Recently identified by the editors as the **Rua Nova dos Mercadores**, the principal commercial and financial street in Renaissance Lisbon, two sixteenth-century paintings, acquired by Dante Gabriel Rossetti in 1866, form the starting point for this portrait of a global city in the early modern period. Focusing on unpublished objects, and incorporating newly discovered documents and inventories that allow novel interpretations of the Rua Nova and the goods for sale on it, these essays offer a compelling and original study of a metropolis whose reach once spanned four continents.

The Rua Nova views painted by an anonymous Flemish artist portray an everyday scene on a recognisable street, with a diverse global population. This thoroughfare was the meeting point of all kinds of people, from rich to poor, slave to knight, indigenous Portuguese to Jews and diasporic black Africans.

The volume highlights the unique status of Lisbon as an entrepôt for curiosities, luxury goods and wild animals. As the Portuguese trading empire of the fifteenth and sixteenth century expanded sea-routes and networks from West Africa to India and the Far East, non-European cargoes were brought back to Renaissance Lisbon. Many rarities were earmarked for the Portuguese court, but simultaneously exclusive items were readily available for sale on the Rua Nova, the Lisbon equivalent of Bond Street or Fifth Avenue. Specialized shops offered West African and Ceylonese ivories, raffia and Asian textiles, rock crystals, Ming porcelain, Chinese and Ryukyuan lacquerware, jewellery, precious stones, *naturalia* and exotic animal byproducts. Lisbon was also a hub of distribution for overseas goods to other courts and cities in Europe. The cross-cultural and artistic influences between Lisbon and Portuguese Africa and Asia at this date will be re-assessed.

Lisbon was imagined as the head of empire or *caput mundi*, while the River Tagus became the aquatic gateway to a globally connected world. Lisbon evolved into a dynamic Atlantic port city, excelling in shipbuilding, cartography and the manufacture of naval instruments. The historian Damião de Góis bragged of the “Tagus reigning over the world”. Lisbon’s fame depended on its river, an aquatic avenue that competed with the Rua Nova, providing a means of interaction, trade and communication along Lisbon’s coastline. Even for the cosmopolitan Góis, who travelled extensively for the Portuguese crown, Lisbon’s chaotic docks were worth describing. Of all the European cities he experienced, only Lisbon and her rival Seville could be “rightfully called Ladies and Queens of the Sea”. Góis contended that they had opened up the early modern world through circumnavigation.

Lisbon was destroyed in a devastating earthquake and tsunami in November 1755. These paintings are the only large-scale vistas of Rua Nova dos Mercadores to have survived, and together with the new objects and archival sources offer a fresh and original insight into Renaissance Lisbon and its material culture.

---

**THE GLOBAL CITY: ON THE STREETS OF RENAISSANCE LISBON**

*Edited by Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and K.J.P. Lowe*

Paul Holberton publishing

89 BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON SE1 1NL TEL 020 7407 0809
SALES@PAUL-HOLBERTON.NET WWW.PAUL-HOLBERTON.NET
# CONTENTS

**Foreword**

Princess of the seas, Queen of Empire: Configuring the City and Port of Renaissance Lisbon  
**ANNEMARIE JORDAN GSCHWEND AND KATE LOWE**

**THE MARITIME CITY**

Foreign Descriptions of the Global City: Renaissance Lisbon from the Outside  
**KATE LOWE**

The Global Population in Sixteenth-century Lisbon  
**KATE LOWE**

Chinese Commodities on the India Route in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century  
**RUI LOUREIRO**

Saved from the Sea: The Shipwreck of the Bom Jesus (1533) and its Material Culture  
**BRUNO WERZ**

**BRINGING A STREET BACK TO LIFE**

The Rua Nova dos Mercadores Paintings, Dane Gabriel Rossetti and the Victorian Art Dealer George Love: Questions of Provenance  
**ANNEMARIE JORDAN GSCHWEND**

“Aquela grã Rua Nova”: Images of the Rua Nova in Sixteenth-century Portuguese Literature  
**T.F. EARLE**

Reconstructing the Rua Nova: The life of a Global Street in Renaissance Lisbon  
**ANNEMARIE JORDAN GSCHWEND**

Global Interiors on the Rua Nova in Renaissance Lisbon  
**HUGO MIGUEL CRESPO**

*Olisipo, emporium nobilissimum*: Global Consumption on the Rua Nova  
**ANNEMARIE JORDAN GSCHWEND**

**MATERIAL CULTURE: CASE STUDIES FROM WEST AFRICA, BRAZIL AND PORTUGUESE ASIA**

Made in Africa: West African Luxury Goods for Lisbon’s Markets  
**KATE LOWE**

On the Turkey in Rua Nova dos Mercadores  
**SHEPARD KRECH III**

Rock Crystal Carving in Portuguese Asia: An Archaeometric Analysis  
**HUGO MIGUEL CRESPO**

“The Three Brothers”: Sixteenth-century Lacquered Indo-Persian Shields or Commodities for Display? A Case Study  
**ULRIKE KÖRBER**

Some Notes on the Production of Christian Sculpted Ivories in the Estado da Índia  
**CARLA ALFERES PINTO**