious death, his hidden photography, the draped mannequins, and the abundance of fabrics in his home have all enabled critics to make assumptions about his fetishes and perversions, on the basis of a series of fragile suppositions.

Of course, it is important to recognise that Clérambault's interest in drapery did border on obsession. As we have seen, he developed an encyclopaedic knowledge on the subject: from its varying forms according to geographic location, to ways of assembling the veil, to the variety of finished effects. However, I argue that it is reasonable to claim that this "obsession" was very likely more that of a researcher fascinated by his subject and intent on making a mark on the world than it was that of a fetishist, which claim is reinforced in the widespread rumours concerning Clérambault's passion for cloth and his apparent desires to unveil the Moroccan bodies hidden beneath the haik. For sure, sensual and erotic allusions abound throughout Clérambault's photography – as do fantastic otherworldly presences and ghostly silhouettes – and yet, to always insist on interpreting his photography as being simply a reflection of his *Passion érotique chez la femme* is, I argue, far too limited in its explicatory power when we take into account what we know about Clérambault's life, writing, and career.

#### **5.4 The interconnection between psychiatric and photography**

Clérambault was not so much a fetishist who succumbed to the fixations he observed, than he was someone whose interest in photography reflected the professional preoccupations that

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<sup>440</sup> "Une légende à laquelle son suicide viendra ajouter la note de scandale propre à enflammer des imagination." in Tisseron, *Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault, Psychiatre et Photographe*, 8.

absorbed him as an alienist. We might now explore in greater detail, and once more remind ourselves, of the line of argument developed in this thesis regarding how Clérambault's psychiatric work and his photography can be seen to have been indivisible, or one and the same.

In his native town of Bourges, as well as in Malakoff, Clérambault's commemorative plaques describe him as a "psychiatrist and photographer." Contrary to Philippe Pignarre's belief in the existing "impermeability" between Clérambault's different practices, this thesis has demonstrated that, in fact, the opposite is true. It would be just as possible, and similarly reductive, for example, to claim that the gaze of the photographer can be found in Clérambault's psychiatric writings and that his scientific approach is reflected in his photographic images. As for the question of Clérambault's attitude towards drapery, I have argued that it can be understood to have functioned as space, or as a metaphor even, that enabled Clérambault to work out and articulate his thoughts about his practice as a whole. In his written descriptions of the forms of visual hallucinations caused by toxic delirium, for instance, Clérambault used textile imagery to describe his thought. In another example of this same tendency, in order to illustrate the idea that chloral addicts often live between lucidity and drowsiness, Clérambault used the images of a veil that encompasses the spirit and "whose play of folds makes the transparency uneven" as a means of illustration.<sup>441</sup> Danielle Arnoux has brought to light these analogies in Clérambault's vocabulary and the similarities in the method and the analysis of the structure, particularly when studying the automatic mechanisms that generate psychosis.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> "Dont le jeu des plis rend la transparence inégale." in G. G. de Clérambault, "Chloral" in *Œuvre psychiatrique*, 204.

<sup>442</sup> D. Arnoux, "Analytique du drapé. Les photographies de Clérambault," in *Revue du Littoral*, no. 41 (Novembre 1994):151-167.

The investigation in Clérambault's psychiatric training and analysis of both the *Passion* and the phenomenon of *Erotomania* identified by Clérambault may also be seen to offer some insight into Clérambault's photographic practice. Erotomania, let us remind ourselves, is based on what Clérambault named the "postulate," the principal motor that is the origin of the development of delirium. With the lack of a postulate, Clérambault argued that there is no manifestation of delirium. Thus, the concept of Erotomania demonstrates that the starting point of a psychosis lies in the "automatism phenomena": a simple neurological disorder that stimulates certain areas of the brain. This initial disorder of thought and language is neutral, that is to say that it does not affect the patient emotionally. This is something that has been outlined by Danielle Arnoux:

The initial postulate of Erotomania is the generating fulcrum of the syndrome. The phenomenon of automatism also presents these initial characters and is the generator of delirium, which complicities it and is annexed to it.<sup>443</sup>

This approach to theorizing about psychiatry can be compared to the thought process Clérambault used in his studies of drapery culture that he defined by "diagram of construction." The classification of the drapery was made according to the main "point d'appuis" (fulcrum), with the "movement générateur" (generating movement) starting from this point. The parallel determination to find a singular starting point from which the overarching phenomena can be explained within both psychiatry and drapery domains is clearly striking.

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<sup>443</sup> "Le postulat initial de l'érotomanie est un point d'appuis générateur du syndrome. Le phénomène d'automatisme présente aussi ces caractères initial (et comme tel anidémique) et générateur du délire qui le complexifie et s'y annexe." in Danielle Arnoux, "Analytique du drapé. Les photographies de Clérambault," in *Revue du Littoral*, 154.

Clérambault, in other words, approached the subject of studying various forms of drapery in the same manner as he approached the subject of studying various forms of patient and mental illness. There was a real correspondence and fluidity between his studies that led him to explore new territories and, in turn, discover unprecedented new concepts. Proof of the interrelatedness between these disciplines and Clérambault's approach can be found by considering the manner in which he frequently integrated his interest in drapery into his psychiatric practice. For example, in *Du Tissage comme mode de travail pour les maladies (Weaving as healing for illnesses)*, Clérambault developed the idea that weaving "by its gentle movements, by the ease of interrupting and resuming, accelerating and slowing down, by its simplicity or its variety, by its intrinsic interest"<sup>444</sup> could be practiced by his alienated patients as an active mechanotherapy or simply as a stimulating and artistic activity. This article, written ten years after his return from Morocco, shows Clérambault's interest in the drapery's mechanical aspect was intertwined with his interest in psychiatry.

However, as was argued in the introduction to this study, it would be a mistake to read Clérambault's photography as merely a tool or as a means of illustrating his psychiatric practice. The integrated-ness between these two disciplines, the way in which both interests were driven by a comparable determination to determine a universal principle behind them, and the sense in which he used the respective disciplines to reflect on one another and to help him understand how they functioned, all of this suggests that for Clérambault photography and psychiatry were not distinct lines of inquiry, but rather intimately connected components within a broader mode of inquiry. This, in turn, might encourage us to resist seeing Clérambault's

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<sup>444</sup> "Par ses mouvements doux, par la facilité d'interrompre et de reprendre, d'accélérer ou de ralentir, par sa simplicité ou par sa variété, par son intérêt intrinsèque." in Clérambault, *Œuvre psychiatrique*, 818-820.

photography as secondary to his interest in psychiatry and to question any inclination to privilege the latter over the former.

### 5.5 From historical documents to works of art

Having now reiterated the core claim behind this thesis that Clérambault's photographs are best understood not as the work of a fetishist, but as the expression of an individual who, as an ethnographer, as an art historian, and as a psychiatrist was interested in the process of *documentation*, I now move on to reflect on this conclusion by asking a broader question: namely, does that fact that Clérambault's photographs can be interpreted as part of a broader discursive interest in documenting the veil limit our ability to view his photographs as works of art? In order to answer this question, this section will begin by offering an overview of how archivists and curators have preserved Clérambault's photographs over the years, and how, following an initial tendency to archive his photographs as historical documents, they have come to be recognized as works of art.

A significant portion of Clérambault's photography was initially entrusted to the government, and then later to the Musée de l'Homme in 1938, before it ultimately joined the Museum of the Museum Quay Branly, Jacques Chirac. In a letter dated the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 1924, the French department of public instruction and the Beaux-Arts acknowledged Clérambault's donation of one thousand one hundred and twelve photographs. They announced their decision only to keep 530 images for their archive.<sup>445</sup> No further information regarding the selection process or the reasons for discarding or conserving select images was given.<sup>446</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> Only a portion of the photographs made it to the Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, the rest are, to the best of my knowledge, lost or yet to be found.

<sup>446</sup> "Correspondance reçue par Clérambault," 2AP3, Box 2, Folder A, Papiers Clérambault (1872-1934), Muséum d'Histoire naturelle, Paris.

The Minister for the Arts was the first benefactor of Clérambault's photography collection, which in turn gifted it to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro. By bequeathing his photographic collection to a public institution, Clérambault ensured the longevity of his research and of his photographs. It is the Musée du Trocadéro, which later became the Musée de l'Homme, who inherited Clérambault's photographic work. Since 2006, his photographic body of work on the haik has been in the Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac archive. The old collections of the Musée d'Éthnographie du Trocadéro were then reorganized for an opening of the museum in 1937. From this point on, Clérambault's photographs were organized according to their role and purpose. The inventory system implemented by Yvonne Oddon followed a classification favouring geographical area, ethnographic themes, and moments of social life, often omitting the author and the date of creation in the process. Many original photographs taken by Clérambault were neglected in favour of more recent prints produced by the laboratory of the Musée de l'Homme. The images were then fixed on cardboard, which would later be numbered as well as geographically and thematically referenced. These photographic index cards were stored in the museum's main room, and their content was open to the public. Anyone could consult, compare but also replicate these images. Clérambault's photographs were filed under the category entitled "*types et vêtements*" or "styles and garments" but also under "Maroc" or "Morocco." This brief history indicates how Clérambault's photographs – and photographs of this nature, in general (specifically documentary and ethnographic photography) – were preserved and archived in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>447</sup> The classification of the photo library of the Musée d'Éthnographie du

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<sup>447</sup> J. Binney and G. Chaplin, "Taking the photographs home: the recovery of a Maori history," *Visual Anthropology*, no. 4 (1991): 431-442.; G. Porter, "The Economy of Truth: Photographs in Museums," *Ten- 8*, no. 34 (1989): 20-33.; M. Banks and H. Morphy, eds., *Rethinking Visual Anthropology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).; R. Poignant, "About Friendship: About Trade: About Photography," *Voices*, no. 4 (1994): 44-71.



Trocadéro also highlights the devotion to the culture being documented and the information to be found within the image rather than the artistic merit of the photograph or the wider oeuvre to which it belongs. Thus, in the case of Clérambault's photographs, it is the subject and its geography – the Moroccan drape – were what was foregrounded.

This was all to change in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The cultural legitimacy of the medium of photography may in many ways be seen to date to the 1970s.<sup>448</sup> In this period, photography progressively shifted from the archive to cultural institutions and art museums. At the beginning of the 1990s, the photographic library of the Musée de l'Homme took drastic measures to evaluate the state of their collection and improve its condition of preservation. This was certainly also because some works were to be moved to other museums, like the Quai Branly in the case of Clérambault's photographs. A procedure was implemented to protect rare pieces and old photographs threatened by the negligence of researchers who viewed the images as simple documents. The museums called upon the assistance of photography conservators, Giulia Cucinella Briant, on two separate occasions, on the restoration of Clérambault's prints. The restoration revealed a change of attitude towards these photographs. Suddenly, there was an increased awareness of the photographic object's fragility, rarity, artistic merit, and, consequently, its heritage. Reflecting this new devotion to photography as an art form, the photographic library collection was sorted around the creator of the photographs rather than its content's geographic location. This may be seen to reflect a sense in which photography is now seen as the result of an individual's creative process and a subjective viewpoint and approach, rather than as a neutral medium that captures images with objectivity and accuracy.

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<sup>448</sup> D. Bate, *Photography: The key concepts*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2009).

We might now ask ourselves, then, is this sufficient if we are to try and recognize the art historical importance of Clérambault's photographs, especially given the line of argument developed in this thesis? In other words: if we are to hold that Clérambault's photographs are of interest not as the works of a fetishist but as the works of an individual interested in documenting in precise detail the world around him in the manner of an ethnographer, an art historian and a professional scientist, then does this counteract the recent effort to re-establish Clérambault's photographs as the works of an artist?

### **5.6 Are Clérambault's photographs art-historically useful?**

As we have seen, Clérambault's drapery study project was driven by an ethnographic and scientific desire to document with precision the attributes of the haik. The photographs may be seen to have been part of this discourse. However, suppose these images are not the result of a clearly announced artistic project, but rather may be seen to reflect Clérambault's preoccupations as an Orientalist, as an art historian, and as a psychiatrist, a question we might ask ourselves is: should we still refrain from noticing their formal qualities? In other words, does their broader discursive function invalidate their utility when studied as works of art?

I have argued that recognising the ways in which they can be seen to reflect and embody other related discourses does not invalidate them in this way or suggest that they should be excluded from the aesthetic field. The art historical significance of Clérambault's photographs is, heightened by the attentiveness that arises as a consequence of his ethnographic, art, historical and scientific approach. The qualities of composition, the framing, the mastery of the printing, the balance, the contract between the purity of his images and the drapery's expressive force – each of these formal qualities may be viewed as the result of the meticulousness of Clérambault's approach, and in this sense related to his broader intentions as an ethnographer,

as an art historian, and as a scientist – and yet far from diminishing the status of these photographs as works of art, the effect is to heighten their status as artworks of interest for their uniqueness.

Clérambault photographed a subject that fascinated him, which inspired him and pushed him as a photographer to go to greater length to capture the qualities of the subject matter that interested him. During his inaugural lecture at the Beaux-Arts, Clérambault recognized that his photographs had fixed "the contests of lines, the movements of surfaces, the interior paths of a translucent fabric, the fluidities of a fabric in lighting."<sup>449</sup> We have seen that his keen sense of observation was frequently noted in the context of his psychiatric work in the special infirmary. Clérambault's many sketches show an exaggerated attentiveness to the structure of things and an ability to record and capture these qualities. He wanted his photographs to capture the qualities of textures, effects, and arrangement that he noted and contribute to enhancing the viewer's understanding of drapery culture. He was not, in short, motivated by self-expression but by the desire of an ethnographer, an art historian, and a scientist to capture a form.

At the same time, however, it is important to acknowledge that Clérambault probably did not consider his images to belong within the art domain. They entered the sphere of the Beaux-Arts as documents. Clérambault saw photography at best as "the servant of the arts and sciences, but the very humble servant", to quote Baudelaire.<sup>450</sup> Clérambault himself claimed similarly: "it is important for draperies that their extinction does not take place before the complete recording and analysis of their structures, [...] that could later not be drawn from the

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<sup>449</sup> "Les concours de lignes, les mouvements de surfaces, les trajets intérieurs d'une étoffe translucide, les fluidités d'un tissu dans des partis-pris d'éclairage." in "Conférence sur le drapé Arabe à l'École des Beaux-Arts," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>450</sup> "La servante des arts et des sciences, mais la très humbles servant." in Charles Baudelaire, "*Salon de 1859*," *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Michel Levy frères, 1868), 261.

sole examination of their images."<sup>451</sup> However, at the same time, while Clérambault may have considered photography a subordinate art form but this is not to say that he did not recognize the artistic merit in works of photography. By first and foremost gifting his photographs to the Ministry of Fine Art, Clérambault clearly indicated that he attributed an aesthetic value to his photographs and given his artistic training, his photography was informed by artistic practices as much as medical documentary practices of psychiatrists such as Charcot and Bertillon.

For several decades now, postcolonial studies have been challenging the shape of art history, however, today's generation is looking for radical changes in the ways academia and cultural intuitions transmit "collective cultural heritage".<sup>452</sup> As Catherine Grant and Dorothy Price pointed out in the context of the UK, the backdrop of Brexit, the rise of nationalism and xenophobia the topic of "Decolonizing Art History" is more relevant than ever.<sup>453</sup> With this in mind, we ask ourselves, how might we decolonize Clérambault's work?

To begin, it is necessary to make the "invisibility" of the photographic legacy of the colonial past in museums visible.<sup>454</sup> As presented by Elizabeth Edwards and Matt Mead in their article "Absent Histories and Absent Images", there is a lack of photographic representations of colonial past – like Clérambault's images – in public institutions and academic curriculum. They argued that it is exactly those representations of colonial past that will offer a way into a more collective history. That being said, engaging with these images should be done with

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<sup>451</sup>"Il importe pour les drapés, que leur extinction n'ait pas lieu sans que des images très complètes en aient été prises sans que leur structure ait été analysée [...] que plus tard on ne pourrait tirer du seul examen de leurs images." in "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).

<sup>452</sup> C. Grant and D. Price, "Decolonizing Art History", *Art history*, vol. 43 (January 2020): 8.

<sup>453</sup> C. Grant and D. Price, "Decolonizing Art History", 9.

<sup>454</sup> E. Edwards and M. Mead, "Absent Histories and Absent Images: Photographs, Museums and the Colonial Past", *Museum & Society*, vol. 11, (2013): 19.

caution and critical engagement. Though Clérambault's images have been part of several exhibitions since their rediscovery in 1990, they have never been exhibited or taught within their multidisciplinary contexts.

The nature of Clérambault's status as a French psychiatrist and "man of the state" certainly led to many false interpretations of his photographs, as we have already established. Clérambault's colonial attitude towards the systematic documentation, and recording of the haik – a practice about to disappear – was a practice of his time, and earned him colonial, ethnographic and artistic recognition. Yet, when looking closely at the images, purely as images – not through the actions, agency, and intent of their author – we start to notice how they defy both the intentions of the photographer and those of colonial forces. This can be seen in many of Clérambault's serial works but is most prominently evident in figures 3.1.1 to 3.1.3. The series of photographs created for the purpose of illustrating the evolution of the haik *redda* on the body but also as a comparative and an identification tool, offering an array of various exposure (over and under), textures, and frames of the model. The psychiatrist, had to our knowledge no formal training in photography, which can certainly explain his lack of control in the medium resulting in a less meticulous documentation of the Moroccan garment, as he would have probably wished.

Clérambault's photographs much like any colonial photographs should not only be present in public collections, it should be an integral part of the permanent display in museum galleries but also an unmissable section in the art-history curriculum so as that to represent a fuller and more accurate understanding of "our collective heritage". Exhibited and studied in their rightful histories and contexts of creation, Clérambault's corpus would be an interesting addition, and would provide a great comparison to the government commissioned colonial photographs or

orientalist studio photographs taken in North Africa. They represent the independent study of an amateur photographer, recording the disappearing tradition of wearing the haik in Morocco due to modernisation, caused by colonialism. Similarly, the corpus of images aptly demonstrates that even within a rigorous, scientific-based research, photographs can defy the intent of their creator.

### **5.7 Final Thoughts**

This thesis does not claim to have cleared up the mystery behind the myth that remains of Clérambault's personality. The intricacies of his persona would probably require a thesis in its own right, and to embark upon such a project would have led us down the wrong path in the study of his Moroccan photographs. And though this project is suffused with and anchored by biographical detail, I do not argue that the work is reducible to his biography.

Clearly, the legend of Clérambault has given rise to multiple publications in which a fixation upon suppositions regarding the alienist personality clouds the judgment of the photographic work. Against this, this thesis had advanced from the contention that it is necessary to place the corpus of images within the context of the history of art and photography, as well as in the context of the related discursive fields of Orientalism, and in the context of Clérambault's own psychiatric practice. Thus, the decision not to focus on Clérambault but rather upon the discursive influences that shaped him as an artist may be seen to have liberated us so that we are able to say more about his artwork, encumbered by myths about the man.

In doing so, this thesis has demonstrated three clear pathways through which Clérambault's photographs can be analysed. In the process, I have noted the parallels with Clérambault's psychiatric work: in particular, I have noted how Clérambault appears to have been driven in both sentences to document observable trends around him in order determine the locus, or a

single theory that enables a wider understanding of the identified phenomena. Noting that this tendency may be seen to have underwritten not just his psychiatric work and his photography – but that it also connects to his interest in ethnography and art history – I argue here in conclusion that rather than seeing Clérambault's photography as something secondary to his other work, or as distinct from it, to fully understand it, we must concede the photography as a component of an integrated whole.

This thesis provided three possible ways in which Clérambault's corpus of photographs realized in Morocco draperies can be analysed. However, it is nowhere near enough – this thesis seems to just hit the tip of the iceberg in the analysis of Clérambault's work on drapery. Further research is required into Clérambault's unpublished work on draperies and the images and sketches he has executed in Morocco. The exploration of the archive at the Museum d'Histoire Naturelle found Clérambault's interest in the drapery went far beyond that of the Moroccan haik. He documented, collected, and extensively researched draperies from all around the world. Gaëtan Gatian de Clérambault's drapery research is a truly fascinating project combining years of dedications with notes, photographs, sketches. It deserves to be recognized as one of the first investigations into the Middle East's outer garment but, most importantly, as the only detailed systematic recording of a dress that would slowly disappear from the North African landscapes. A fascinating future project would be to regroup Clérambault's entire documentation and research on the drapery as a sort of drapery-Atlas, which would be enlightening many researchers across the fields of ethnography, archaeology, and art history.

Furthermore, extensive research can still be done on Clérambault's status as a psychiatrist and the relation to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. From the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, medical scientists supported the teaching of anatomy and created a dynamic interaction

between art, medicine, and anthropology. How did the psychiatrist fit within the plethora of physicians lecturing at the Beaux-Arts? Did Clérambault's teaching have a significant influence on artists? Clérambault's research, his position as a psychiatrist, and personal history offer various topics that still require studying.

At the beginning of this thesis, I examined the bizarre yet compelling *Le costume drapé* (see figure 1.1) – we asked ourselves – what was the story behind this image? What was its purpose? As part of concluding this project, we must now answer these very questions pertaining to the image. Set in an Orientalist setting, the photograph was taken inside Clérambault's home in Fez, Morocco, in 1919 is part of the psychiatrist's wider investigation in what he called the "living drapery." Fearing its looming extinction and wishing to record it before "its death," Clérambault embarked on an extensive, systematic recording and classification of the mechanics of this garment.<sup>455</sup> This photograph – both the instrument and document of this investigation – aimed to serve as an ethnographic and artistic tool for the teaching and correct rendering in the North African drapery and as a singular way to understand Antiquity better.

This interdisciplinary study of Clérambault's photographs showed the uniqueness of this corpus of images as being at the same time an ethnographic, artistic, historical, and scientific investigation into the Moroccan haik.

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<sup>455</sup> "Introduction à l'étude des costumes drapés indigènes," *Papiers Clérambault* (1872-1934).



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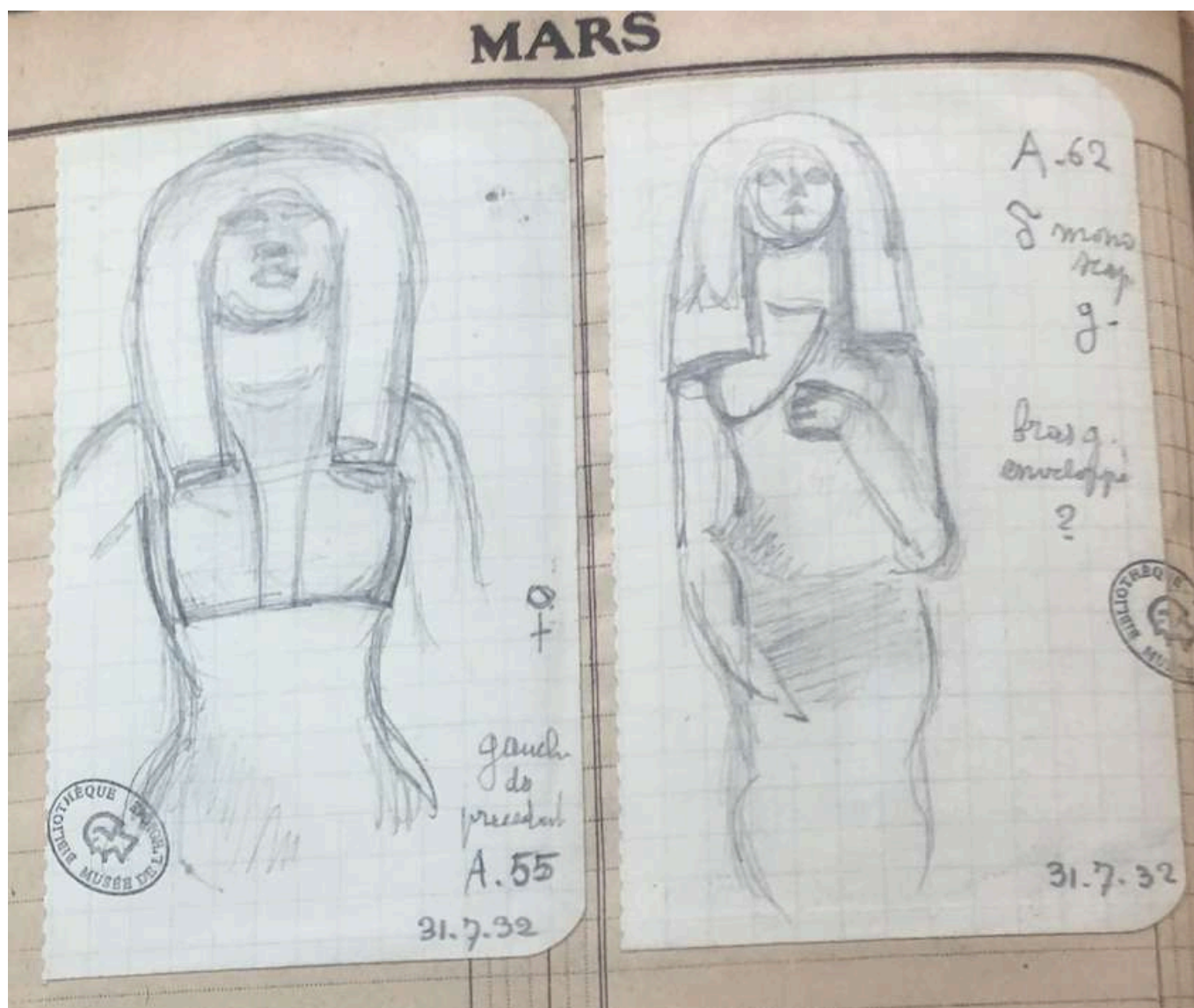
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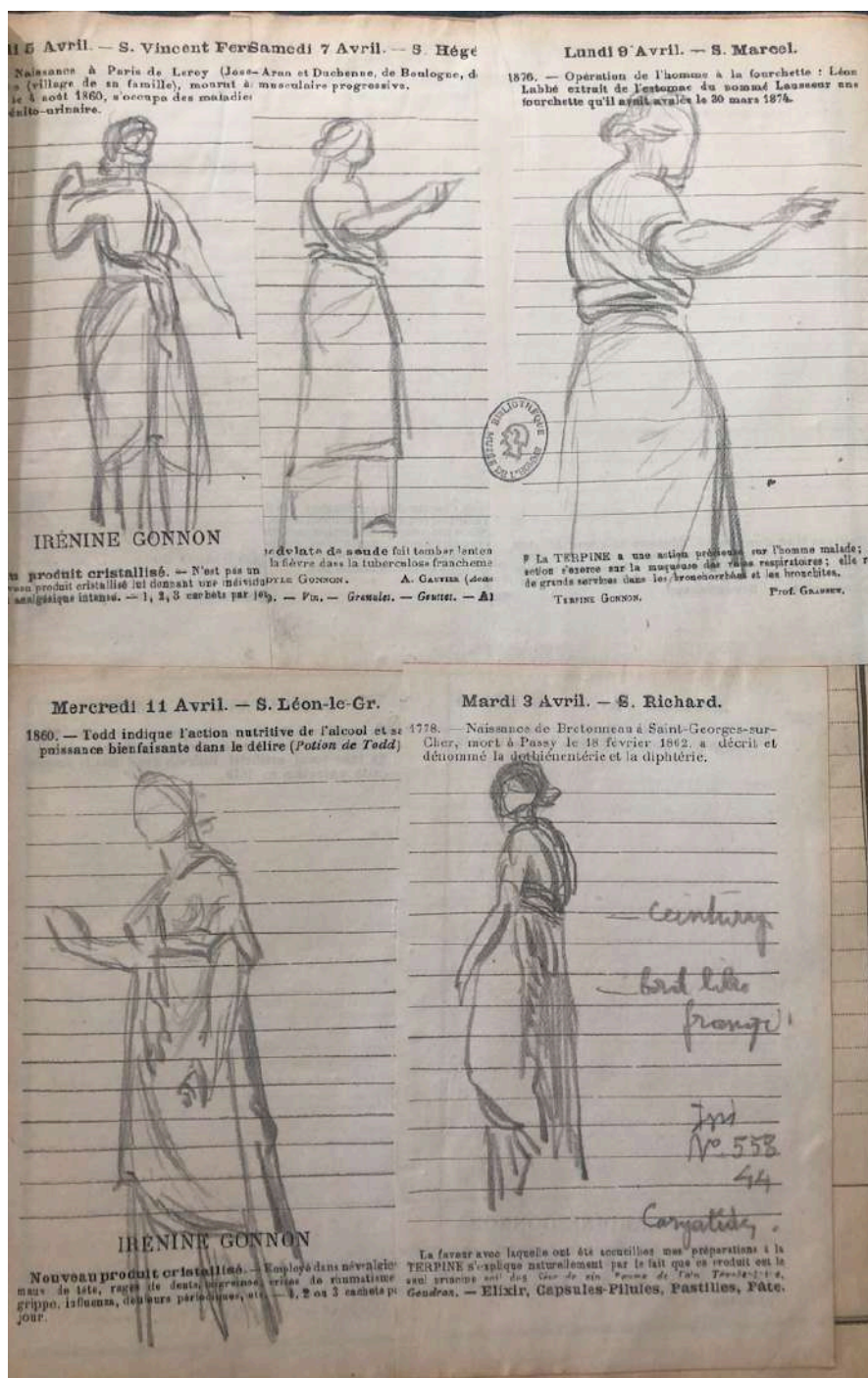
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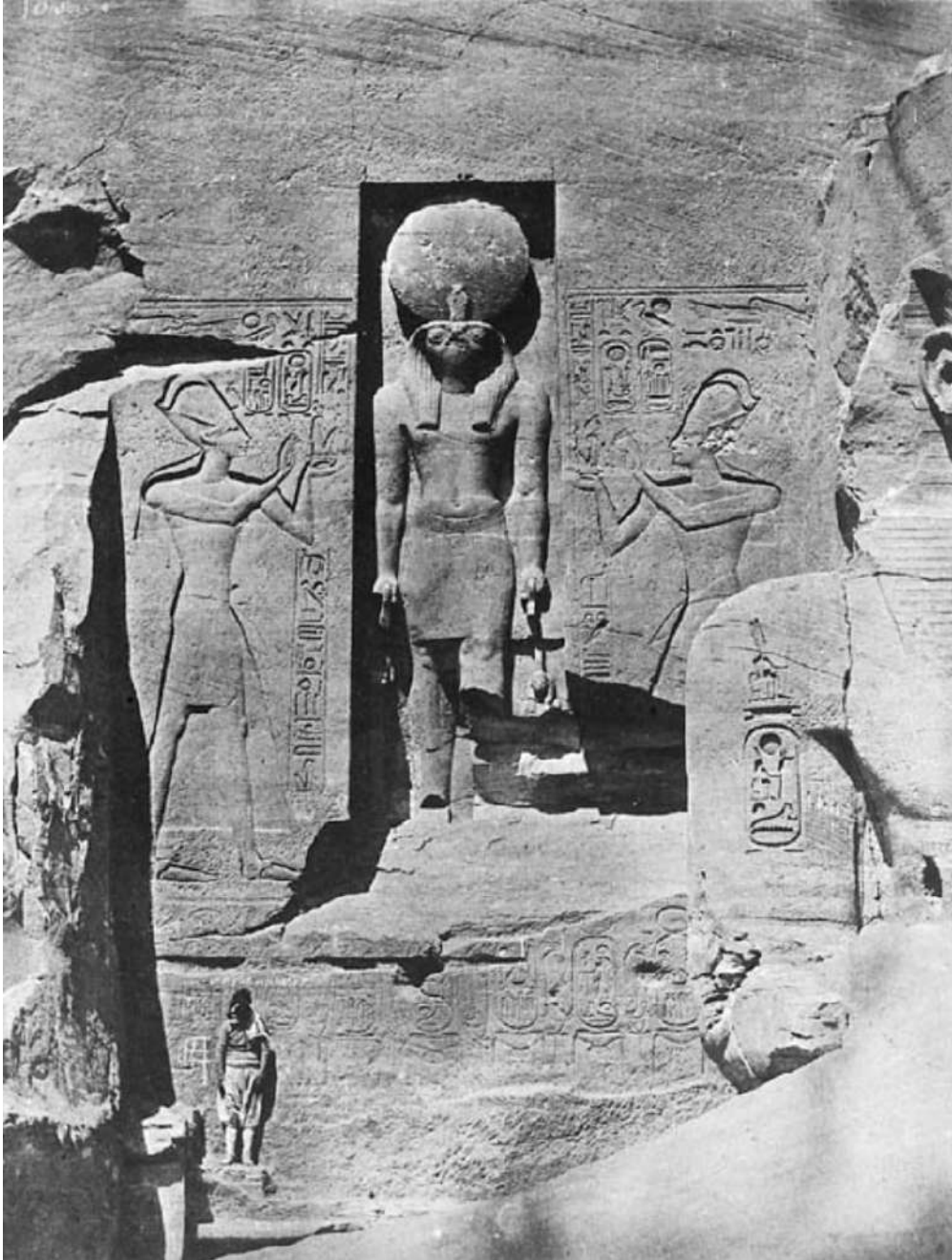
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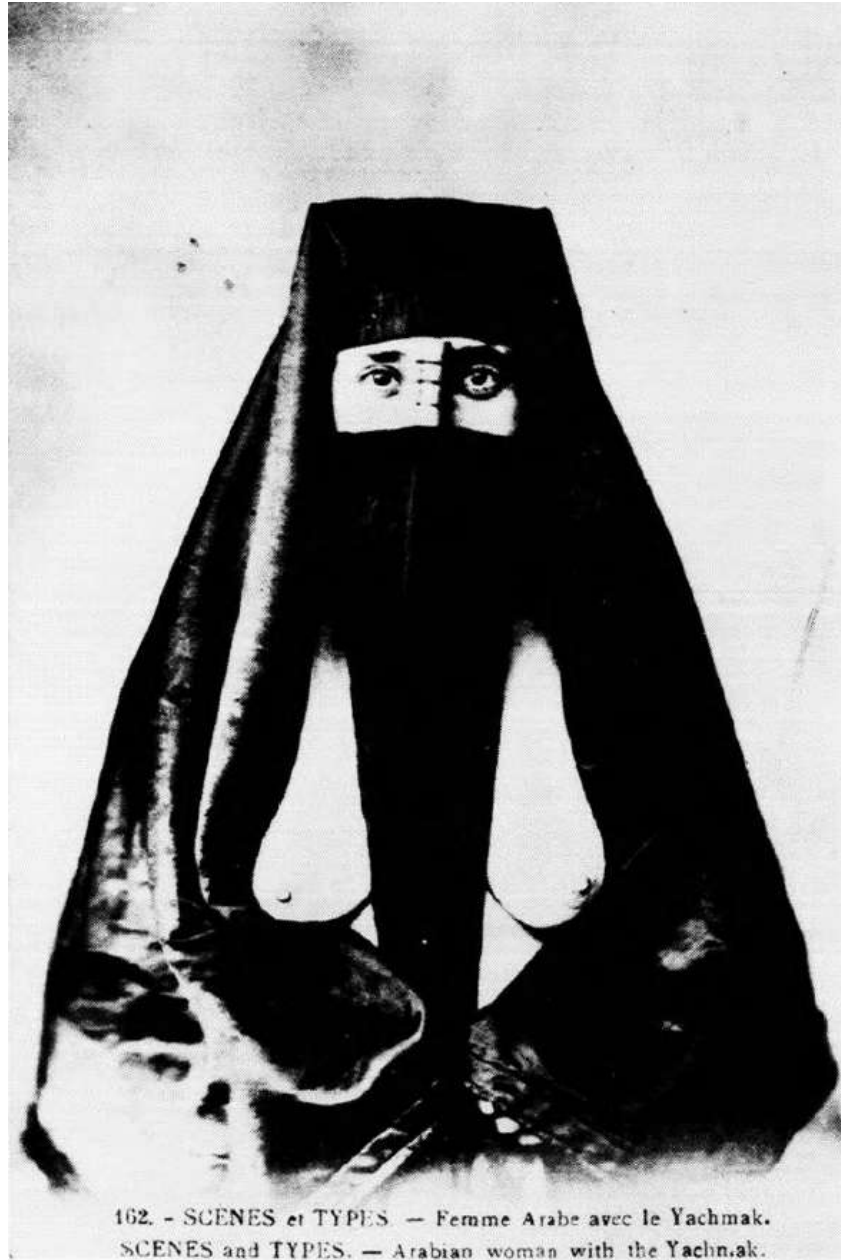
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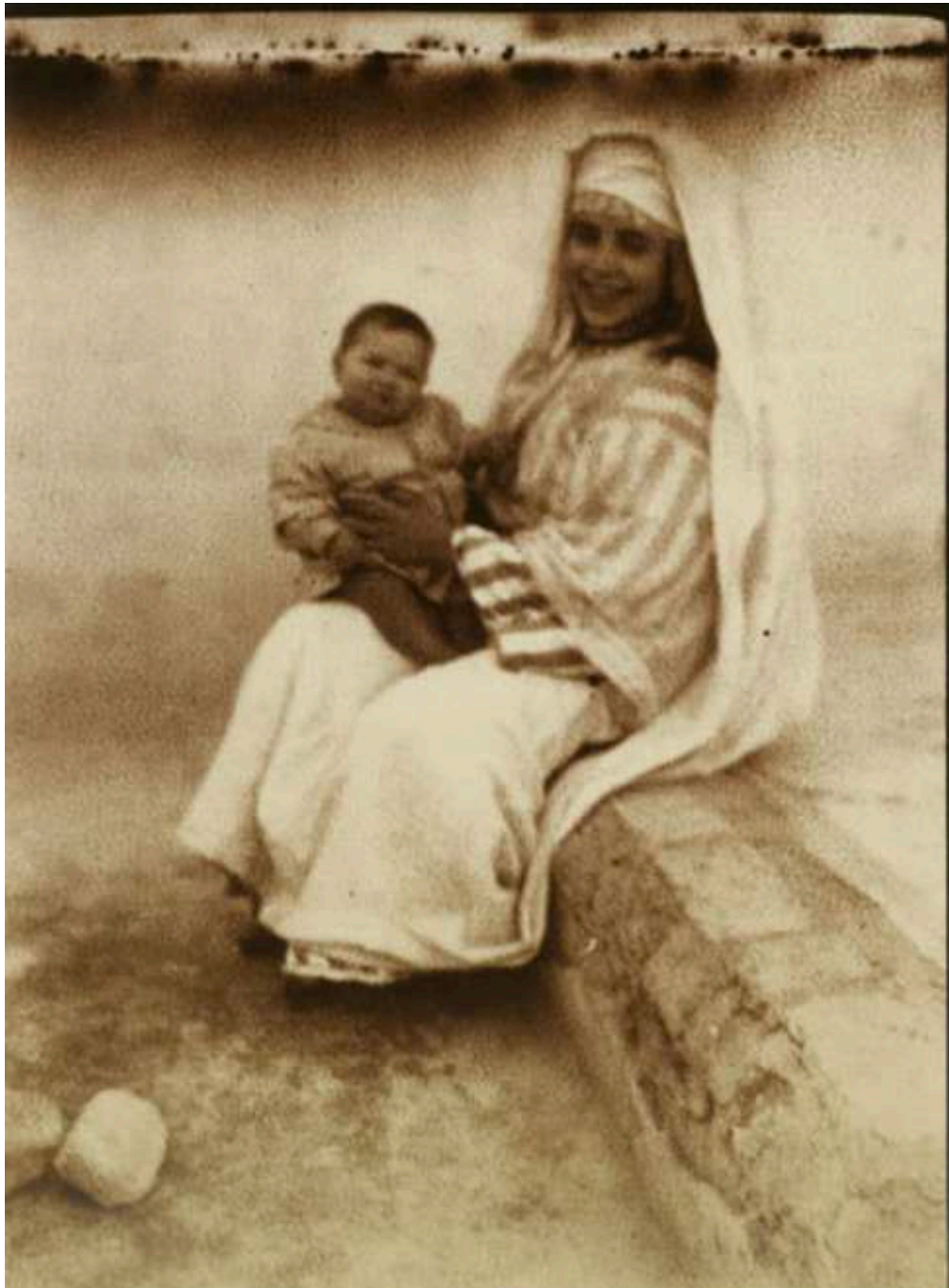
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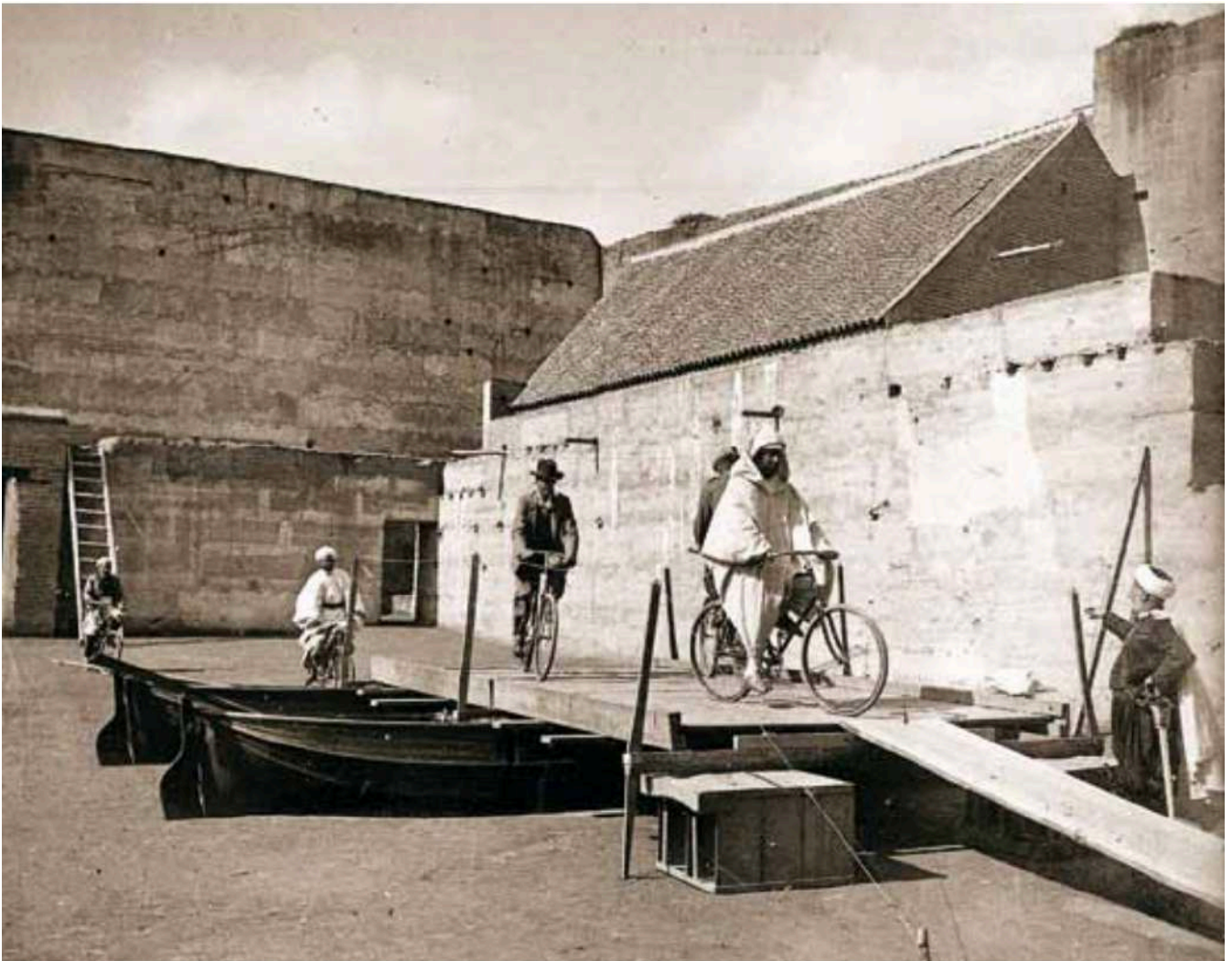
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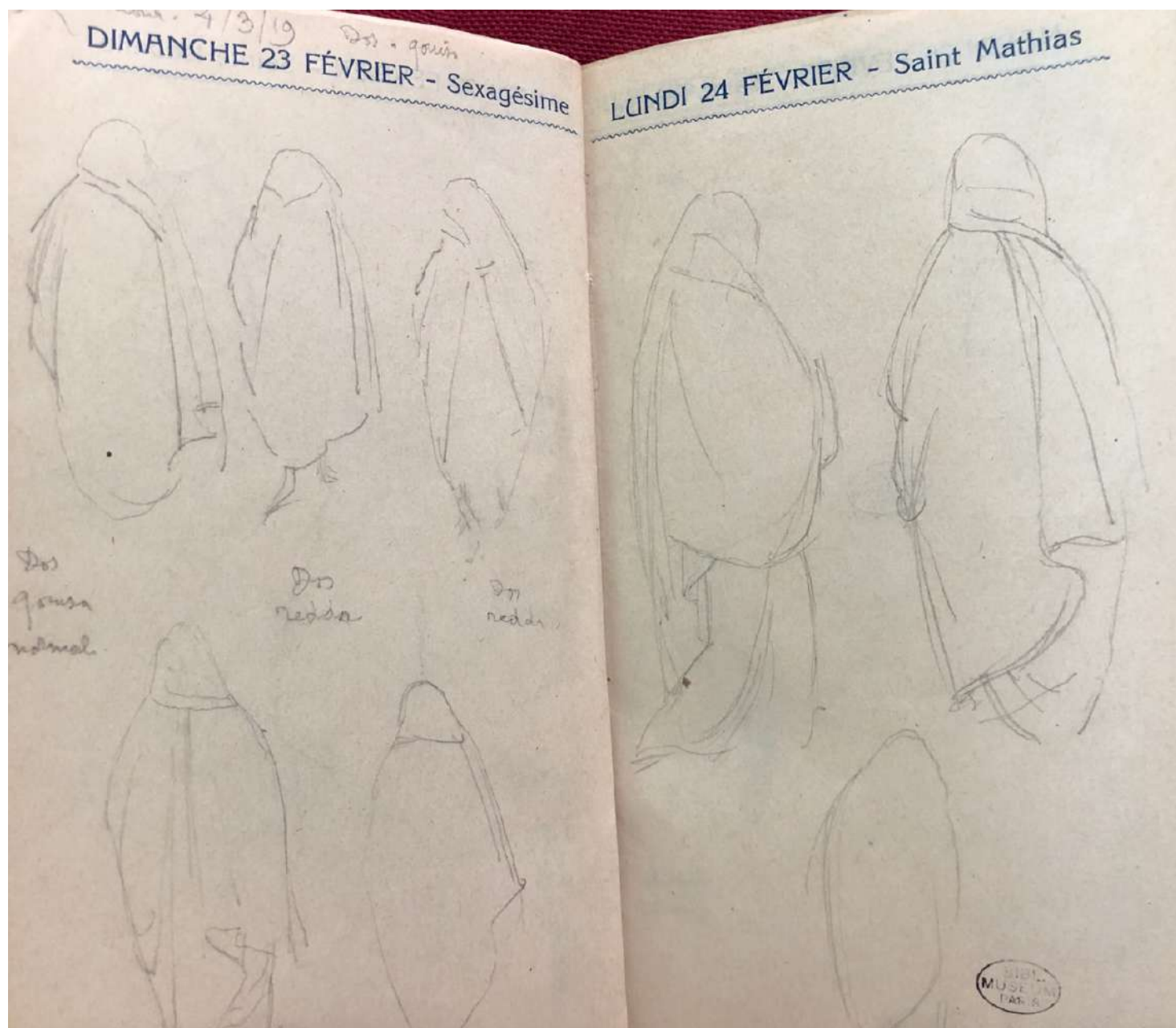
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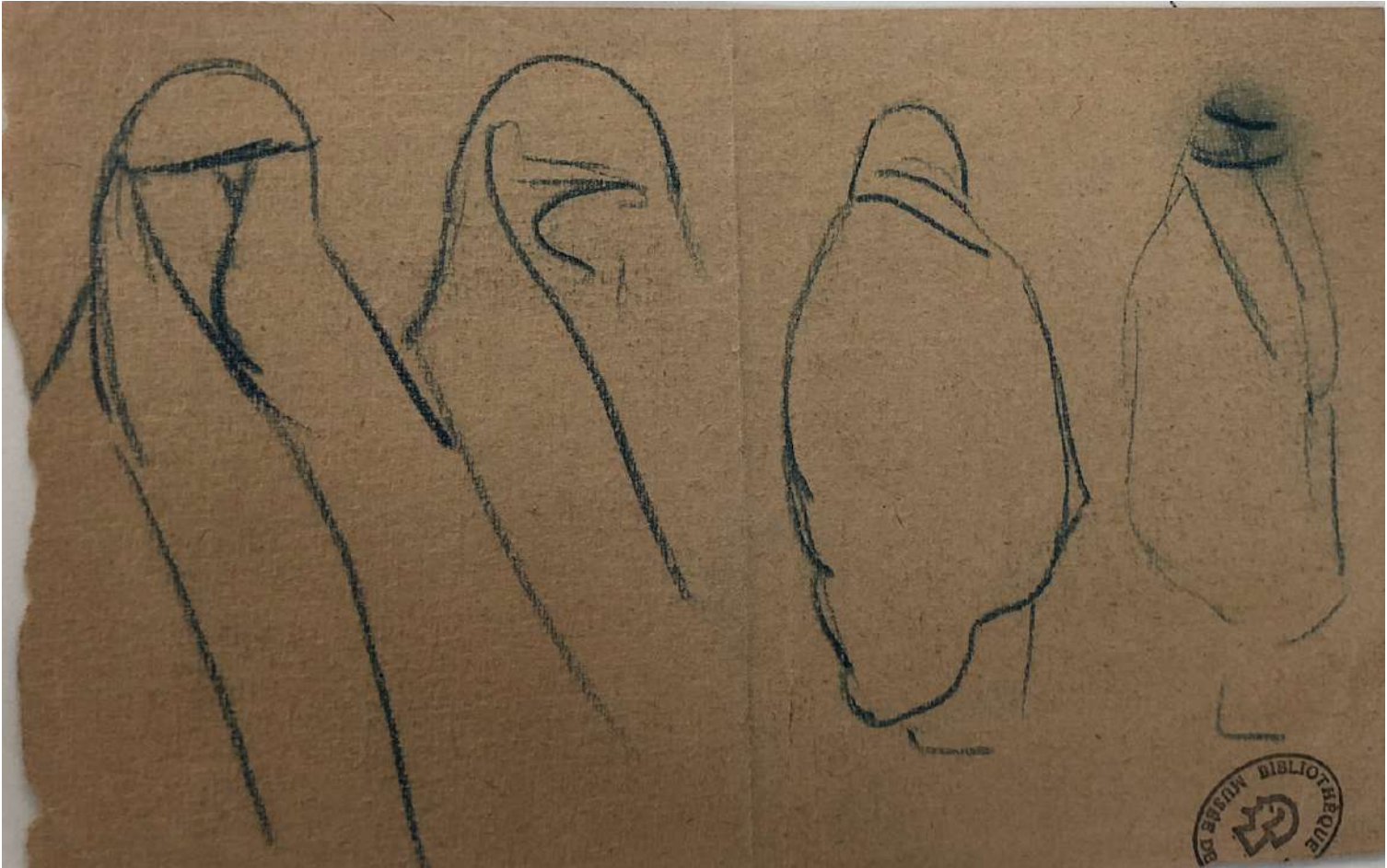
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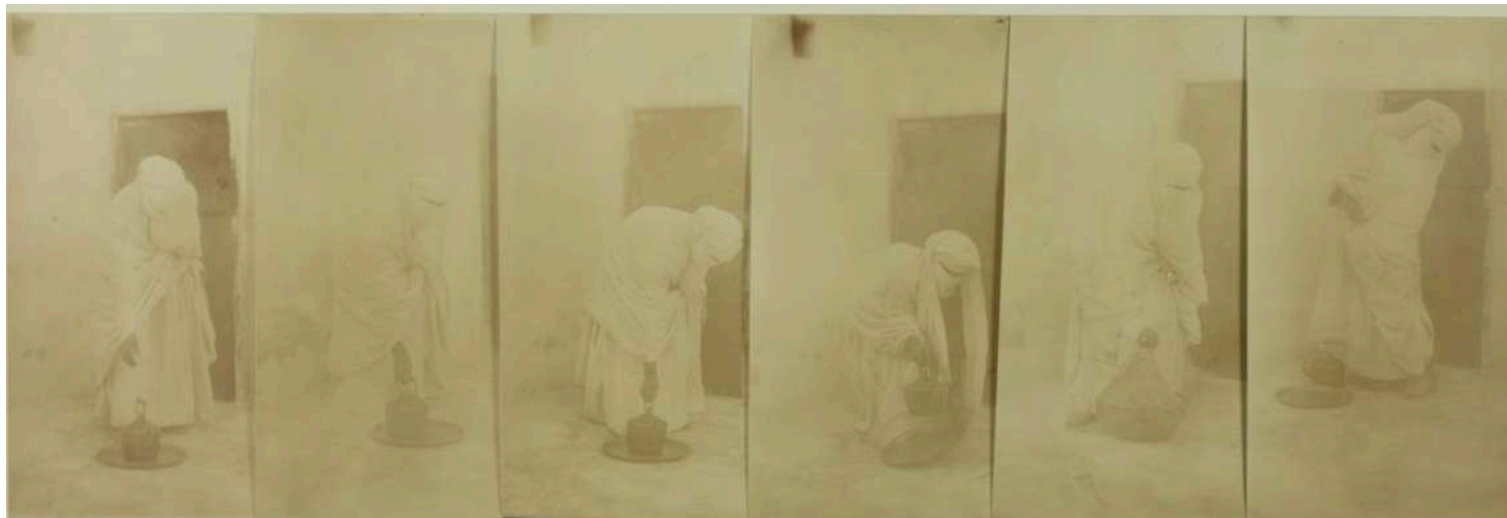
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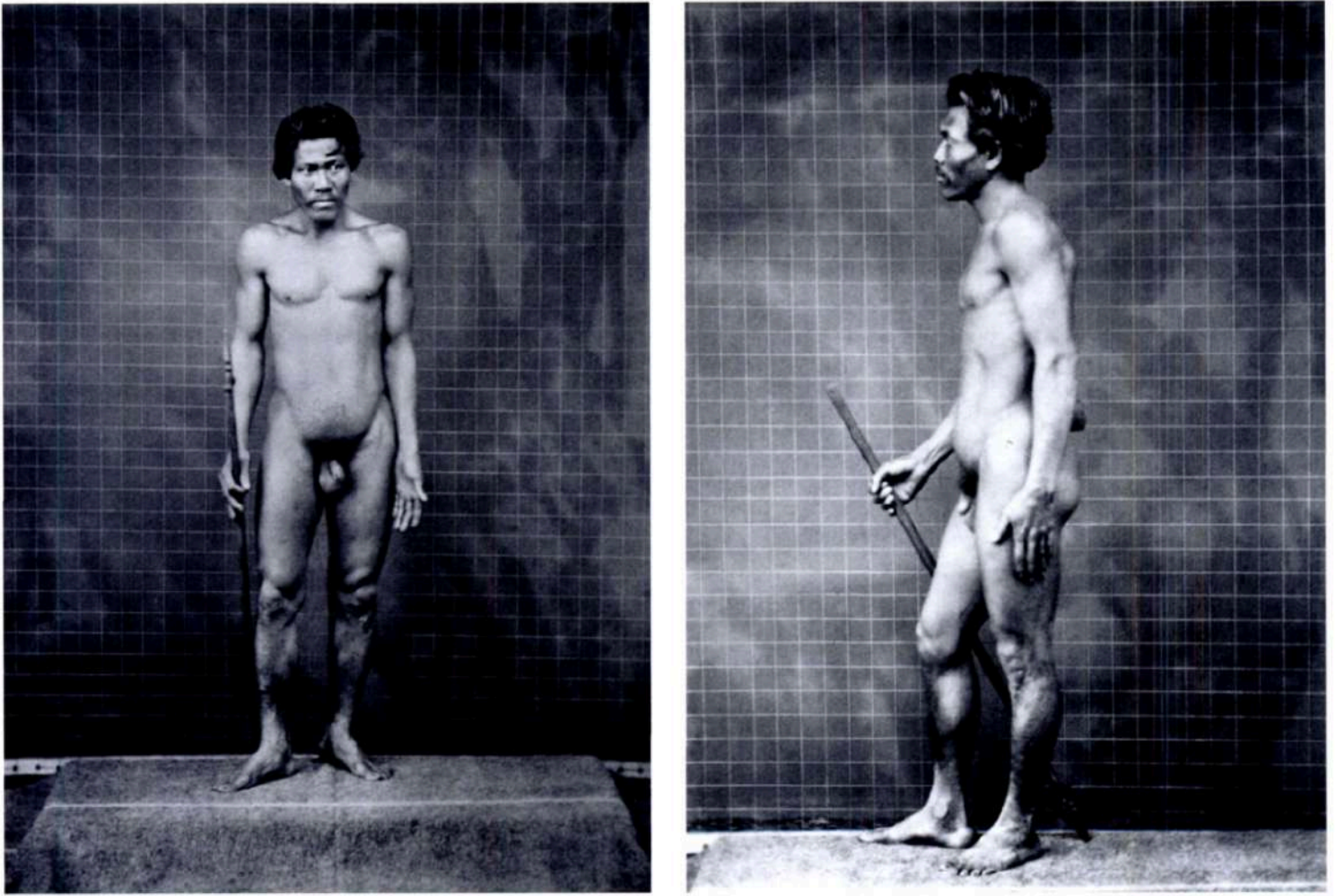


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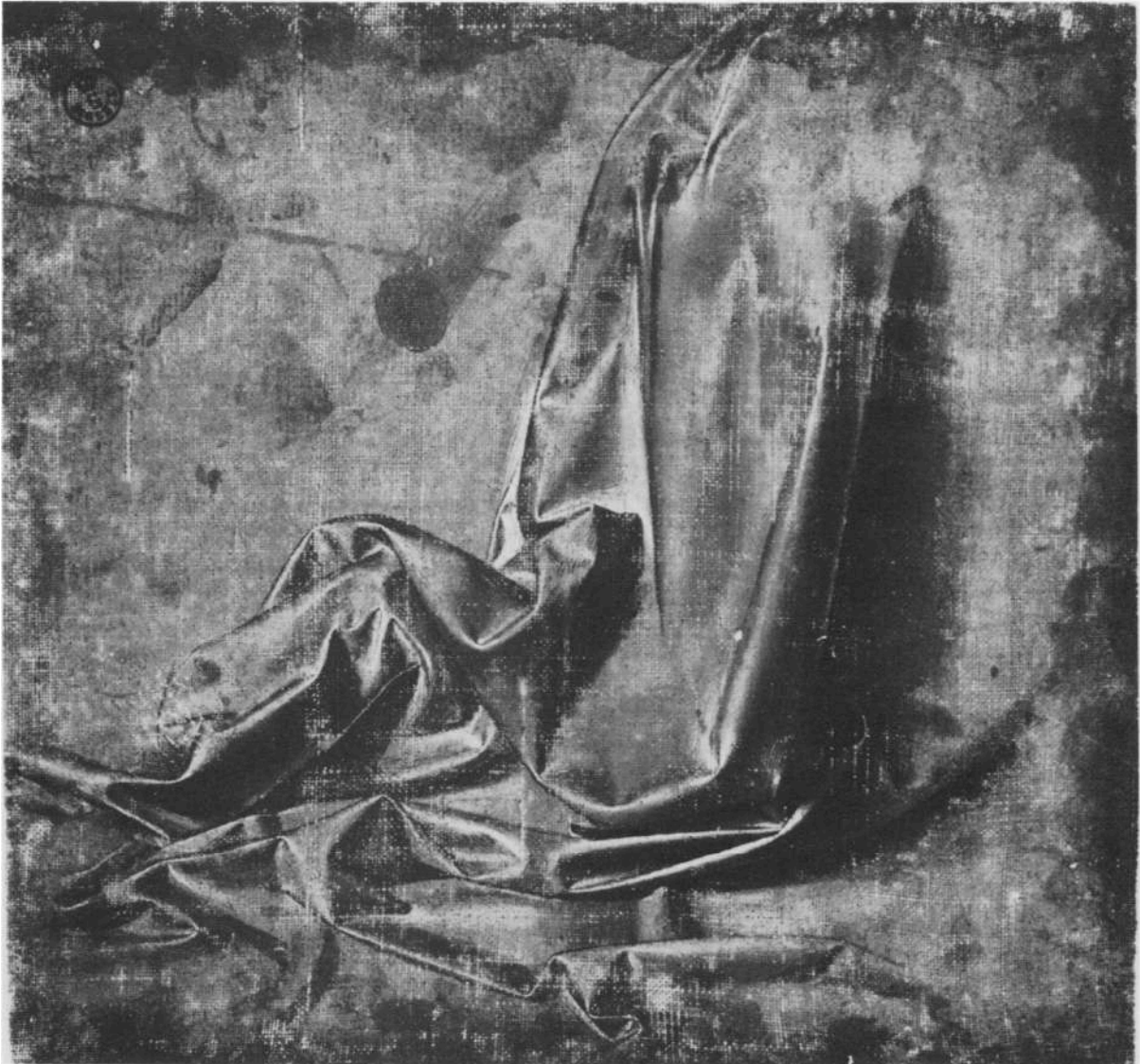
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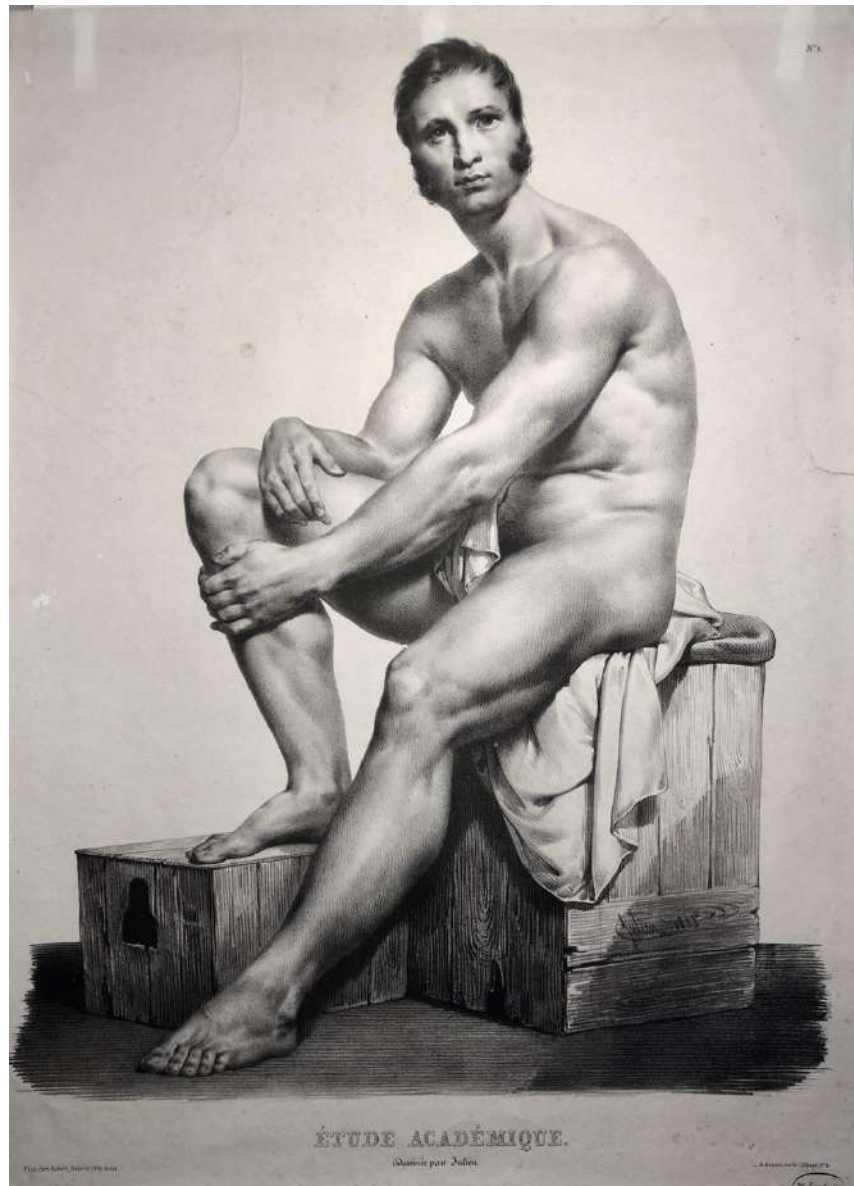
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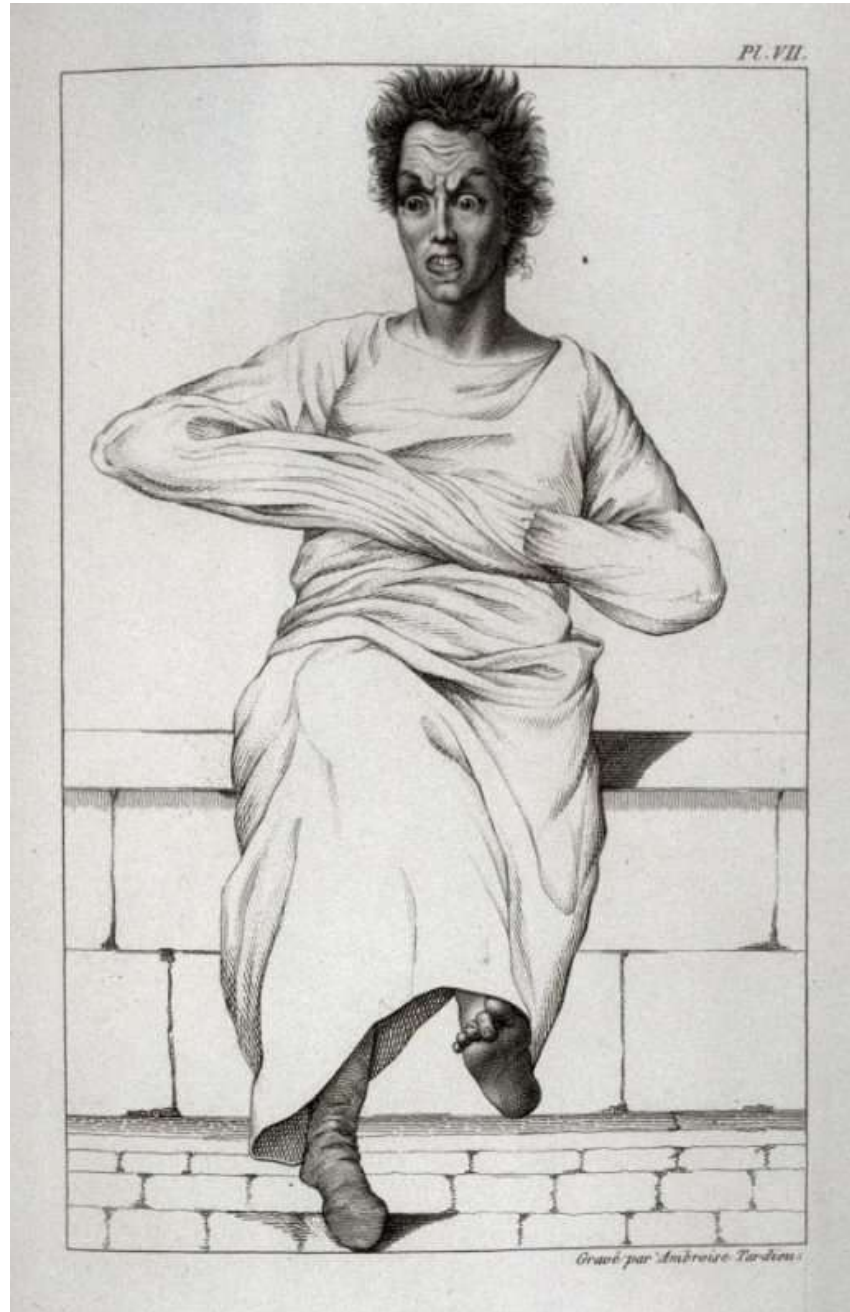
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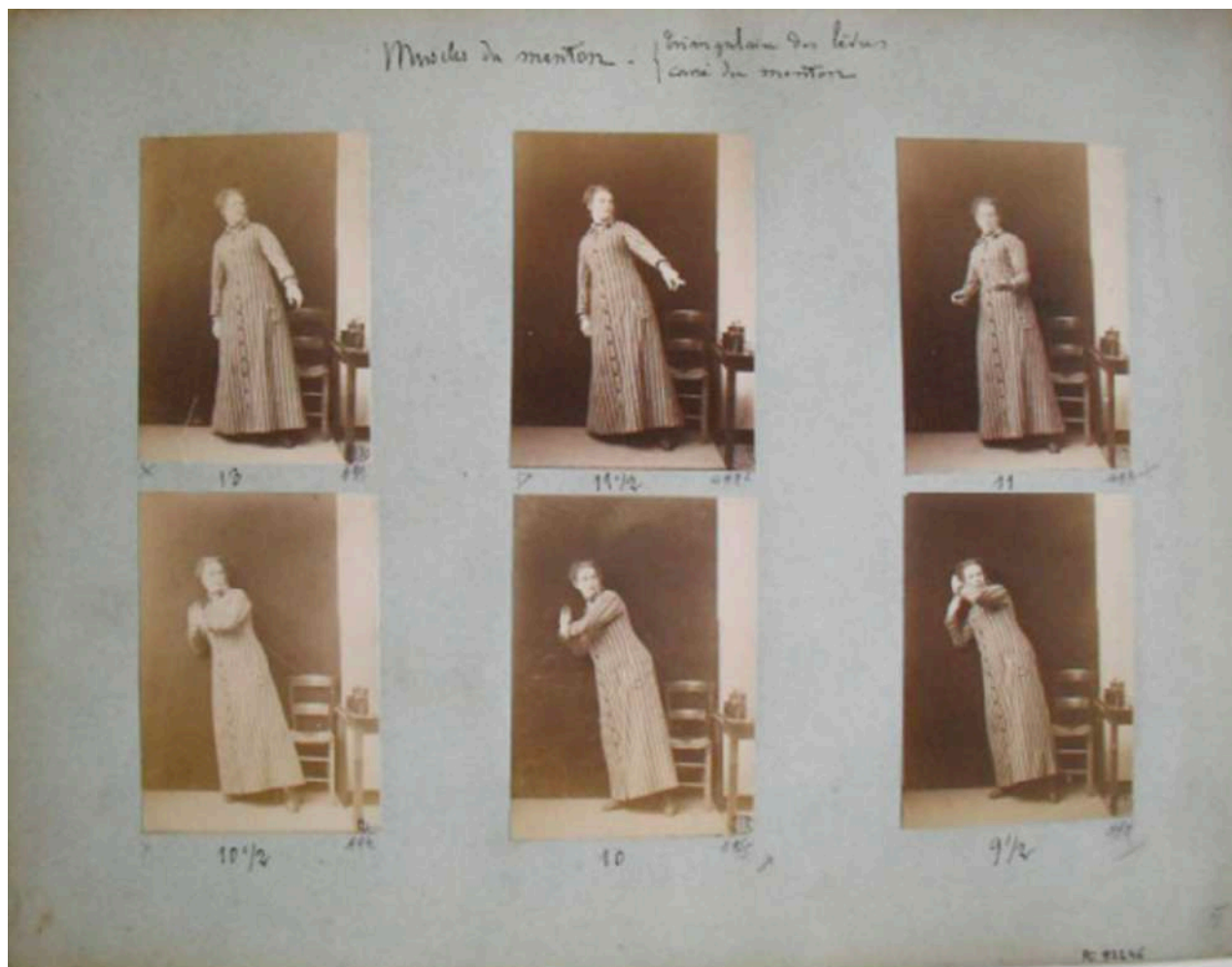
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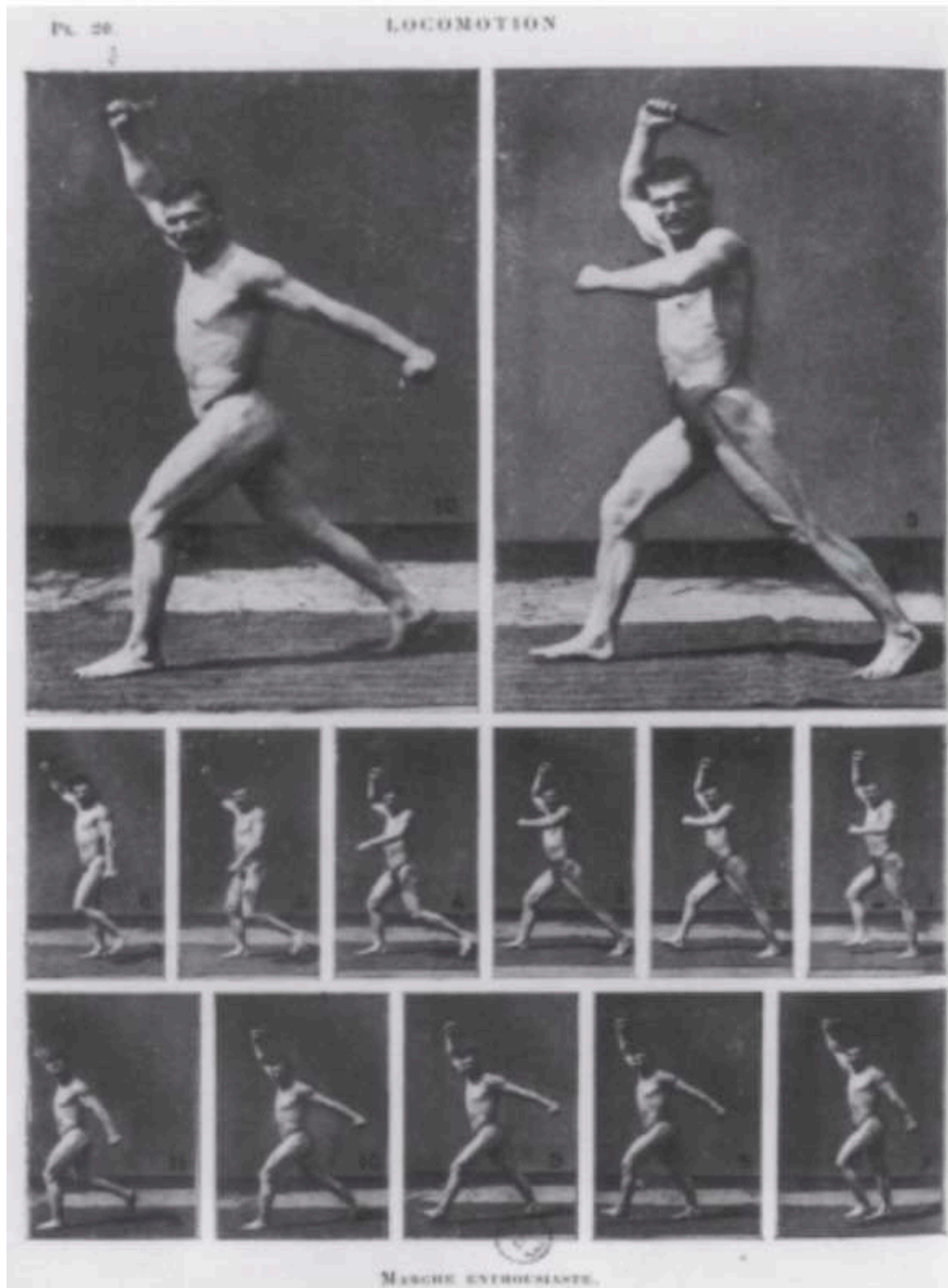
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Taille 1 <sup>m</sup>	Long <sup>r</sup>	Pied g.	N <sup>o</sup> de ci.	Ag <sup>e</sup> de
Voies	Larg <sup>r</sup>	Médus g.	Ann <sup>e</sup>	né le
Enverg <sup>r</sup> 1 <sup>m</sup>	Long <sup>r</sup>	Auric <sup>l</sup> g.	Pèr <sup>e</sup>	à
Buste 0.	Larg <sup>r</sup>	Coullée g.	Part <sup>r</sup>	app.

(Réduction photographique 1/7.)

Front.	Insin <sup>o</sup>	Basins 'cavité'	Bord. o. s. p. f.	Barbe	Coll <sup>e</sup> / Ann <sup>e</sup>
	Haut <sup>r</sup>	Bas	Lah. c. s. m. d.	Cheveux	Cent.
	Larg <sup>r</sup>	Haut <sup>r</sup> Saillie. Larg <sup>r</sup>	A. trig. s. p. r. d.	Car	Autres traits caractéristiques :
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N<sup>o</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

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Surnoms et pseudonymes : \_\_\_\_\_

N<sup>o</sup> L. \_\_\_\_\_ 18. à \_\_\_\_\_ ans \_\_\_\_\_ Dept.

Fils de \_\_\_\_\_ et de \_\_\_\_\_

Profession : \_\_\_\_\_ dernière résidence : \_\_\_\_\_

Papiers d'identité : \_\_\_\_\_

Relations : \_\_\_\_\_

Services militaires : \_\_\_\_\_

Condamnations antérieures, leur nombre : \_\_\_\_\_

Cause et lieu de la détention antérieure : \_\_\_\_\_

Cause de la détention actuelle, spécification du délit : \_\_\_\_\_

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