ENEMY ENTICEMENTS: A HABSBURG ARTIST IN SÜLEYMAN'S CAPITAL CITY

Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen
Danish National Art Library at Copenhagen

Whose Mare Nostrum?

Throughout the early modern era, the confrontation and conflict with the Ottoman Empire shaped notions of Europe as a place as well as emerging European identities. This said, trade and other cross-cultural encounters often smoothed conflicts between the Muslim-majority Ottoman realms and the Christian realms of Europe. The standard-bearers of the military confrontation with the Ottoman empire were the Habsburgs, based on their stature and obligations as Holy Roman Emperors, as well as on their dynastic territorial interests. From the early sixteenth century onward, the Spanish Habsburgs embraced this role as defenders of the faith. Spanish perception of the Ottomans and their Islamic allies, generalized as "Turks," was informed by the historical memories of Christian-Muslim clashes during the *Reconquista*, followed by the persecution and eventual expulsion of the *Moriscos* (ca. 1568-1609).

Other Europeans, unburdened by the Habsburg self-conception as Christendom's line of defense against Islam in Europe, proposed less bellicose conceptions of the Turks. At times, those attitudes took on an almost friendly character, at least on the level of everyday experience, such as commercial and diplomatic interaction. England under the Tudors, for instance, had close connections with Saadi Morocco, the two realms being united in their common aim of curbing the Spanish in the last decades of the sixteenth century. France, for its part, maintained a direct military alliance with Constantinople for a large part of the century, motivated by a shared rivalry with the Holy Roman Empire. Aware as they were of these cases of negotiation or accommodation, the Habsburgs and their allies viewed themselves as the real bulwark against the Ottoman Turks and their Muslim client states.

Notwithstanding the many internal European conflicts—whether between England and Spain, between the French and Spanish monarchies, or between Protestants and Catholics—the external threat of Ottoman expansion westward fomented the widely held notion of Europe as the homeland of Christendom. If actual diplomacy and trade would make for many alliances across religious boundaries, general conceptions of a European Christendom nonetheless took root. That is to say, a rudimentary notion of a common Christian "we" took hold, though it had a limited impact on real-world politics and military action, with the partial exception of the Battle of Lepanto (1571). Still, this "we" had a profound ideological impact and can be recognized in literary and artistic representations.[1]

Within this larger political and cultural context of rupture and conflict across the Mediterranean world, the drawings and prints of Melchior Lorck (1526-27–after 1583), a Danish-Protestant artist working for Ferdinand of Austria, offer a particularly striking series of European images of the same Ottoman Turks. For scholars of Spanish Renaissance literature, Melchior Lorck may not be a familiar name. But his visualization of Constantinople as the enticing heart of the Ottoman Empire left an indelible mark on European visual culture that would serve to nourish literary imagination throughout Europe. Melchior Lorck's views of Constantinople, both as visitor and as visual artist, offer a window onto a crucial period in which the European image of the Turks took shape. The extraordinary quality of Lorck's Turkish images attained particular currency in Habsburg lands, where ties forged through patronage, the book trade and the international art market connected Spanish realms to Germany and the Low Countries. Taken in this context, the story of Lorck's journey and the artistic production it nurtured offers Hispanists one more link in a chain of representations of the Turks that fired the imaginations of generations of poets, playwrights and prose fiction writers.

In the following pages, I piece together the story of how Lorck, in the company of noted Flemish diplomat Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq (1522–1592), represented Constantinople for a wide European public. The city views he produced express this encompassing Christian "us" opposed to a "Turkish" and Muslim "them." Before examining just how these representations of Constantinople took shape and in turn

shaped images of a Turkish Other, some points of historical background are in order.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the conflict with the Ottoman Empire was a regular part of European affairs: in one place or another in or around the Mediterranean, fighting was almost always in evidence, whether it was in Hungary and Croatia, on Rhodes, on Cyprus, the Italian coast, on Malta, in Algiers, in Tunis or on Djerba. Piracy, abductions and traffic in slaves were frequent spinoffs of the conflict. The overarching structure of the conflict and the protagonists' identification of "them" and "us" was closely tied to the competition between the vast empires of Charles V and Süleyman the Magnificent. This duality remained largely intact even after 1556, when the European empire of Charles V had been divided between his brother Ferdinand of Austria and his son Philip II of Spain, and after 1566, when Süleyman died and Selim II assumed Ottoman power.

A quote from Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq provides us with an example of how this identification of the conflict between Christians and "Turks" could manifest itself. His so-called *Turkish Letters* were published during the 1580s, allegedly as records of epistolary correspondence to a friend from his sojourns in Turkey, from 1554 to1555 and from 1556 to 1562. In them Busbecq recalls the reaction of the citizens of Constantinople after the defeat of the Spanish in the defense of the Tunisian Island of Djerba (July 31, 1560), which had been in Spanish hands since 1551:

> Piali [the Turkish naval commander] sent a galley to Constantinople to announce his victory. This vessel, in order to emphasize the purport of the news which it brought, trailed behind it in the water a banner, which […] was painted with a picture of our Saviour on the cross. When it entered the harbour, the rumor of the defeat of the Christians quickly spread through the city, and the Turks congratulated one another on their great victory. They also congregated in crowds round my door and mockingly asked my people whether they had a brother or relation or friend in the Spanish fleet; for, if so, they would have the pleasure of seeing them shortly. They were also voluble in extravagant praise of their own valor and scorn of our cowardice. (Busbecq 116)

What emerges in this passage is a clear sense of "them" and "us," where Busbecq's "us," in both his own rendering as well as in the eyes of

the Turks, encompassed the embassy's entire entourage, comprising Flemings, Hungarians, Germans and Spaniards. Here the national identities thus dissolve into larger entities of Europeans and Turks, Christians and Muslims, overruling differences between southern and northern European identities. This duality elides confessional differences and opposing political loyalties within domestic matters.

The conflict between the Habsburgs and the Ottomans appears to have been seen from both sides as a war between the two major contenders for dominance over the Mediterranean world, a struggle over who was to define a new Roman Empire, and by extension, a struggle over which empire held the most legitimate claims to dominion in the *Mare Nostrum* or greater Mediterranean region. But the geo-political conflict between two competing visions of empire overlapped with the inter-religious conflict that had emerged more recently with the expansion of Islam. Here, the rivalry was construed as a clash of Christendom as a whole and its external threat, "the Turk."

Despite this rhetoric of empires and religions in conflict, the two protagonists of this study, the diplomat Busbecq and the artist Lorck, held views that were more nuanced. In this regard they drew on and contributed to a more diversified image of "the Turk." We can see this in Busbecq's *Turkish Letters*, which gained a wide dissemination very soon after their publication, and were translated in numerous editions into a range of European languages over the next century, such as Czech (1584 [(first letter only]), 1594), German (1596, 1597-98, 1664), Polish (1597), Spanish (1610), French (1646), Dutch (1652, 1660), and English (1694) (Martels: 515-522), broadening their audience from that of learned humanist circles to everyone with the need or curiosity to learn more about the Turks, their customs and institutions, the many different peoples in the Ottoman Empire, and important events in their recent history. Along with other eyewitness accounts of the Ottomans and their empire written by other travelers and diplomats, Busbecq presented the Turks in a nuanced and often sympathetic way. Though originally written for fellow humanists and diplomatic colleagues, his letters thus soon became available and marketable to a much more general audience all over Europe and remained important sources for knowledge about the Turks for at least a century.

Lorck's pictures, which can be viewed more or less as supplementary to Busbecq's descriptions, not only provide us with the most

comprehensive and possibly the least biased visual account of Ottoman society in the sixteenth century, but they also form part of an intriguing story of the production and use of such images. They furthermore attest to how an artist would adjust his output to the changing expectations of different audiences and to different discourses that engaged in an image of "the Turk." Lorck would use his source pool of images brought home from Constantinople in very different ways, according to the differing discourses he was trying to tap into during the rest of his career. Humanistic, theological, military, political, or economic discourses would all have different interests and agendas regarding the Turks, and were often contradictory, if not mutually exclusive. Lorck's production provides us with a good example of such diversity within the works of a single artist, and offers a point of departure for a differentiated approach to an understanding of the development of the image of "the Turk" on a larger European scale.

Who then was this artist, and how did he end up in Constantinople? Melchior Lorck was born in Flensburg in the Duchy of Schleswig on the present day border between Denmark and Germany, in 1526 or 1527. Schleswig and its sister duchy to the south, Holstein, both hailed the King of Denmark as their duke, and were governed in cooperation between the king and his brothers, who held individual fiefs in the duchies. While Schleswig was a fiefdom of the Danish king, Holstein was a fiefdom under the Holy Roman Emperor, a fact that often complicated the loyalties of the subjects in those lands, particularly when the interests of King and Emperor were at odds. King Christian III maneuvered wisely and did his best to maintain good relations with the Emperor, despite the fact that he had instated Lutheranism in all of his lands. Christian III became the patron of Lorck in 1549, and funded his travel abroad in order to foment his artistic development with the understanding that he would return home to serve as court painter. However, the ambitious young man found too many opportunities and patrons in southern Germany to allow him to fulfill his promise to return. Possibly through patrons in the circle of the Fugger family of Augsburg, he came into contact with the court in Vienna. From there he went to Constantinople in late 1555 to join the embassy sent by the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, then administrator of the German lands of the Holy Roman Empire, and also King of Bohemia and disputed King of Hungary. The Emperor was still Charles V, but

with his abdication in 1556, his younger brother Ferdinand took over his office, so very soon the embassy was not only an Austrian Habsburg one, but an imperial one.

The background for the embassy was decades of war and conflict. Since the Ottoman invasion of most of Hungary after the battle of Mohacs in 1526, Ferdinand had been in conflict with the Sultan over the vast country, which he considered to be his by inheritance. A very complicated and extended war involving several feuding Hungarian parties and at times the French, who became allies of the Sultan in their attempt to curb Habsburg expansion, had been going on ever since, mostly to the detriment of the Habsburgs. Sultan Süleyman considered Ferdinand an unruly vassal, and the latter's acceptance of a subservient position was in reality confirmed by his payment of vast annual levies to the Sultan in exchange for an unstable and often disrespected truce. The early 1550s were particularly troublesome, as Ferdinand, often the aggressive party, had attacked the contested Transylvania and even had the region's governor, Frater Georgius, assassinated. This led to the protracted imprisonment of his ambassador, the Italian Giovanni Maria Malvezzi, at the the Sultan's court, the so-called Sublime Porte. Clearly, open war on a grander scale was looming on the horizon as the Ottomans were gaining momentum.

Such was the situation when, after the release of Malvezzi in 1554, Ferdinand sent the talented young Flemish diplomat Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq to Constantinople, in order to assist the two Hungarian envoys, Antal Verancsics (Antonius Verantius) and Ferencs Zay.[2] They were entrusted with negotiations for a more lasting peace agreement over Hungary. Busbecq went twice, first in 1554-1555 on a single mission that took him far into Anatolia, and then again from late 1555 to 1562, where he was resident ambassador. After August 1557, when Verancsics and Zay left Constantinople, Busbecq stayed for another five years as the only Habsburg representative at the Sublime Porte.

Lorck became part of the embassy's entourage for approximately three and a half years, from late 1555 onwards. Parallel to Busbecq's *Turkish Letters* published during the 1580s, Lorck, from the early 1560s to 1583, produced a corpus that provides one of the most important visual sources of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent: a "Prospect of Constantinople," 128 woodcuts intended for publication in a book

describing Turkish society in its entirety, as well as a number of portraits and drawings of the city and its ancient and modern monuments.

We do not know for sure what the reason for Lorck's mission to Constantinople was. Strangely, Busbecq never mentions him in his published letters, nor does he appear to be mentioned in his quite substantial correspondence to the court in Vienna from the years in Constantinople (Rogerson; Martels). To be sure, a good number of the letters to the court were written in code and remain undeciphered to this day. Quite plausibly, these documents may hold the information about a secret assignment that took Lorck to the Sublime Porte (Martels). What we do know is that Lorck himself thought it a dangerous place to be, or at least he describes it as such in an autobiographical letter to the Danish king Frederik II from early 1563.[3] Apparently Ferdinand I thought so, as well. In the document elevating Lorck and his three brothers to nobility in February 1564, the reason for the elevation specifically mentions that he was sent to Turkey at risk of life and limb in the service of Ferdinand and his son, Maximilian.[4]

But in the letter to the Danish king, Lorck also cultivates an image of himself as an accomplished artist, stating that he went to the East because he had realized when he was studying in Rome that its artistic currents had their source in Greece, which had incited him to pursue this origin. "Greece," in this case, was a looser geographic concept than the present state of Greece, encompassing something like the Balkans and Western Asia Minor, as well as what we consider Greece proper. The attachment to the embassy was a chance to go to these otherwise almost inaccessible lands.

And so the artist took advantage of this opportunity. Lorck produced a substantial number of sketches and drawings, plus a few finished engravings during the sojourn. These provided the main source of his output for the rest of his life, as well as the foundation of his relative fame amongst his contemporaries. It is likely that he made some drawings for Busbecq and other members of the embassy, as that would have been one of the reasons for his posting in the first place. For one thing, there is a mention in Busbecq's first *Turkish Letter* of a drawing of the Column of Arcadios, a monumental column of c. 40 meters (c. 131 feet) in height decorated with spiral bands of relief, conceived as an eastern counterpart to the columns of Marcus Aurelius and Trajan in Rome, a wonder of the city for western travelers. Lorck did produce

at least one drawing of the column which is the most obvious candidate for Busbecq's drawing, even if the diplomat may also refer to other existing drawings that he might have owned at the time of the letter's publication in 1581.[5] We also know that Busbecq and his friend, the embassy's physician Willem Quackelbeen (Latinized as *Cotornossius*), sent samples as well as drawings of plants unknown in the West to the imperial physician and botanist Pietro Andrea Mattioli in Prague, and that they had a draughtsman sent from Vienna that they used for the purpose. This draughtsman must have been Lorck (Fischer, Bencard, and Rasmussen 1:103; Martels 437).

The famed "Prospect of Constantinople" and the portraits of Süleyman and Ismaïl earned Lorck the admiration and respect of his contemporaries, as is evident in the dedications and solicitations he received from scholars and publishers hoping for collaboration and access to the artist's unique material. But his finest contribution to our visual record of the Ottomans in the sixteenth century are his 128 woodcuts of Constantinople's people, buildings and material world, prepared for a publication that would have outshone any other. Unfortunately, the project was never completed in his lifetime. The woodcuts were only published a good forty years after his death.

Lorck was, of course, not the first artist to go to Constantinople and in spite of the fact that western artists there were scarce, most of them only passing through, there had been some important visits to the city that had produced eyewitness images of what in European eyes was an alien culture, as well as a feared and formidable enemy encroaching on the very heart of the continent. The Venetians had, through their close involvement with the Levant trade and the Ottoman neighborhood of their colonies, been the first and foremost to establish an imagery of the Turks from the end of the fifteenth century on.[6] From here artists such as Albrecht Dürer had imported the Ottoman types into the arts across the Alps, and an iconography of Turks had developed that supplanted the more general idea of 'oriental' types in biblical imagery with the more contemporary prototype.[7] Hereby, the biblical images had also gained a topical character connecting them to current events, a factor most clearly developed in relation to apocalyptic imagery. In this respect, Lutheran artists from the circle of Lucas Cranach the Elder and Matthias Gerung produced some of the most direct and violently anti-Turkish

interpretations that were to influence the theological discourse on the Turks, particularly, if not exclusively, among Protestants.

Other, more ethnographic or at least less hostile or prejudiced images were also brought back, often by artists attached to embassies and trade missions. The prominent Antwerp artist Pieter Coecke van Aelst had gone to the Ottoman capital for a year in 1533 in an attempt to gain orders for a series of tapestries like the ones his workshop was producing for central and western European courts. In 1553, not long before Lorck went to the East, Van Aelst's widow published the vast woodcut *Moeurs et fachons des Turks* (4.825 m x 44.5 cm), with scenes from the city and its surroundings, composed as a varied account of diverse practices of the different layers of Turkish society, Muslim and Christian alike. Supplementing the many written accounts of Ottoman customs and practices that began to abound from mid-century onwards, a few visual compendia saw publication. A particularly influential collection of images appeared in Nicolas de Nicolay's *Quatre premiers livres des navigations et pérégrinations orientales* (1567), which was quickly translated into German, Italian and English and published in many editions (Ilg, Höfert). Yet the images of Melchior Lorck, however, stand out even in comparison with those prominent 'ethnographic' images that gained a much wider reception at the time. Their visual strength and impact easily compete with the wonderful workmanship of Pieter Coecke van der Aelst's woodcut and far outdo the finely printed, but rather clumsily rendered figures in Nicolay's plates. With this view of the overall artistic and political context for Lorck's representations of the Ottoman capital, let us now consider the images themselves and what we can glean about their production.

Constantinople

One of the most captivating city views of early modern Europe is undoubtedly Lorck's panoramic view of Constantinople, known as the "Prospect of Constantinople" (Fig. 1 and 2). One of the largest cities in the Old World at the time, Constantinople is shown here at the Ottoman Empire's zenith of power under the Sultan Süleyman "Kanuni," the lawgiver, who was known in the West as "the Magnificent." Stretching c. 11.5 meters (37 feet 8.75 inches) in length at a height of c. 45 cm (17.75 inches), it outlines the skyline of the Ottoman capital from the tip of the Topkapı promontory to the bottom of the Golden Horn.

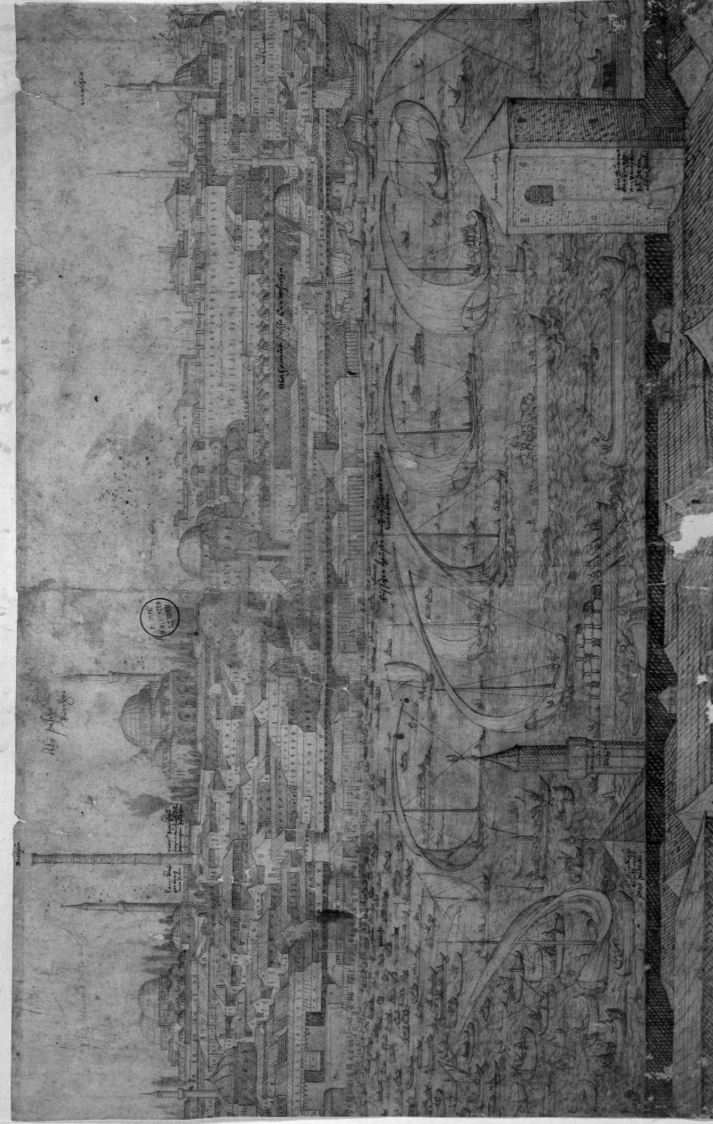

Fig. 1. Melchior Lorck, Prospect of Constantinople (sheet 08), c. 1560-1564, drawing in brown and black ink with watercolor, total dimensions (scroll divided in 21 sheets) 45 x 1145 cm / 17.7 in. x 37 ft. 6.8 in., Leiden, University Library, Inv. No.BPL 1758.

Fig. 2. Melchior Lorck, Prospect of Constantinople (sheet 11), c. 1560-1564, drawing in brown and black ink with watercolor, total dimensions (scroll divided in 21 sheets) 45 x 1145 cm / 17.7 in. x 37 ft. 6.8 in., Leiden, University Library, Inv. No.BPL 1758.

It is of delicate draughtsmanship, and full of detail that vividly describes the milling crowd of traders and sailors along the shore and on their boats in a way that suggests the great city's metropolitan character. Perusing the panorama, the spectator finds that this is a city of many layers, a hub of civilizations: Roman aqueducts, Byzantine churches, Ottoman mosques, Genoese ships and Turkish galleys mingle into a kaleidoscopic whole. The "Prospect" logically puts special emphasis on the monumental architecture of the city, which is distinguished from less prominent parts of the drawing by its detailed delineation and identifying inscriptions in German and Italian. The different inks of these inscriptions seem to indicate that the Italian glosses are later additions, probably made in order to supplement the information provided by the first set (in German), on the basis of other sources. The Italian inscriptions, for example, are mainly copied from Giovanni Andrea Vavassore's woodcut prospect of the city from ca. 1520. Their

difference and their at times smudgy appearance or redrawn character point to the fact that the "Prospect," for all its grandeur, is most likely a draft rather than a finished piece. The wording of some of the labels on the buildings supports this, as well. For instance, the Süleymaniye mosque, the splendid masterpiece of the architect Sinan, consecrated in 1557 while Lorck was in the city, features an annotation aimed at the artist himself or at a prospective woodcutter that would produce the blocks for a planned publication*:* "sol mit sampt alles ihrer zugehörenden Gebewe etwas grösser sein" (it must, just like all the buildings belonging to it, be somewhat larger) (Fischer, Bencard, and Rasmussen 4:16).

Despite its preliminary character, Lorck's prospect provides us with the most comprehensive image of the Ottoman capital in his day. Virtually all of the most important monuments in the city are represented here. Equally dominant and counterbalancing the Süleymaniye mosque is the sixth-century Justinian church of the Hagia Sophia, the largest church of Christianity for almost a millennium, until Mehmed II "Fatih," the Conqueror, turned it into a mosque in 1453. The sights of the city line up like a string of pearls: the Topkapı palace complex, the aqueduct of Valens, the mosque of Mehmed Fatih, the Theodosian walls, the pyramidal structure of Candarli Ibrahim Pasha's mosque, the mosque of Bayezid, the Arcadius column, the Yedikule fortress, the church of the Pantokrator, the Selimiye mosque, the Tekfur Sarayi and the Blachernae Palace.

However, the drawings do not provide a mere catalogue of monuments, but an eyewitness record of a busy and thriving metropolis. The sounds of life on the Golden Horn and on the Bosporus are almost audible. The thriving business of the day is not only due to lively commerce. An extensive array of ships is designated to carry either the Sultan's household or members of the foreign embassies of the city. Passing from the inlet of the strait are boats and galleys identified by their inscriptions as *Romischen Kaÿsers Bottschafft* ("embassy of the [Holy] Roman Emperor"), *Turckischen Kaÿsers Galehen* ("Galley(s) of the Turkish Emperor"), *Jenueser Bottschafft* ("Genoese Embassy"), *Venedischer Balÿo oder / Venediger Bottschafft* ("Venetian Bailo or Venetian embassy") or *persianische Bottschafft* ("Persian Embassy"). A number of ships carry only the inscription *Bottschafft* ("embassy"), leaving them unfinished or unidentified. Thus, the French embassy is

not mentioned, despite the close ties between France and the Sublime Porte at the time. A number of huge vessels resembling houseboats with only small window openings on the sides could hold the more secluded members of the Sultan's entourage, like the harem, but labels are not provided for these, either. Whether the depicted procession on the water really happened during Lorck's sojourn is not certain. Just as the prospect itself is composed of a number of sketches taken from different viewpoints and with different angles (Iuliano in: Fischer, Bencard, and Rasmussen 4: 16; Mango and Necipuglu; Westbrook, Rainsbury Dark, and van Meeuwen), so it appears that the action in the drawing is a construct intended to replenish the city view with meaningful detail and references to the significance of the city and its intermediary position between East and West, between antiquity and the present.

A particularly intriguing facet of the "Prospect of Constantinople" relates to its depiction of the artist within the city, and its allusion to the reason for his Turkish sojourn. At the lower rim of the prospect, the top of the fortifications of Galata are visible, with embattled towers and walls. The artist has depicted himself here, with his back to the beholder, but his head in profile, as he is about to draw the long scroll with the city view. On the nearby tower it says: *Das ortt zu / Gallatta / oder / Pera da ich / Melchior / Lorichs / die Statt am / meisten oder / den meisten / theil der Statt / ge Conterfeit / habe / Anno 1559*. ("The site at Galata or Pera where I, Melchior Lorck, mainly drew the city or, rather, the larger part of it. AD 1559.") The scene is a manifest fiction. The prospect was only drawn after his return to the West, as it would have been immensely unpractical to bring such a scroll to the top of a city wall for the sake of sketching out the view. But the imagined viewing stresses the eyewitness character of the drawing. And it also makes a claim about the artist himself, who is rendered as an elegant young courtesan, well groomed, in fashionable clothes. His elongated fingers hold the quill lightly as it easily touches the paper. His figure contrasts with the one assisting him, a turbaned Turk of comparably large proportions, who is handing him the ink well and holding the scroll in place. It appears that another figure of the same kind originally held up the other end of the scroll, but that it has been torn out of the paper at some point. The contrast between the two figures—the youthful artist with the blond curls commanding the situation and the heavy figure of the elderly Turk assigned the role of a passive helping

hand—advertises the sophistication of the artist, as a gentleman of artistic genius and cultural sophistication.[8]

This self-insertion follows models from some of Lorck's contemporaries in its "I was there" aspect, notably the view of the encampment outside Ingolstadt rendered by Hans Mielich in 1549, though in this case the artist features much less prominently. Yet another inscription strikes a different pose from the characteristic image of the artist pictured at work in the city. Flanking the conspicuous column of Constantine, known as the "Burnt Column" or *Çemberlitas*, the following words indicate the residence of the Holy Roman embassy: *Rom: Kaÿ: [-] Matt.etc. Bottschaftt / herberg [-] darin auch ich ML / mit Jnen [-] gefangen gelegen* ("the lodgings of the embassy of his Imperial Roman Majesty, where I, too, ML, was kept prisoner with them"). This last piece of information complicates the image of cheerful commotion on the Golden Horn. Obviously, Lorck's experience of Constantinople had a darker side to it, as the statement alludes to a state of conflict that was the cause of Lorck's stay in the city. He was there as part of an embassy in times of war, and he was for most of his sojourn not the free artist with an unfettered grasp of the city that he depicts himself to be in the image. On the contrary, for many months he had been confined, uncertain of his fate, in the heart of enemy territory. Nevertheless, it appears that at certain times he was accepted by the Turks, who may have allowed him a rather extended freedom of movement.

The Sultan

Some of Lorck's work seems to indicate that he came closer to the Sultan than most Europeans of the early modern period, ambassadors included. It is likely that Lorck had several roles to play. It was not uncommon in early modern Europe for rulers to exchange artists, or for one prince to lend them to another, even among rivals and enemies. It could be seen as a sign of good will and appeasement, as was the case when Venice willingly sent Gentile Bellini to the court of Mehmed II in 1479, following a request by the Sultan for a skilled artist (Raby; Renda). There are indications that Lorck may have been employed by Mehmed's great-grandson along similar lines, allowing him to enter into the presence of the Sultan much more easily than the ambassadors, who were rather strictly kept at bay, according to Busbecq.

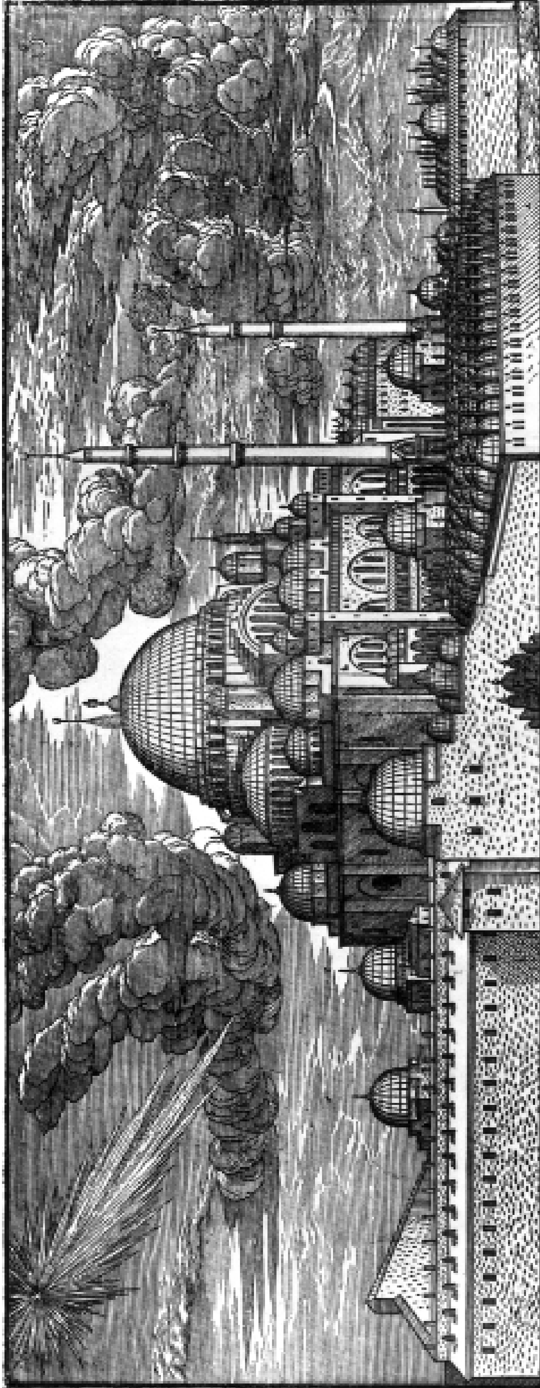

Fig. 3. Melchior Lorck, View of the Süleymaniyie mosque, 1570, woodcut, 18.4 x 52.5 cm / 7.2 in. x 20.7 in., London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. no. 1904,0206.107.1-121. © Trustees of the British Museum.

Certainly, Lorck produced some works which suggest that he had come close to the Sultan. One of the most striking is the woodcut showing the brand new mosque complex by Sinan, the Süleymaniye mosque (Fig. 3). The print is part of the *Turkish Publication* that will be dealt with more elaborately below. His view of the mosque is rendered from an angle that suggests that he was very close to or perhaps even inside the Topkapı Palace complex.[9]

Such possible access may indicate that Lorck could have been summoned to make a drawing or painting of the magnificent new building through which the Ottoman capital could claim rivalry with the vast structures of the city's Roman and Byzantine past. In fact, Süleyman the Magnificent was not specifically opposed to direct visual representation of the human form, though in his later years he embraced an orthodox Islamic skepticism towards images.

Another example is the large engraved portrait that Lorck made in 1562, but which, he states, shows the Sultan "most truthfully expressed" (*verissime expressa*) on 15 February 1559 (Fig. 4).

We cannot know how much truth there is to this claim. However, the portrait does not appear to be a fantasy and is probably based on some kind of visual encounter. This may have been from a distance when the Sultan passed by the embassy lodgings on his way to Friday prayers, but it could also have taken place during a face-to-face session in the palace. The conspicuous inscription in Arabic letters and Ottoman phrasing correctly spells out one of the Sultan's honorific designations, and could thus be aimed not only at a European audience with an interest in allegedly authentic features of the mighty, exotic enemy, but perhaps also at the Sultan himself and an audience of his own choosing. No doubt the print we know today was made in the West and for the West, but a version of the portrait could also have existed in Constantinople.

Indeed, the Latin inscription beneath the Sultan's portrait is elaborate, presumably directed at a Western audience. While the Arabic inscription could point to its verisimilitude and authenticity by allowing the possibility of the Sultan himself as part of its audience, the Latin inscription is aimed at an educated public and suggests that the portrait requires several layers of interpretation. The inscription therefore inserts the portrait into a specific discourse that by the power of association, molded it into something more than a depiction of a specific person.

Rather, the magnificent portrait of Sultan Süleyman was an example, a personification of imperial power and greatness.

Fig. 4. Melchior Lorck, Portrait of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, 1562, engraving, 40.7 x 28.9 cm / 16 in. x 11.4 in., Vienna, Albertina, Grafische Sammlung, Inv No. DG1937/17 © Albertina, Wien.

The inscription reads:

> The Emperor of the Turks in the East Süleyman, only son of Selim, who ascended in the same year 1520 when in Aachen Charles V, grandson of Emperor Maximilian, was made Christian Emperor of the West; made with greatest exactitude in Constantinople on 15 February 1559 by the most studied in antiquities, the Holsteiner Melchior Lorck from Flensburg.[10]

The idea of naming the Sultan "imperator" was not new; in fact, it was commonplace. Following a tradition particularly well established in the Holy Roman Empire and going back to the early sixteenth century, the designation can be seen an expression of the transfer and translation of empire from the Greeks or Byzantines to the Turks, whereby it maintains the idea of an East-West balance of power with a shared heritage, that of the Roman Empire (Bisaha).

The notion of the Sultan as heir to, rather than conqueror of, the Roman Empire was voiced very soon after the fall of Constantinople in the East and embraced by Mehmed the Conqueror, himself. Georges of Trapezunt (1395-1472/1484), for instance, hailed the Sultan as such and proclaimed that imperial power was the legitimate claim of the one occupying the seat of such power, that is, Constantinople (Thorau). Mehmed himself seems to have agreed and in his propaganda appropriated the Western (Roman) tradition of portrayal in paintings and medals, as he may have been heading for Rome in order to occupy the other seat of Roman imperial power when he conquered Otranto in 1480-81.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who in many respects set the tone for the Western rhetorical response to the Ottoman advance into Europe in his sermons and letters of the 1450s, even uses this cultural appropriation in a (mock?) attempt to convert the Sultan to Christianity and thereby pacify him. Piccolomini also set the tone for the very negative crusader-inspired image of the Turks as cruel barbarians, tracing their bloodline to the Scythians and thereby investing them with an image of marginality, brutality, inhumanity and "eastern-ness." To be sure, other humanists of the late fifteenth century connected Turks to Trojans, a move even Piccolomini had made at an earlier time in his career, and conceived of ecumenical connections, granting the Turks a place within the European nations (Hankins 135-44). The double image of the Turks and their Sultan as a cruel race ("them"), a terrible threat for Christian Europe ("us"), on the one hand, and as a legitimate, if adversarial member among the European powers, on the other, would last for centuries. The designation of the Sultan as Eastern (or sometimes Turkish) Emperor was thus a commonplace, and it displays an inherent understanding of the Ottoman Empire as the legitimate heir to the Eastern Roman Empire that it had vanquished a century before.

Because it was directed at a rather more learned audience, the dichotomy expressed in the inscription could count on a whole range of associations that were as much a part of the construction of identity in Western Christianity as in Eastern Islam. Indeed, the pairing of Ottomans and Habsburgs followed from a longstanding discourse that contrasted East and West, which had its roots in ancient Greece. This rhetoric of difference proffered real or mythical representations of Eastern peoples, such as the Persians, the Scythians or the Amazons, as barbaric counterparts to their own civilization. The dichotomy was translated into a dichotomy between Rome and Greece in Roman times, even if they effectively shared the same civilization. This dichotomy then continues into the schism between Catholicism and Orthodoxism, identified with their respective centers in Rome and Constantinople. These cities were, in turn, the ideal or actual centers of the competing Empires that saw themselves as the heirs to the Roman Empire. The antagonism between the two Christian empires was thus smoothly transformed into an antagonism between the Holy Roman Empire and the Empire of the Rûm, the Ottoman Empire, when it took Constantinople as its capital in 1453. The structure of world history, the division into a "them" and "us" thus remained intact, even if the players changed. Even Mehmed II, the Fatih or the Conqueror, embraced this worldview and adopted the idea of a world empire divided but meant to be reunited, a central trait in the ideology of the Holy Roman Empire throughout the Middle Ages. Thus, when Mehmed attacked and conquered Otranto in 1481, his wish could have been to overtake Rome itself and thereby style himself as universal ruler and reuniter to the Roman Emperor, as *restitutor imperii*.

The antagonism between Eastern and Western offshoots of the Roman Empire became folded into the conflict between Muslims and Christians, drawing on ideologies and battles of the Carolingians and the later crusaders against the East. In the realities of the sixteenth century, the building blocks of this ideological construction were strongly exposed in the context of continuous war, in Hungary or Rhodes, Tunis or Malta. In Lutheran eschatology, the real world was interpreted as a dichotomy of good empire versus evil empire, the surge of the Antichrist and the coming of the Last Days. Though this rhetoric of conflict informed the production and circulation of the portrait of the Sultan, the Latin inscription quoted above nevertheless presents a

rather neutral, explanatory form that can been read as nothing more than a statement of the Ottoman ruler's paramount importance to world affairs.

Everyday Life

Most of the Turkish images we know from Lorck's hand were made after his return from Constantinople. His sketches of daily life in Constantinople got lost in the reworking process or were perhaps deemed inferior in quality and interest. Their scarcity makes it hard to judge conclusively, however, if the few sketches that survive are indeed his. If they are, he certainly seems to have had much freer hands or a more daring character than most of his contemporary Westerners in the Ottoman capital. For instance, in one of his sketches he shows dancers and prostitutes, most likely the first depictions of their kind from daily life in the city (Madar, *Before the Odalisque* 8). These individuals were hardly accessible to the other members of the embassy that were closely watched and controlled in their movements, as is clear from Busbecq's letters.

On the other hand, Lorck was not free to move around at all times, as we have seen. He clearly states that he was kept in confinement with the rest of the embassy. This confinement was enforced in two periods during Lorck's stay and lasted a total of one and a half years, the first beginning almost immediately after Busbecq's arrival in the city, in January 1556. Perhaps this accounts for the small number of pictures produced during Lorck's first years in the city. The ones he made were portraits of the three ambassadors, a few depictions of animals—perhaps some of those we know Busbecq spent time collecting in the quarters of the embassy—, and a few views from the embassy building.

One of the most charming is the view over the rooftops toward the Sea of Marmara (Fig. 5). It is drawn from the top of the lodgings, the so-called *Elçi Han* (i.e. German caravanserai), which was situated on the main road, high in the city, not far from the palace quarters. Busbecq describes the same scene in his third letter:

> It is situated on high ground in the most densely populated quarter of Constantinople. The back windows provide a delightful view over the sea in the distance, though near enough to enable me to see the dolphins leaping and sporting in the water, while far away

> the Asiatic Olympus can be discerned, white with perennial snow. It [the building] is open to all the breezes and is therefore regarded as a healthy place of residence; the Turks, however, grudging such amenities to foreigners, not content with having blocked the view with iron bars on the windows, have added parapets, which impede both the view and the free enjoyment of fresh air. This appears to have been done in deference to the complaints of the neighbours, who declared that they had no privacy from the gaze of the Christians. (Busbecq 64)

Fig. 5. Melchior Lorck, View looking south over Constantinople's roofs; in the background, the Sea of Marmara, c. 1555-1559, drawing in pen and brown ink, 20.8 x 32.6 cm / 8.2 in x 12.8 in., Copenhagen, National Gallery of Art, The Royal Collection of Graphic Art, Inv. No. KKSgb4625.

Busbecq's view was from a window that was facing in a different direction, but his description still fits Lorck's drawing almost perfectly. The drawing provides us with a unique glimpse of the back of the city, so to speak, a non-monumental aspect of the buildings that has otherwise never been recorded in this era. Lorck may have climbed to the roof in order to be able to record the different roof types sweeping toward the horizon. In the distance one sees the tip of the Arcadius column. To the right are seen the small domes of the Qur'an school or madrasah

connected to the Atik Ali Pasha mosque, the minaret of which is just visible to the far right. It is intriguing to consider the possibility that Lorck found a space with no bars or parapets blocking the windows, and that he thus managed to avoid such obstacles to get a view. Parapets are visible on the building to the left, a small head just visible as it peeps out in our direction through a tiny opening. The drawing was never finished, despite the effort put into the completion of all the small tiles and other surface details in other parts of the scene.

One particular detail may provide the explanation for the insertion of barriers, as it appears Lorck himself may have constituted one of the reasons the neighbors felt their privacy disturbed by the Christians from the West: behind the wooden parapets attached to the building to the left, but visible from the high view point of the draughtsman, a balcony with a lovemaking couple comes into sight. Could the draughtsman have been forced to interrupt his drawing by being caught spying? What appears to be a mere exercise in composition of architectural elements and surfaces suddenly reveals a human story, and triggers the imagination and curiosity of the viewer in quite an unexpected way. Had the drawing been made in the nineteenth century, it could easily have been interpreted as an example of Orientalist prejudice against Turks, who were frequently depicted as both lascivious and lazy. Lorck most certainly did refer to commonplace prejudices of his time, particularly in his religious and satirical prints aimed at the Pope or even at the Turks. His etching of *The Pope as Wild Man in Hell* (1545) and his 1568 pamphlet, *A Song on the Turk and Anti-Christ*, are outspokenly antagonistic and hostile in their propaganda. Nonetheless, these negative representations of Turks were not dominant in his work. Other depictions of Turks by Lorck do not deploy or engage this negative rhetoric. Thus, the lovemaking couple does seem to steer clear of negative images or even the impulse to render Turks as "other," offering instead a straightforward eyewitness recording of a tiny, marvelously intimate corner of the Ottoman capital 450 years ago.

Another drawing showing the view from the Elcı Han is known only from its later translation into a woodcut in 1576. This is the view of the so-called Atik Ali Pascha Mosque from an oblique angle, which is unusual among Lorck's woodcuts, from a compositional point of view, and one of the most powerful in visual impact (Fig. 6). The viewpoint was most likely from the extreme corner of the embassy's

lodgings, furthest away from the mosque, at the opposite end of the building from which the view over the rooftops was taken; again, it was made from the top of the building, gazing over the roofs of the nearby imaret or pilgrims' lodge, and over the surrounding wall towards the mosque itself.

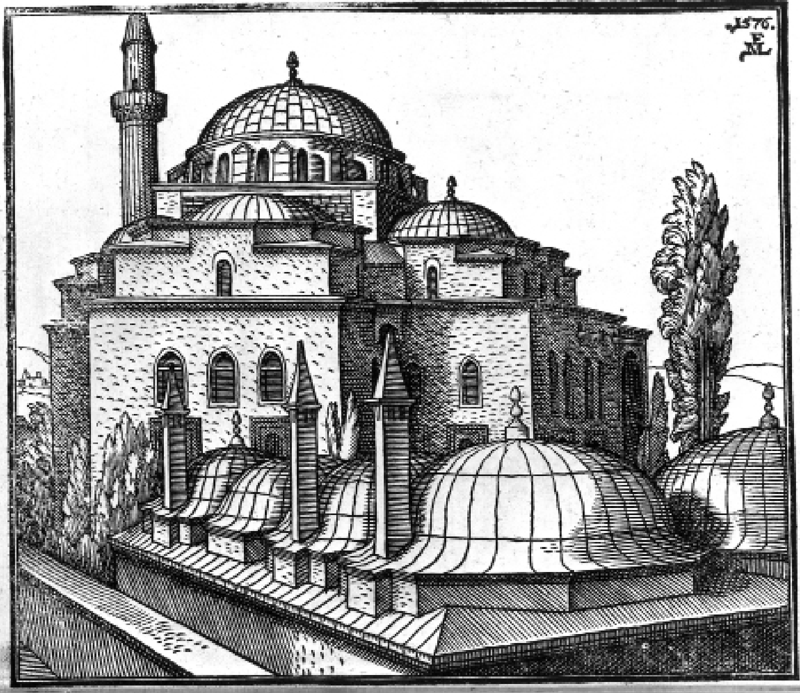

Fig. 6. Melchior Lorck , View of the Atik Ali Pasha mosque, 1576, woodcut, 18.0 x 20.7 cm / 7.1 in. x 8.1 in.,London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. no. 1871,0812.465. © Trustees of the British Museum.

The woodcut is a good example of Lorck's style and, for all its unusual angles, attests to his mastery of composition that is in part responsible for his renown as among the best and most original artists working in Germany in the second half of the sixteenth century. All the elements of curves, oblique lines and straight verticals are perfectly balanced, dynamically assembled and rendered in a style dominated by strong lines and sharp contrasts. They fuse together in a potent woodcut style that follows in the footsteps of Albrecht Dürer and the elegant elastics

of mannerism. The result is an unforgettably compelling image.

As with this example, most of Lorck's Constantinople material was later redrawn and for the most part made into woodcuts, while the sketches and drawings from the city itself were lost or even destroyed after their use as models for finished works. We have only one example left of a sketch that we can follow through successive stages of the later adaptations. It shows three female musicians playing harps and tambourines, accompanying a dancer. In the background one seems to look out of a window towards a slave market. The sketch is very hasty and quite unlike the style in Lorck's finished drawings, but it is possible to ascribe it to him on the basis of its accompanying inscriptions that appear to be in his handwriting. Also, this particular sketch forms the basis for both a drawn model for a woodcut that was never produced, and for the last woodcut we know from Lorck's hand. The two female harpists in the sketch are developed into separate images: a drawing of a male harpist from 1576 and a female harpist in a woodcut from 1583. In the sketch, several layers are visible, revealing the processes of reworking or rethinking that it has gone through. The female harpist to the right thus is seen to have been revised into a male musician, even if this alteration is somewhat faint and barely discernible today. What we can see from this example is that Lorck produced a quite substantial number of perhaps rather loose sketches that he would keep as a repository of stock motifs to be mined for the rest of his career.

In fact, the collection of the English diarist John Evelyn included an entire portfolio of sketches by Lorck, compiled with copies made from his finished woodcuts, probably extracted from a larger set of sketches from Turkey, lost today. These indicate that such material might still have existed by the mid-1640s, when Evelyn bought the portfolio somewhere in Northern Europe. Also, a manuscript now in Vienna, written and illustrated by a Flemish traveler to Constantinople named Lambert Wÿts (or: Wijts), comprises, among other images, twenty-two drawings that appear to be based partly on copies of Lorck's sketches for later woodcuts, and partly on sketches very similar in conception, and thus very likely by Lorck, as well. As Wÿts was the friend and neighbour of Hubert Goltzius in Malines (Mecheln), a prominent historian and numismatic who was in close contact with Lorck about the time of the manuscript's composition in the early 1570s, he may provide the link

to now lost sketches by Lorck (Fischer 1974).

While the first years that Busbecq, Lorck, and the rest of the embassy's entourage spent in Constantinople were marked by prolonged periods of confinement, which limited the production of sketches and drawings, the last year or so appears to have brought more freedom of movement and thus more opportunities for observation. Busbecq recounts how he was able to follow Süleyman and his army to the other side of the Bosporus, to Kadiköy, where they would lie encamped for months preparing for battle against Mohammed, one of two sons of Sultan Süleyman who survived the traditional killing of all but one of the sons of the ruler in the Ottoman dynasty, a tradition that prevented civil wars among the sons after a sultan had died. Busbecq is able to observe the structure and discipline of the Ottoman military system at close hand, allowed to walk around incognito for months, clad as a local Christian. As the major part of Lorck's later production shows members of the Ottoman army and its baggage train, it would seem likely that he had a chance to stay in the vicinity of the army on this occasion, as well. His later employment in the imperial Habsburg corps of *Hartschiers* (the mounted honorary guard of the emperor in Vienna) and his participation with Busbecq in the campaign in Hungary in 1566—in which Süleyman died at the siege of Szigetvár—suggest he gained a reputation as someone who knew the enemy from personal experience.

Back in Europe

Interestingly enough, however, after his return from Turkey in late 1559, Lorck's immediate impetus was not to start working on military themes. The intellectual environment upon his return was marked by humanistic interests. Vienna was a center of politics, attracting a fair number of historians and humanists connected to the courts of the Emperor Ferdinand and of his heir apparent, Maximilian, but also to the city's university. Their interest was less attuned to the military and contemporary aspects Lorck had witnessed abroad, and much more so to the Roman and Byzantine past of Constantinople. Accordingly, Lorck produced drawings of the ancient monuments he had seen, such as the above mentioned Arcadius column, but also of the reliefs of the still extant base of the obelisk in the hippodrome (Atmaydan), erected under Theodosius the Great in 390 A.D., and another base, possibly

from Constantine's column, erected in 330 A.D. Not least, Lorck worked on the great "Prospect of Constantinople" that introduced us to the artist. All these finely drawn records of the venerable city and its remains were very likely meant for reproduction and helped establish Lorck's name in learned circles, assuring that his fame quickly spread across the Empire and gained him suitors among publishers and patrons.

Among the first prospective patrons to contact him was one from his homeland. This indicates that his original patrons had not entirely forgotten the artist's old promise to rejoin the service of the Danish king after his studies. This promise was more than ten years old by 1560 when the brother of King Christian III, Duke Hans (John) the Elder of Schleswig-Holstein, approached him with a letter after having heard from his envoys in Vienna that his natural subject had returned from the East and was now attracting attention. The duke wanted portraits of the Sultan and his wives, and of princes and rulers in Austria and adjacent realms. They were to be installed in Hansborg, his palace under construction in Hadersleben. From what we know, Lorck did paint portraits of the Sultan and other princes for the courts in Vienna, but they are unidentified today and possibly lost. There was a series of sultanate portraits attributed to the artist among the pictures that were destroyed in the conflagration that devastated the Palace of Christiansborg in Copenhagen in 1884. He may have made several others of the kind, as they were obviously sought after by the mighty in Europe.[11] As was his habit, Lorck showed a casual attitude toward noble patronage; in fact, there is no evidence he ever delivered anything the duke had requested. When he finally sent something two and a half years later in 1563, it was not paintings, but engravings, which was perhaps a wise choice, considering Lorck's lesser capabilities as a painter. In looking at the documents that record his patronage ties, one senses that Lorck was both a master of excuses, and an able negotiator. When he answered the Duke, he simultaneously sent a letter with gifts to the nobleman's nephew, the new Danish king Frederik II, cleverly offering his service as both artist and secret agent in Vienna. He asked for financial support, though he made no commitment to return to Denmark.

Along with the letter, Lorck sent the autobiographical account (mentioned above) that remains one of our most important sources for his early career, plus ten examples of two fabulous portrait engravings.

These were the same ones that he sent to Duke Hans instead of the ordered portrait paintings. They show Sultan Süleyman (Fig. 4) and Ismaïl, a Persian ambassador at the Sublime Porte. Both are masterpieces of their kind, extraordinary in size for their medium and highly accomplished both in technique and characterization of the subjects. Lorck accomplished two things by this move: on the one hand, he pacified Duke Hans with these splendid portraits, even if they were not what the patron had commissioned, thereby freeing himself from an obligation to the duke and making himself available for more prestigious royal commissions. On the other hand, he positioned himself to serve the king, paving the way for possible employment, and securing a substantial financial subsidy, to be brought to him in Vienna by his own brother, Andreas, who had just gained high favors with the King in his own right.

The occasion for the portraits is not certain. But no doubt Lorck saw the potential in these engravings that could serve both as fulfillment of the robust demand for portraits of the Sultan and as an opportunity for promoting himself by means of the reproducible and easily distributable medium of engraving. The inscriptions on the parapets that line the bottoms of the prints are also the first occasion of the artist's use of his not very modest self-designation "antiquitatis studiosissimus" (most erudite in antiquities), underlining his identification with the images of the antiquities of Constantinople and his familiarity with humanistic discourse.

One occasion may present itself as the possible spark for the execution of the portraits. In November 1562 the imperial heir apparent was to be elected and crowned King of the Romans in Frankfurt. This event coincided with Busbecq's return from Constantinople, as he had finally been able to negotiate a peace agreement with the Sublime Porte. Following him back to Frankfurt was the Dragoman Ibrahim with an Ottoman entourage. The exotic train that passed through a long stretch of Austria and southern Germany was a matter of keen interest for a broad cross-section of the local populations. As representative of the Ottoman Sultan, Ibrahim (the Polish-born Joachim Strasz) gave a speech at the Frankfurt coronation festivities, congratulating the elected king and lauding the newly won peace. Due to the wonder and amazement that the dragoman and his entourage had created, as

well as the possibility of conciliation between the Ottoman and Holy Roman Empires, his speech was widely distributed in print, appearing in several editions and languages in the months following the event (Rasmussen). The reactions point to a certain degree of public "Turkish fever" in Germany that could have been the stimulus for Lorck's two prints. In his above-mentioned letter to the Danish king, however, Lorck presents them as dedicated to King Frederik II, although this is not mentioned anywhere in the print's inscription.

The portraits of Süleyman and Ismaïl from late 1562 were Lorck's breakthrough as an artist and established him as someone with a special expertise in Turkish motifs—a field that had already begun to become an important strand in Europe's visual culture. Their success may have triggered the idea of a larger publication that would become a mainstay of the rest of his career. The *Turkish Publication* was, when it was finally published in Hamburg in 1626, only a small portion of what was originally intended (Lorck 1626; facsimile in: Fischer, Bencard & Rasmussen, vol.2). Lorck seems to have conceived of the idea of a thorough compendium of Turkish society somewhere around 1570. After his work on the prospect and the renderings of the antiquities of Constantinople, which never came into publication as prints, he may have been approached by the Frankfurt publisher Sigismund Feyerabend, who dated one of his dedications to Lorck as early as August 1564, though it was only published in 1569. Certainly, Lorck began his first renderings of Turkish military standards and of mosques and other buildings in the years between 1565 and 1570, prints that were incorporated into the *Turkish Publication* of 1626.

In the years around 1570 Melchior Lorck lived in Hamburg, employed by the city as cartographer and architect. There he embarked on a the creation of a costume book. In 1573 Lorck went to Antwerp, the publishing center of Northern Europe at the time, perhaps in search for a publisher for this project. Here, he entered the circle of Abraham Ortelius, Christoph Plantin, Philip Galle, and other key players in the city's thriving book trade. In contact with these noted innovators, Lorck conceived of a new and almost encyclopedic work of contemporary Ottoman society in word and image.

In 1574, he published a small book, the last known copy of which was unfortunately lost in the firestorms of Hamburg that raged from July to October 1943. The book was both a republication of the two

large portrait prints from 1562, as indicated by the title *Soldan Soleyman Tvrckhischen Khaysers, vnd auch Furst Ismaelis auß Persien, Whare vnd eigendtliche contrafectung vnd bildtnuß* (the true and faithful counterfeit and image of Sultan Süleyman, the Turkish emperor, and also of Prince Ismail of Persia), and a means for self-promotion, as he published with them the 1563 autobiographical letter to King Frederik II. He produced two new portraits of Süleyman and Ismaïl, as well. These new depictions were full length, set against the background of views from Constantinople, and embellished with accompanying poems written by Paulus Melissus and a certain Conrad Leicht. Finally, he announced his intention to bring forth a book that would describe in detail the Ottoman state, its different territories, its structure, the civil and military institutions, the peoples and classes, the customs and way of life, based on his own observations and the knowledge he had gained during his sojourn there. His ambitious plans for the publication may have been encouraged by Nicolas de Nicolay's immediate success, but also by the publishing circles with which he had engaged and which could no doubt see the potential in such an undertaking, not least in the context of political and military interests.

Lorck was compelled to leave Antwerp as he feared a Spanish attack on the city that was heavily implicated in the Dutch insurgency against Spanish dominion and its resistance to the hard line Catholic policies of King Philip II in the North. As a Protestant, Lorck did the same as many thousands of Protestant and reformed Flemings, who emigrated to the northernmost provinces or abroad to Protestant strongholds of France, Northern Germany, or Denmark. Lorck went back to Hamburg for a while, and though he continuously struggled with limited financial means, dedicated the rest of his life primarily to the grand Turkish project. In 1580—thirty years after he had promised to do so—he finally went to Denmark to enter the king's service, and yet he does not appear to have used his time as royal counterfeiter for the king's projects, as he should have, and was released from service in late 1582. As most of the existing woodcuts for the *Turkish Publication* are dated to the years of this employment to the king, one of the reasons for his relatively short career in Denmark may be that he spent most of his time on those instead of on portraits and other royal commissions.

Lorck continued to use Antwerp woodcutters for a number of the prints, as is clear from the woodcutters' signatures on them. But due

to the aggravation of the conflict in the Netherlands he eventually had to find others to help him. A fair number of the later woodcuts seem to have been cut by the German Jacob Anton Bringhausen, who was reportedly employed by Lorck from March 1582 in Denmark. It is also very likely that the woodcuts we know today do not constitute the whole range of planned motifs, or even the prepared drawings ready to be cut. We know of a few drawings no doubt made as models for a block cutter, but never finished as prints.

After Lorck lost his employment to the Danish king, we lose track of him, and no trace has come to light so far of how the blocks with the Turkish motifs turned up in Hamburg forty years later, or where they had been kept in the meantime. It is quite likely that Lorck himself returned to that city and left his material behind there when he died.

Posthumous Impact and Publication

The first edition of the *Turkish Publication* finally saw the light in Hamburg in 1626 as a publication without any text at all to accompany the images. Another edition came out in 1641, and a third in 1646, again in Hamburg, this time with an index to explain the images. Surprisingly, this index does not fit the order of the images and in some cases refers to material outside the published book. Most confusing is the note for one of the pictures, where different buildings are marked with letters, and the explanatory note ends with the assertion that "the meaning of the other letters can be gained from the original manuscript." But which original manuscript? The obvious answer would be a manuscript available to the printer, who did not, however, look things up, but simply printed what would have been a remark by the publisher that the printer should finish the list himself. We can thus surmise that it is likely that the accompanying text for the images that Lorck announced in his 1574 publication in Antwerp was still available to the Hamburg publisher behind the 1646-edition: Tobias Gundermann.

The next time the prints were published, they accompanied the publications of Eberhard Werner Happel, which consisted in newspaper accounts of the Turkish wars in 1683-84, called the *Türckischer Estaats- und Krieges-Bericht* (Turkisch State and War Report) published by Thomas von Wiering as a serial publication that appeared in 137 installments.[12] Here the century old images were used to illustrate

current events, not as news, but rather as a kind of background story that would also offer an insight into Turkish society. Happel compiled several textual sources for his newsletters, among which are some that appear to be not only descriptive, but even explanatory of Lorck's woodcuts, in a way that could hardly have been likely if they had not been composed by the very maker of those woodcuts, complementing the visual with a textual description of what could either not be seen or needed further elaboration. The same goes for Happel's huge book, the *Thesaurus Exoticorum*, published in 1688 by the same Hamburg office, which once again includes most of Lorck's woodcuts and the engraved portraits of the Sultan and the Persian ambassador Ismaïl in a description of the world outside Europe. In all likelihood, then, by the end of the seventeenth century, a large part of Melchior Lorck's project of a comprehensive description of the Ottoman Empire from the 1570s and 1580s was still present in both word and image, unfinished, no doubt, but existent nonetheless (Fischer, Bencard & Rasmussen 3:12-20).

What we know today and what we can reconstruct is thus only a fragment of what may have been the ensemble of Lorck's work. Still, it forms the most comprehensive and powerful visual record of the Ottoman Empire, and its capital in particular, that has come down to us from the time of its flowering under Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent.

Despite the fact that Lorck never saw his ambitious project realized, his impact was felt as soon as his drawings, or perhaps preliminary prints of some of his blocks, were copied. When they finally saw the light of day in the seventeenth century, they captured the imagination of a number of the best known artists in Europe. The Italian Stefano della Bella used them as models for his rendering of the entry into Rome of the Polish embassy in 1632. Rembrandt, who very often used 'oriental' types in his paintings and prints, owned a copy of them. Nicolas Poussin copied Lorck as well. The magnificent "Prospect of Constantinople" had passed into the possession of the important Dutch Van der Does (Douza) family around 1590 and was prominently displayed on the wall of the library of Leyden University, the center of learning in the young rebel state of the Northern Netherlands throughout most of the seventeenth century. No Spanish copy of Lorck has surfaced so far, to my knowledge, but due to the lively artistic exchange between Flanders and Spain, the appearance of his drawings in Spain would

come as no surprise.

Melchior Lorck never entered the Parnassus of eternal fame as an artist, but he was never forgotten, either. He was canonized in the artists' biographies of Carel van Mander. The landmark atlas of city views by Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg, the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, credits Lorck as the man behind the magnificent images from Turkey, which even today retain their powers of fascination. The rising interest in the relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in the early modern era in recent decades has made him once again a focus of attention.

His primary contribution to the history of the relation between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empires should be understood as the production of reproducible and distributable images of a range and quality that would allow them to be used in a number of different discourses about the Turks. Through their eyewitness quality and their high artistic skill they exhibit a much more open-minded and diversified approach to the Ottoman Turk, who was the great enemy and "other," but one who appears so multifaceted, cultivated and sophisticated that he would have to be seen as an equal. Lorck's images of the Turks accordingly would come to function as a mirror with which to clarify and define Europeans' ideas about themselves in a much more diversified and multifaceted fashion.

NOTES

[1] An example of the importance of a common Christendom identified as such in the face of the Turks is found in as unlikely a figure as Martin Luther, who argued that Christendom, regardless of confession, had to obey the temporal ruler in the person of the Emperor in the fight against the Turks as a military enemy, even if the same Emperor, because of his Catholicism, was to be seen as an enemy of the true faith, which in Luther's eyes was of course reformed Christianity.

[2] For the humanistic aspect of the embassy, which both Verancics and Busbecq used for study purposes as well as diplomatic ones, see Ács.

[3] "Letzlich bin ich vvider aus der Barbaria durch vvunderbarliche weg vnd mitl, aus sonderer verhelffung dess Allmechtigen, mit grosser lebensgefar vnd muhe, Gott ewigs lob, gluckhlich vviderumben herauss vnd alheer gehn VVien, in Osterreich ankhomen [...]" (Finally, I have returned from the Barbary by strange paths and through the special help of the Almighty, enduring great danger for my life and much trouble, God be eternally praised, and I felicitously escaped and came here to Vienna [...]); (Fischer, Bencard and Rasmussen 1:161-178).

[4] Fischer, Bencard and Rasmussen 1:194-209. The passage reads: "Auch […] Melchior Lorichs mit seiner Khunst des mahlens und was dem selben anhängig, darinnen er Vor andern berüembt ist, uns und unserm freündlichen geliebten Sohn, Herrn Maximilian dem andern Römisch auch Zu Hungern und Behaim Kunig etc. In der Türckeÿ dahin wir Jhen mit ettlichen unsern Legaten und Pottschafften geordnet haben, mit Gefar und wagnüs seines Leibs und Lebens, und sonst an andern mehr Orten in vilfelttig wegen [...]" (Also [nobility is confirmed for] Melchior Lorichs with his art of painting and what belongs thereto, in which he is famed before others, [who has served] us and our friendly beloved son, Lord Maximilian the second, Roman as well as Hungarian and Bohemian King etc., in Turkey whereto we ordered him to go with several of our emissaries and ambassadors, in danger of his life and body, and also in other places in many ways […].")

[5] Among the possible other candidates are the drawings in the so-called *Freshfield album*, made by a member of the German embassy in 1574. This set of drawings could have been acquired by Busbecq after the return of the envoys or the artist to Vienna, where Busbecq was in charge of the court library and increasingly began to cultivate his humanist interests) (Fischer, Bencard, and Rasmussen 1:102).

[6] See *Bellini and the East*; Rodini.

[7] See, for example, Madar, Silver, and Jardine and Brotton.

[8] The compass on the turban of the Turk, so far unnoticed in the literature and only recently brought to attention in Güran and Abali, is a puzzle. Güran and Abali suggest it indicates that the assistant is more than just a stock character, but rather a skilled artisan. These authors' attempt to identify him with Sinan, the great Ottoman architect of his day, is hardly convincing, though, particularly

given the second, now missing figure that appears to have had a similar place in the image. If one of the figures is Sinan, who is the other individual whose image was later removed?

[9] I thank Dr. Seyfi Kenan of Marmara University, Istanbul, who was so kind as to discuss the possible viewing point with me, suggesting that while the direction was certainly from the direction of the palace, an actual position inside the palace that I myself had been contemplating was not likely, given the low viewing angle.

[10] The original text thus reads: "Imago Svleymanni tvrcorvm imp.in oriente, vnici Selimy filii, qvi an. Do. MDXX in imperio svccessit: qvo eti= / am anno Carolvs . V . Maxæmyliani cæsaris nepos Aqvisgrani in occidente coronatvs est Christian: imp: a Melchio= / re Lorichs flensbvrgensi, holsatio, antiqvitatis stvdiosisso, Constantinopoli, an. MDLIX, men. Feb., die XV, verissime expressa."

[11] Fischer, Bencard and Rasmussen 1:164

[12] For Happel's publications, which used Lorck's illustrations, see Tatlock.

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