# Europe's Turkish Nemesis

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Americans who lived through the Cold War with the Soviet Union from World War II until the late twentieth century probably can well imagine from the Iron Curtain what life was like across the Christian-Muslim frontier during the sixteenth century. Ever since the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, threats from both military attack as well as ideological war against the alien religion of Islam preoccupied the consciousness and created a climate of fear in European Christian states. Nowhere was this anxiety concerning the rival superpower greater than within the loose German-speaking confederation known as the Holy Roman Empire, led by Habsburg emperor Maximilian I (r. 1493–1519).[1] Indeed the eventual frontier between Catholics and Muslims, established after the battle of Mohács in Hungary (1526), still coincides almost exactly with the modern, hostile frontier between Catholic Croatia and Orthodox Serbia (Catholics who remained behind the Ottoman lines were forced to convert to Islam and became the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina).


Fig. 1 Map of the Danube, by Willem and Johann Blaeu, *Novus Atlas* (Amsterdam, 1636).

In an atlas map of the Danube watershed, produced by Johann Blaeu in Amsterdam during the 1630s we see this confrontation institutionalized around the image caption (fig. 1). Here this heightened awareness of both a political and religious frontier, manned against a mysterious and foreign enemy at the border, is personified by the confrontation of two pairs of figures. On one side, the east, a sultan with an elaborate turban brandishes his scimitar above a round shield with the crescent moon of Islam. His female companion, surely an allegory of the Muslim faith, stands contemptuously upon a crucifix and dispenses the exotic scent of incense; but she is scantily clad in a revealingly low-cut dress, certainly is not a figure to admire. In case the viewer missed these obvious visual cues, a noxious toad rests on the ground between these Ottoman personifications. By contrast,



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on the western side of the standoff, a handsome bearded ruler figure in armor steadfastly confronts this enemy with a broadsword. His shield displays the double-headed eagle of the Holy Roman Empire, and his crown resembles the official *Bügelkrone*; complementing his orb of office, he wears the exclusive pendant of the noble Order of the Golden Fleece, headed by the Habsburgs. His female companion, who personifies the Christian religion, holds her crucifix upright and wears a distinctly modest gown.

Throughout the sixteenth century Turks were regarded in apocalyptic terms by leading Christian thinkers as a scourge of God. This attitude began early: we can already find it prominently advanced in Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools* (1494).[2] In Chapter 99, 'Of the Decline of the Faith,' Brant intones about Christendom,

> At first the cruel heretic
> did tear and wound it to the quick
> and then Mohammed shamefully
> abused its noble sanctity
> with heresy and base intent. […]
> So strong the Turks have grown to be
> they hold the ocean not alone,
> the Danube too is now their own,
> they make their inroads when they will,
> bishoprics, churches, suffer ill […]

But the poet places his trust in the young Emperor-elected to be the antidote,

> The noble Maximilian,
> he merits well the Roman crown.
> They'll surely come into his hand,
> the Holy Earth, the Promised Land.

Many of the woodcut illustrations in Brant's popular volume were designed by the young Albrecht Dürer, the same artist who produced some of the earliest German images of Ottoman Turks. Beginning with his first visit to Venice in 1494, Dürer turned his omnivorous gaze to the substantial community of Turkish visitors, documenting their exotic dress.[3] He seriously engaged with this unfamiliar nationality, which had such a strong trade presence in Venice, and his curiosity resulted in a series of drawings that emphasize distinctive costumes.[4] Some of these colored drawings of 'orientals' by Dürer survive in copies, indicating their importance as models, used for later reference by his many followers and credited with an on-site accuracy. However, several of these drawings actually derive, not from studies of costumed models, but rather from earlier artworks by local Venetian painters, particularly Gentile Bellini, who had even visited Istanbul earlier on a diplomatic mission (figs. 2-3).[5]



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Fig. 2 Albrecht Dürer, Three Turkish Men, ca. 1495.

Fig. 3 Gentile Bellini, Procession in Piazza San Marco, 1496, detail of three Turkish men in background, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.

Other Dürer drawings expressly focus on the military trappings and skills of Turkish soldiers, specifically their archery (fig. 4). This other preoccupation—a focus on Turks as formidable military enemies—would strongly inflect not only Dürer's own presentations but also those of many of his later German followers.

Fig. 4 Albrecht Dürer, Oriental family of an ottoman archer, 1496, Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana.

Fig. 5 Albrecht Dürer, Oriental Ruler seated on his Throne, ca. 1496/97), Washington, National Gallery.

Fig. 6 Albrecht Dürer, Apocalypse Series, 1497, pl. 2: Torture of St. John the Evangelist.

In the wake of his 1494 visit to Venice, Dürer also produced a drawing study (fig. 5) for an uncompleted engraving: an *Oriental Ruler Seated on his Throne* (ca. 1496/97).[6] In this fantasy image any first-hand experience of Turks in Venice is overwhelmed by an intimidating suggestion of both power and majesty as well as stern menace. Details of this exotic foreign costume still preoccupy the artist. A distinctive crowned turban (probably imaginary) marks the royal rank and status of this



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frontal, enthroned figure; its encrusted round jewels are echoed on his princely robes, highlighted by an enormous necklace with pendant.[7] Exotic details of the costume speak to its 'Asiatic' character: fringes added to the robe as well as the footwear of sandals beneath it. Both power and authority of this ruler are conveyed, respectively, by a huge, two-handed battle sword in his right hand and by an orb in his left. While akin to the ceremonial orb of the Holy Roman Empire, which Dürer's home town of Nuremberg proudly guarded, the orb in the drawing significantly lacks the surmounting cross of imperial Christian regalia. The threatening authority of this bearded potentate is further enhanced by his stern and menacing facial expression; despite his formal frontality, his glowering eyes turn away to scowl obliquely out of the frame, as a kind of negative inversion of holy icons of the face of Jesus.[8] This image clearly does not record a portrait of any particular Ottoman sultan; instead, it uses a figure of authority to personify the perceived threat of Turkish Islam to Christendom. Indeed, Dürer would soon adapt this enthroned orientalist ruler as the persecuting emperor Domitian in the woodcut scene of the *Martyrdom of St. John*, the first illustration of his 1498 publication of the *Apocalypse* (fig. 6).


Fig. 7 Albrecht Dürer, Sultan Süleyman, 1526, Bayonne, Musée Bonnat.

Fig. 8 Anonymous, Sultan Süleyman, ca. 1530/40, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

At the end of his career Dürer produced a very different image of a Turkish ruler, the profile 'portrait' of ruling Sultan Süleyman (monogrammed and dated 1526, see fig. 7), in the artist's favored medium for portrait drawings, silverpoint.[9] Its profile presentation suggests that the German artist had access to an existing portrait prototype, almost surely derived from a Venetian painter, in the form of a medal.[10] In fact, a specific source survives: a silver medal in which the profile faces the opposite way but with the bust truncated at the same point of the chest and shoulders. There the sultan wears the same turban as in Dürer's silverpoint, and he is identified by an inscription in the block Latin letters, 'SULEYMAN.CAESAR 'TURCARUM / MELECK. ET. ARAB. TURC.'[11] Both the medal of Süleyman and the Dürer profile drawing present the same distinctive long neck and prominent nose



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and lips. Around a decade later a Venetian painter close to Titian painted a bust-length portrait of a young, mustachioed Sultan Süleyman in the same orientation as Dürer (ca. 1530/40; see fig. 8), presumably using the same visual source.[12]

Fig. 9 Albrecht Dürer, The Martyrdom of Ten Thousand, 1508, oil on panel, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

Fig. 10 Albrecht Dürer, The Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand, ca. 1497/98, woodcut.

In 1508, in response to a commission by one of his principal courtly patrons, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, Dürer painted an image to commemorate martyrs' relics in the prince's extensive religious collection at Wittenberg. For this image, Dürer again cast the Turks as sadistic persecutors for the narrative, *The Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand* (1508, fig. 9).[13] In this early Christian subject from the Middle East, the Persian king Sapor, acting on command of Emperor Diocletian of Rome, slaughtered the Christians of Bithynia (343 C.E.). Dürer had depicted this same subject already appeared a decade earlier in a woodcut (ca. 1497/98; fig. 10). In both compositions, Christians are cruelly tortured to death, tossed from cliffs by turbaned conquerors. In the painting, however, the martyrs' imitation of Christ is emphasized by two figures on crosses and a third standing awaiting execution; two wear crowns of thorns like Christ in the Passion, a clear medieval allusion to martyrdom and sainthood as an *imitatio Christi*, but now with the oppressors represented as Turks. Opposite, in the lower right corner, both standing and mounted figures with distinctive beards, complex turbans and colorful robes clearly conflate the ancient king, through dress, to the modern Turks. His sinister commands thus become fused with those of the implacable religious enemies of Dürer's own day.

In addition, the painting also took on more personal significance for the artist, who included his own self-portrait as a darkly clad witness in the center, inscribing himself expressly as 'Albrecht Dürer, German' (*Alberto Dürer aleman*), to link his identity still closer to his patron, an Elector of the Empire and the leading lieutenant to Emperor Maximilian. He also included a friend, plausibly



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identified with the recently deceased poet laureate of the Empire, Conrad Celtis. Thus, Dürer fuses past with present and assimilates modern Ottomans onto historic persecutions of Christians in the Levant.[14]

The year 1529 marked the climax of the ongoing conflict between the forces of Holy Roman Empire and their enemies, the Ottoman Turks, then poised in siege at the gates of Vienna after an unbroken string of victories in the Balkans and along the Danube (a series highlighted by Belgrade 1521, Mohács and Buda, 1526). Not only did the advance of the armies of Sultan Süleyman pose an immediate threat to the Habsburg rulers in their traditional capital, but ultimately the siege undermined their own Christian claims to universal monarchy, claims implicit to the title of 'Holy Roman Emperor.' This peril was actually redoubled by the contemporary 'odd couple' alliance, especially after 1530, between the Ottomans and the Habsburgs' mortal enemy in Europe, King Francis I of France, an alliance that encompassed commercial privileges, non-aggression pacts, and culminated in coordinated military campaigns (1536-37).[15] Taken together, this period of political tension heightened national self-consciousness in Germany of the Empire as the ultimate bulwark against further Turkish incursion.

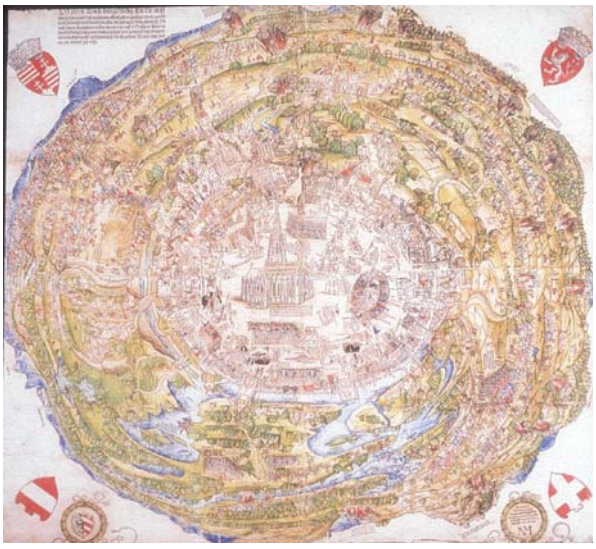

Fig. 11 Nicolaus Meldemann, Circular View of the City of Vienna at the Time of the First Turkish Siege in 1529, eight sheet woodcut, 1530.

The Siege of Vienna in 1529, a momentous event at the Habsburg capital that turned back the tide of Turkish advances into continental Europe, received careful documentation in the form of a large (81.2 x 85.6 cm.) multi-sheet commemorative woodcut, designed by Dürer's follower Sebald Beham and printed in Nuremberg by Nicolaus Meldemann from six blocks (1530) (fig. 11).[16] The work had an official imprimatur, a privilege granted by the Nuremberg city council. The printmaker prized reportorial accuracy of battle details; topographical accuracy was emphasized as well, with all the views based on careful studies taken from the great tower of St. Stephen's cathedral in the heart of the city. To document fully the defense against the troops of the Turks, the print shows the city at the pictorial center; the siege itself outside the city walls is seen in the round from an elevated, bird's-eye viewpoint above the central cathedral tower.[17] This composite image visualizes actual troop movements, tents, and artillery explosions characteristic of contemporary practices of warfare.



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In the process, Beham's woodcut celebrates victory over Turkish invaders—even as it participates in the vogue for printed images of military documentaries.

Meldemann's local rival as publisher of woodcut broadsheets in Nuremberg, Hans Guldenmundt, made his own commemoration of the great event as a pamphlet with text by local poet Hans Sachs and prints by Sebald Beham, as *The Three Besiegers of Vienna*. His procession series of Turkish officers and soldiers included archers, armed spahis (roughly akin to European knights), and earnest profile equestrian portraits of Turks on horses. These Turkish besiegers were led by Sultan Süleyman himself, plus his principal counselor Ibrahim Pasha and General Sansaco.[18] The source for these images stemmed from an earlier suite of five woodcuts, produced in the Netherlands by Jan Swart of Groningen and dated 1526, the high water mark of Ottoman conquests along the Danube.[19] These images thus held contemporary pertinence as newsworthy while also catering to the ongoing fascination with Turkish costume, particularly headwear, as well as their exotic weapons and battlefield instruments (trumpet, bagpipe, and high-pitched shawm). The sultan himself (fig. 12) appears in profile at the center, riding on horseback, accompanied by a lone foot-soldier and labeled '*Solimanus imperator Turcharum*' with the date. Other mounted triads, variously dressed, are also labeled as 'Mamelukes,' 'Arabs,' and 'heathens,' respectively.

Fig. 12 Sebald Beham, The Turkish Sultan Süleyman, woodcut published with the pamphlet *The Three Besiegers of Vienna.*

A darker side of Turks at war was produced in 1530 by Hans Guldenmundt at Nuremberg as a woodcut series for opinion formation and rallying of imperial troops in revenge for alleged atrocities in and around Vienna. Images, attributed to Erhard Schoen but freely adapted from Swart, now show mounted Turkish warriors leading pairs of captive Christians on foot with a rope around their necks; verses by Hans Sachs describe their cruel conditions.[20] Even worse is the baby carried by one of them on his spear. The text laments how 'the evil, gruesome Turk' has killed children, stolen sheep and cattle, burned down homes, and condemned Christian captives to slavery, pulling plows like animals. Worse still is the 1530 Guldenmundt/Schoen broadsheet woodcut collaboration recounting the



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threat to civilians by Turks on the outskirts of the Vienna Woods, showing them killing babies by impaling them on stakes or slicing them with scimitars (fig. 13).[21] Here the Sachs poem reads:

> Oh Lord God on the highest throne,
> look at this great misery,
> the Turkish raging tyrant
> has carried out in the Vienna Woods,
> murdering virgins and wives,
> cutting children in half,
> and impaling them on pikes […]
> Oh, our shepherd Jesus Christ […]
> save us from the hand of the Turk.

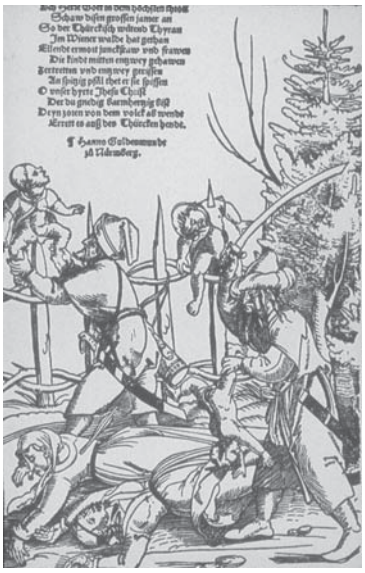

Fig. 13 Erhard Schoen, Turkish Atrocities, woodcut, published by Hans Guldenmundt in Nuremberg, 1530.

No friend to either papacy or Empire, Martin Luther declared in his preface to the *Book of Revelation* (1530; published in 1546) that the Turks were a scourge sent by God to chasten Christians on the eve of the apocalypse:

> Here, now the devil's final wrath gets to work: there in the East is the second woe. Mohammed and the Saracens, here in the West are papacy and empire with the third woe. To these is added for good measure the Turk, Gog and Magog […] Thus Christendom is plagued most terribly and miserably, everywhere and on all sides, with false doctrines and with wars, with scroll and with sword.[22]

But for the current emperor, defender of Christendom, the ongoing contest against the Turk was conceived as a crusade, so after Vienna in 1529, Emperor Charles V looked for an opportunity to go on the offensive and reverse Turkish conquests in mainland Europe. In doing so, he could reassert his imperial status as well as his leadership of the Christian faith. He got his opportunity in 1535, when he led a campaign from his base in Spain against the fortified city of Goleta near Tunis. The 1535 campaign in the Maghreb combated Berber corsair Kheir-ed-Din (known in the Christian west as 'Barbarossa'), admiral of the Turks in the Mediterranean. Equipped with four hundred ships and some thirty thousand soldiers, Charles V had set out to stop Muslim raids on Christian shipping and to secure maritime dominance over the Sultan's fleets. Francis I of France, Charles V's nemesis, was supplying Barbarossa with arms while treating with Sultan Süleyman (thus forging an alliance between the two principal enemies of the Empire). The proximate cause of war was Barbarossa's deposing of King Mulay Hasan of Tunis, a nominal vassal of the emperor. Andrea Doria of Genoa commanded the imperial fleet; land forces served under Alfonso d'Avalos, marquis of Vasto.

Commemorating and celebrating that (short-lived) victory, the emperor was later presented with a suite of tapestries, the most costly and luxurious of all media. Using the same panoramic



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design as an earlier tapestry cycle, celebrating the military spectacle of the 1525 *Battle of Pavia* (a glorious 1525 victory over the French in Italy), designed for Charles V at the behest of Margaret of Austria by her court artist, Bernart van Orley. This twelve-part set on the *Conquest of Tunis* was woven in Brussels by Willem de Pannemaker (1549–54) after designs by Dutch artist Jan Vermeyen (who had been embedded with the invading troops, like recent American journalists in Iraq), probably with the help of experienced tapestry designer Pieter Coecke van Aelst (1546–50).[23]

In terms of documentary validity, this tapestry suite offered a mixture of careful observations, especially of costumes and settings, even as it conveyed a fully realized propaganda message. The climax of the conflict was the month-long siege of the fort of Goleta (which protected Tunis) and the subsequent sack of the capital. Particularly careful topographical renderings of the city of Tunis include mosques and city walls. Further details include ancient ruins of Carthage, especially the prominent aqueducts, seen from different angles in successive tapestries, as well as the distinctive Mediterranean oared galleys, marked by their triangular, lateen-rigged sails. Moreover, the entire series begins with an aerial map of the entire Mediterranean basin, seen from the vantage point of Barcelona, with Africa at the top. The documentary character of these tapestries is further emphasized by the inclusion of text histories in two languages; longer passages in Castilian at the top, shorter Latin verses at the bottom.[24] As if to assure the images' documentary claims, Vermeyen even included a self-portrait while drawing in the field into the design of *The Sack of Tunis*. He also appears in the initial map panel, where a full-length self-portrait figure stands beside a tablet with the proud declaration: 'The course of events is represented in this work as exactly as possible the action is treated in this tapestry according to nature, all that concerns cosmography leaving nothing to be desired.'[25]

Fig. 14 Willem de Pannemaker after Jan C. Vermeyen, *The Quest for Fodder*, Sixth tapestry of the Conquest of Tunis series (including ancient ruins of Carthage), Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional.

According to Hendrick Horn, Vermeyen distinguishes between the Maghrebi 'Moors', and their Turkish allies, and he even subdivides the former group into the more urban Arabs and the nomadic Berbers. Both groups of turbaned Moors are shown more sympathetically than the Turkish



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warriors, Janissaries, in their pointed caps, who fought for Barbarossa and are shown in several tapestries as head-hunters. These varied groups are especially evident across the foreground of several works, notably the sixth tapestry, *The Quest for Fodder* (fig. 14). Mulay Hassan and his retinue of Moorish allies of Charles V also appear, across the foreground of the *Fall of Tunis*.

Like Vermeyen, carefully producing costume studies and landscape topographies in Tunisia, the artistically trained nobleman Melchior Lorichs of Flensberg was another Northerner who exploited his privileged role in an imperial entourage to gain access to the Islamic world. Lorichs went to the Ottoman capital of Istanbul as a member of the Holy Roman Empire's entourage to the court of Süleyman under ambassador Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq (1554–62), the same individual credited with importing the tulip into Europe from Turkey.[26] He served as the ambassador's eyes for the military capacities and resources of the Ottomans, and published several treatises (1568, 1574) concerning the dangers that the Turkish army posed to Christian Europe. Yet Lorichs also produced the most meticulous on-site studies of the people and buildings of Constantinople by any European visitor during the sixteenth century.

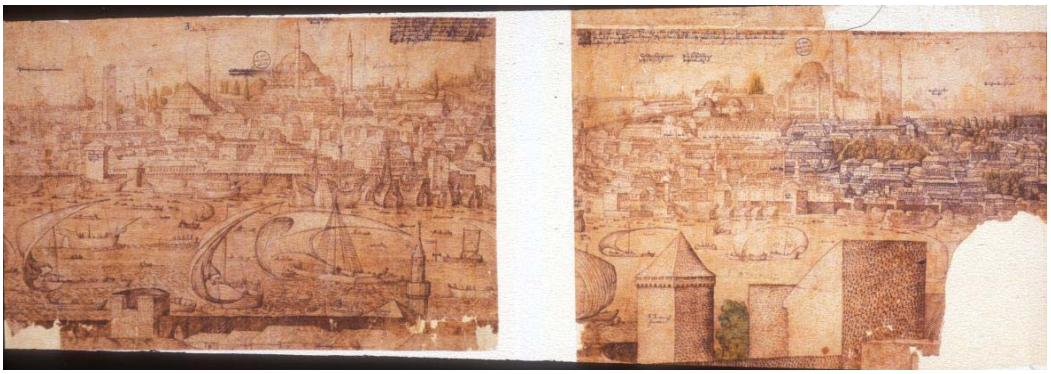

Fig. 15 Melchior Lorichs, *Byzantium sive Constantineopolis* (View of Istanbul), 1559, two sections, Leiden, University Library.

From the high ground of Galata (the part of the city opposite the Golden Horn from what is now called the Old City), Lorichs made a vast yet careful sepia and black ink panorama of Istanbul (Leiden, University Library, 45 x 1.127,5 cm; now divided into twenty-one sections; see fig. 15).[27] This panorama, obviously composed out of separate studies from various positions, records the city skyline, including not only the dominating domes and minarets of mosques but also ancient Roman memorial columns, palaces, caravanserais, gates, and city walls. Ships of all sizes and shapes, including European carracks as well as Levantine vessels with lateen-rigged sails, fill the crowded waterways. Inscriptions label the points of interest in two different colors of sepia ink, though written in a single hand. Near the center of the ensemble appears an idealized self-portrait; a well-dressed, youthful European in dark costume seen from the back, prepares to write or draw on an extended scroll similar to the one today at Leiden. He dips his quill into an elaborate goblet-like inkwell that is held for him by a turbaned Turk (fig. 16).



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Fig. 16 Melchior Lorichs, Section with an ideal self-portrait of the author at the center of *Byzantium sive Constantineopolis*, 1559, Leiden, University Library.

Fig. 17 Melchior Lorichs, Sultan Süleyman's Mosque, 1570, woodcut.

Lorichs also produced a woodcut, monogrammed and dated 1570 (fig. 17), of the great mosque complex, the Süleymaniye, that the architect Sinan had recently built (1550–57) for Sultan Süleyman.[28] Scholars have suggested that this print lacks both the clarity and the accuracy of the skyline drawings made on site, but such distortions may have been intentional efforts on the part of the artist to convey the grandeur of the complex to an audience that had never actually seen it. Lorichs' print furthermore suggests a momentous historical event by placing in the sky above the mosque both gathering storm clouds as well as a glowing star with a tail, like the 'comets' and other ominous celestial apparitions associated with earthly catastrophes or conflicts in contemporary German cosmology.[29] To many Europeans, the architectural splendor of this complex would have been compromised by the source of its funding, tribute amassed through conquest and colonization of Christian-ruled territories, so this may be Lorichs' way of accommodating his western audiences.

Lorichs' careful drawings of both male and female costumes served as studies for his later woodcut illustrations and were composed with clear graphic syntax of parallel and cross hatchings that indicates that he was thinking from the outset about reproduction in printed form. In fact, Lorichs planned a large edition of woodcut illustrations based upon his on-site drawings in Turkey. Blocks were cut from these designs in 1565, 1570, 1575 and 1576, but even though a title page was produced (1575) the planned publication was never completed.[30] A small, reduced version of this volume appeared in Antwerp in 1574 (published by Gillis Coppens van Diest, who also published the first atlas, Abraham Ortelius's, *Theatrum orbis terrarum*, 1570) under the title, *Soldan Soleyman Turckischen Khaysers… Whare und eigendtliche contrafectung und bildtnuss* (Sultan Süleyman, A True and Real Facsimile and Portrait of the Turkish Emperor). One drawing (monogrammed and dated 1557, Paris, Louvre) shows a richly caparisoned dromedary camel, striding through a landscape with a royal drummer on his back pounding his instrument, presumably to announce the advent of the sultan behind him.[31] This image was produced as a reversed woodcut in 1576. The artist also produced other drawings of distinctive, sometimes historical, German costumes, that were probably intended for a companion volume of European costumes, akin to contemporary costume books like Cesare Vecellio's (Venice, 1590) or Abraham de Bruyn's (Antwerp 1577).[32]



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Fig. 18 Melchior Lorichs, Portrait of Süleyman the Magnificent, 1562(?), engraving.

Fig. 19 Melchior Lorichs, Süleyman the Magnificent with the Suleymaniye Cami in Background, 1574.

Lorichs also produced portrait engravings of the Sultan Süleyman when the latter was advanced in years (1574). One of these, based on a drawing of 1559 and monogrammed with the artist's initials (fig. 18), presents the sultan at bust-length, wearing his own, distinctively high turban. Following the formula established in the late portrait engravings by Dürer, such as *Frederick the Wise* (1524), the sitter appears before a neutral, toned background with a ledge bearing an inscription. The print is elaborately captioned in both Arabic and Latin. The Arabic inscription declares the sitter to be 'Sultan of sultans, Süleyman shah, son of Sultan Selim Khan,' and concludes with the formula, 'may God protect his helper.' The Latin inscription is even more elaborate: '*Imago Suleymanni Turcorum Imp. in Oriente, Unici Selimiy Filii, Qui An. Do MDXX. Patri in Imperio Successit: Quo Etiam Anno Carolus. V. Maxaemyliani Caesaris Nepos Aquisgrani in Occidente Coronatus est Christian: Imp: A Melchiore Loricis, Flensburgensi, Holsatio, Antiquitatis Studiosiss°, Constantinopoli, An. MDLIX, Men. Feb., Die XV, Verissime Expressa.*'[33] The full-bearded ruler's face is somewhat haggard and drawn, showing his age and the cumulative strain of his reign.

Lorichs´ second engraved portrait of Süleyman shows the sultan standing at full-length before a gate of the city, through which passes a caparisoned elephant bearing two banner-carriers, one of them displaying the crescent moon of Islam (fig. 19). Visible through the gate behind him is Süleymaniye mosque complex, which Lorichs had studied on site in preparation for the abovementioned woodcut. The features of the sultan derive from the bust-length study made by Lorichs in 1559, but the engraving was only produced in 1574. In that year, inscribed as the 'true and real likeness [counterfeit]' of the sultan, it accompanied Gillis Coppens van Diest's publication.[34]



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Lorichs' woodcut images return us to the tradition of observant, on-site documentary treatment of the Ottoman Turks and their empire, first conveyed by the woodcut illustrations by Erhard Reuwich for the pilgrimage guide of Bernhard von Breydenbach in 1486 and maintained in Dürer's early accurate drawings of Turkish costume and custom in Venice. However, after the decisive military advances in the Balkans, especially during the 1520s, the heightened threat of Turkish armies to both the German Holy Roman Empire as well as to wider European Christendom made it difficult for Dürer and his followers to remain neutral observers of contemporary Islam. Around the time of the 1529 siege of Vienna, European fascination intensified about military aspects of the Turks. Both in Germany and in The Netherlands, sixteenth-century artists' designs—for printmakers and for tapestry producers alike—kept images of Turkish armies richly available to Northern audiences, whether princes or general public.

After the Emperor Charles V's siege of Tunis in 1535, the next signal victory over Turkish forces in the Mediterranean occurred at sea, the Battle of Lepanto (1571). Main credit for the victory was shared between the naval forces of Venice and the armies of Charles's son, Spanish King Philip II. So appropriately two principal commemorations of Lepanto were produced for the Spanish monarch and sent to the Escorial palace by the aged Venetian painter Titian.

Fig. 20 Titian, *Philip II Offering the Infante Don Ferdinand to Heaven*, (1573–75), Madrid, Prado Museum.

The first of these is an allegorical portrait, *Philip II Offering the Infante Don Ferdinand to Heaven* (1573–75) (fig. 20), which shows a fierce naval battle behind the principals, where dark smoke silhouettes the flaming vessels.[35] Documents describe the picture as 'The Naval Battle' (*Batalla Naval*). Ironically, Don Fernando, presumptive heir and first son of the king's final marriage, who was born in the very same year as the Battle of Lepanto, 1571, would die a scant three years after the image was painted. In the picture a descending angel—and/or a winged Victory—extends both a laurel crown and palm of military conquest, together with a banderole with a message intended for the youth: *Maiora tibi* (greater things for you). This same combination of classical reference with religious symbolism suffuses the main action. Philip, bareheaded, wears parade armor



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as he offers his son at what looks like an altar table in a Christo-mimetic act, like the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple (Panofsky has compared this gesture to imagery in late medieval manuscripts, where a priest is shown lifting up a nude child, a symbol of the soul; this scene adorns the opening of *Psalm* 24: 'Unto thee O Lord, do I lift up my soul'). A row of columns like a temple entry recedes along the right side; the sturdy column, symbol of the virtue of Fortitude, frequently accompanies the full-length standing subjects of court portraits, such as Titian's formative 1551 image of Philip II, then a prince. This row converges perspectivally like a series of ancestors on the bright central figure of the *infante*. Meanwhile, in the lower left corner crouches a shackled Turkish prisoner, identified not only by his features but also by his crescent banner and his discarded turban; the spoils of his weapons behind him were added on a strip by painter Vicente Carducho in 1625, when the painting was enlarged to match the grand dimensions of Titian's earlier great military celebration for a Spanish king in armor: his equestrian portrait, *Emperor Charles V at the Battle of Mühlberg* (1548), a conquest not of Turks but over a Protestant alliance.

Fig. 21 Titian, *Religion Succored by Spain*, 1573, Madrid, Prado Museum.

The other painting sent by Titian to Spain in celebration of King Philip's contribution to the Battle of Lepanto was an allegory, *Religion Succored by Spain* (1573, fig. 21).[36] It shows the encounter of two female personifications before a sea battle in the background. Crouching on the right side, a nude who attempts modestly to cover herself can be identified as Catholicism from the chalice behind her and a cross leaning against a solid rock (of faith and the papacy). Above that cross, snakes on the trunk of a dead tree signify devilish threats to Christendom, presumably by the Islamic Turks as well as by heretic Protestants in Europe. Striding boldly in from the left and facing Religion, a female warrior enters carrying a spear and a shield like the goddess Minerva in earlier mythologies by the artist. Panofsky rightly associates her with the pictorial tradition of the goddess of war, Bellona, and calls her *Ecclesia militans*. Behind her a second woman advances with upraised sword, like a figure of Fortitude; she in turn heads a troop of Amazons. Their armed force is identified with Spain through the heraldic arms of Philip II on the corner shield. Once more the spoils of war appear as weapons in the center foreground, between Spain and Religion. At the head of the background naval battle, in place of a Neptune on his marine chariot, drawn by sea horses, we see instead the personification of a turbaned Turk, heading for shore to threaten the vulnerable figure of the Church, who turns to accept welcome reinforcement from her deliverer. Thus the allegory, deftly unpacked



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by Panofsky, can be described in his words as 'The Christian Religion, Threatened by Internal Subversion (the snakes of Heresy) and External Enemies (the Turk), Seeking the Protection of the Church Militant and Fortitude.'


Fig. 22 Domenikos Theotokopoulos, El Greco, *Adoration of the Holy Name of Jesus*, ca. 1577–79, Royal Monastery of S. Lawrence of the Escorial, Patrimonio Nacional.

One final image commemorates the Catholic unity that provided victory at Lepanto. It survives only as an ambitious vision by an artist who hoped in vain to serve the court of Philip II: El Greco, arriving in Spain in 1576, fresh from his own period of finishing school at Venice and Rome. His *Adoration of the Holy Name of Jesus* (ca. 1577–79) survives in two versions, one in the Escorial (fig. 22), the other now in London (National Gallery).[37] Its subject was correctly identified in the seventeenth century by Fray Francisco de los Santos (1657), who identified it as a representation of the mouth of Hell and the bridge of Purgatory, called it the *Gloria* by El Greco for Philip II, thus comparing it directly with Titian's *Gloria*, made earlier for the meditation of Charles V. Kneeling in adoration of the holy name, itself a Jesuit object of devotion, the three great leaders of the Holy League who marshaled the forces for Lepanto: Philip II, dressed as always in black, Doge Mocenigo of Venice in a robe trimmed with ermine, and the current pope, Pius V, in clerical robes. On 9 March 1566, Pius V had issued a bull, *Cum gravissima*, exhorting all Christian powers to unite against the Turk.[38] A fourth kneeling figure at the pope's right is dressed in classical armor and holds a sword; he has been identified by Anthony Blunt as an idealized portrait of the general of the Lepanto fleet, Don Juan of Austria, half-brother of Philip II, who died in 1578 and was buried in the Escorial Royal Pantheon. Indeed, according to Francisco de los Santos, this image hung near that tomb in the mid seventeenth century. This picture reaffirms Christian doctrine and Catholic unity while also presenting these important contemporary figures alongside resurrected souls who await redemption and admission to heaven and the company of the angels above. Even more than an allegory, this vision situates contemporary religion within a cosmos of the Last Judgment and the triumph of good over evil.



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On the eastern front, the Holy Roman Empire resumed its own active Turkish Wars (1593–1606), fought during the reign of Emperor Rudolf II (r. 1576–1612). The renewed conflict began in August 1593, when Sultan Murad III broke a truce that had been in effect since 1584.[39] Although the two sides fought to a deadlock before the peace of Zsitva-Torok (11 November 1606) was ratified, this protracted activity along a Central European front held worldwide significance as another boundary contest between Christendom and Islam. It also provided the opportunity (or, indeed, the necessity) for considerable propaganda—including visual art—on the part of the Habsburg ruler. Although Rudolf II never actually led his troops in battle, he had himself portrayed by his numerous court artists as a great military victor and preserver of the faith.

Fig. 23 Hans von Aachen, Allegory of the Turkish War (Battle of Kronstadt/Brasov), 1603, Vienna. Kunsthistorisches Museum.

Principal propagandistic commissions went to Rudolf's court painter in Prague, Hans von Aachen, the author of a belated cycle of oil sketches on parchment, bound together in a volume under the title *Allegory of the Turkish War* (completed before 1607).[40] The latest of the military events depicted in the cycle, the Battle of Kronstadt/Brasov, dates from mid-1603 (fig. 23). This motivation to celebrate 'victories' through visual imagery echoes the heritage of the grandiose cartoons and tapestries of Charles V's earlier Tunis campaign. Like Vermeyen preparing to paint his cartoons, von Aachen made meticulous topographic studies. Yet he altered the rhetoric of the presentation by utilizing allegorical figures, chiefly female personifications, such as winged victories or places (e.g. Hungary), along with more historically credible groupings of infantry and cavalry. In the final two images he also included banners as trophies to signify victory.



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Frequently the compositions display the heavens open to show divine figures overseeing the battle: classical gods appear in person or through the surrogates of their symbolic animals, and the artist does not miss the opportunity to suggest parallels between the eagle of Jupiter and the heraldic eagle of the Holy Roman Empire. The eagle clawing the crescent moon, symbol of Islam, was also a favorite *impresa* of Rudolf II.

Fig. 24 Adriaen de Vries, Relief with the regaining of the fortress of Raab/Gÿor (1598), Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.

Fig. 25 Hans von Aachen, *The Battle of Sissek* (1593), Vienna, Heeresgeschichtliches Museum.

Some of von Aachen's designs were translated into sculpted relief by Rudolf's court sculptor, Adriaen de Vries, notably the image (ca. 1604–05) of the regaining (1598) of the fortress of Raab/Györ (fig. 24).[41] Both the oil sketches and the bronze relief were more personal, private items than tapestries or prints, and were reserved for the notoriously withdrawn emperor himself rather than conceived for large-scale public display or broad circulation. Yet their genesis and presentation received more direct input from the ruler himself than had the tapestries, commissioned through the agency of the emperor's sister and regent, Mary of Hungary.

A characteristic von Aachen image, *The Battle of Sissek* (1593; one of the sources for de Vries's relief) (fig. 25), inaugurates the scenes of war. It shows the emperor's eagle attacking the sultan's crescent in the sky above, and places classical river gods in the corners to suggest the site. Additionally, a winged Victory extends palm and laurel garlands to the seated female allegory of Croatia, who bears a crown and scepter and heraldic blue and white squares on her skirt. Alongside these fantastic allegorical elements, the background of the image clearly depicts the actual riverside setting of the city and its fortified walls. The battle is in progress: imperial forces move inexorably from left to right, sporting their banners, and vanquished Turks are cast into the river. Cavalry with lances are complemented by infantry with pikes; the modern firearm, a harquebus or musket, is visible in the left middle ground. Some Turks wear identifiable costume, especially turbans, but these are less ethnographically accurate records of dress than they are symbolic attributes to help communicate and celebrate the partisan victory over a dreaded enemy. Along with their allegorical



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main figures, these representations of battles by von Aachen attend more to the specific topography of the sites than they document the actual movements of armies.

Von Aachen's works survive for the most part both in the form of oil sketches (Vienna) and presentation drawings (Dresden), the latter of which were finished in 1604 and presented in 1607 to Christian II, Elector of Saxony.[42] Once more both patron and audience are courtly, imperial adversaries of the Turks, and again the chosen subjects are battles—a different category from the tradition of dispassionate ethnographic study of costumes or customs, intended to satisfy curiosity and display the exotic.

By contrast, Rudolf II assembled in his castle at Prague the actual battlefield booty seized from the Turks, making it a feature within his vast collections.[43] Consisting chiefly of bows and their leather cases, as well metal-edged weapons (daggers, swords, battle-axes), these trophies were displayed to impress visiting ambassadors. Such delegations included Safavid Persians, envoys from the empire that abutted the Ottomans on the opposite flank. This display of trophies must have helped kindle a proposed alliance between the Holy Roman Empire and the Persian Shah Abbas (1587–1629).[44]

The artist of printed portraits of Rudolf II was his court engraver, Aegidius Sadeler.[45] Sadeler, like the imperial sculptor, Adriaen de Vries, devoted his main portrait energies to depicting the majesty of Rudolf II. And his allegorical vocabulary in framing the imperial majesty partakes of a new learned artistic vocabulary, which asserts conquest over the Turkish nemesis. After an extended century of visualizing Turks, this imperial program fits firmly into an ongoing Habsburg tradition, albeit with a more propagandistic purpose. Indeed the allegories, like Rubens's cycle for Queen Mother Marie de' Medici in France during the 1620s, not only offer a more learned and elite pictorial vocabulary but also serve to airbrush embarrassing setbacks and harsh realities, in this case the ultimate military stalemate with the Turkish forces by the Empire. Like the modern example of the Cold War adduced above, no European Christian could ever forget the clear and present danger posed to both his faith and his political autonomy by the Islamic Ottoman Empire across the border. That threatening superpower, however, also held ongoing fascination and exotic allure, realized in pictorial terms all the more by those artists, particularly Vermeyen and Lorichs, who had experienced Tunis and Istanbul in person instead of picturing stereotypes of Turks.

Ultimately, almost all images of Turks from the Holy Roman Empire necessarily blended (to varying degrees) these opposing qualities: fear and loathing towards a formidable enemy that defined Christian Europe through contrast; alongside fascinated, careful observation, produced, usually in multiple print images, for the delectation in Europe of commoners as well as rulers.



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[1] For a discussion of Maximilian's art patronage, including his various verbal and visual campaigns for a contemporary crusade against the Ottoman Turks, see Silver 2008.
[2] Edited and translated by Zeydel 1944, pp. 315–22.
[3] Raby 1982; Levenson 1991, pp. 212–13, nos. 109–110.
[4] Carboni 2007. See also the essay by Elizabeth Rodini in the same volume.
[5] Raby 1982, p. 25; Aikema & Brown 1999, pp. 266–67, no. 38; Koschatzky & Strobl, 1971, pp. 64–65, no. 15 (W. 79, ca. 1495); Levenson 1991, p. 213, no. 110; Bartrum 2003, pp. 108-09, no. 38 (W. 78, ca. 1494–95). See now Campbell & Chong 2005. In the specific case of the *Three Orientals* (London, British Museum, W. 78, ca. 1494–



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95), Dürer explicitly replicated three small figures in the background of a large painting by Gentile Bellini, the *Corpus Christi Procession in the Piazza San Marco*, dated 1496; therefore, these figures must have been experienced by Dürer prior to completion of the final picture, perhaps through preliminary drawing studies.

[6] Levenson 1991, pp. 212–13, no. 109, White 1973, 365–74. The figure of the drawing was traced through to the other side of the sheet, to serve as the model for the engraving. That print exists in only one unfinished proof (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) and was unrecorded by Bartsch. See also Strauss 1981, pp. 54–55; and Strauss 1974, no. 1495/18–18a.

[7] Addition of both rubies and turquoise does indeed mark a number of the sultan's personal decorative objects, including the royal mace; see Atil 1987; and *Schätze aus dem Topkapi Serail*, 1988.

[8] DeWitt 2011, pp. 109–45, esp. 112–13, 121–23.

[9] See Strauss 1974, pp. 2320 – 2321, no. 1526/8. The drawing is inscribed in German script, *Suleyman imperator, die leibfarb ist gantz lederfarb* (Emperor Süleyman, the body-color is completely leather-colored).

[10] For the relations between portrait medals and portrait woodcuts as multiple likenesses, Silver 2003.

[11] Dresden, Münzkabinett; *Im Lichte des Halbmonds...* 1995, p. 75, no. 24. This rare medal does not appear in the celebrated collections of London, Vienna, Berlin, and Munich, and its artist and origin remain unknown. It also resembles a related etching by Hieronymus Hopfer. Compare also the profile medal with turban of Sultan Mehmet II ('the Conqueror'), facing the same leftward direction as Dürer drawing, dating ca. 1480 and patterned after a design by Gentile Bellini of Venice, *ibid.,* p. 53, no. 5, with Gentile's celebrated near-profile painted portrait of Mehmet II (1480; London, National Gallery), *ibid*., p. 52, no. 1.

[12] *Im Lichte des Halbmonds...* 1995, p. 74, no. 21; Heinz & Schütz 1976, pp. 182–84, no. 156, fig. 101. Based on the age of the sultan, the profile model for the painting probably dates to the 1520's, like Dürer's own source.

[13] Anzelewsky 1970, pp. 212–18, no. 105. A horizontal format drawing, preserved in a fastidious copy (W. 438, Vienna, Albertina; see Koschatzky & Strobl, pp. 168–71, no. 62), served as a preliminary composition of this complex theme. More widely on Frederick the Wise as a courtly patron of Dürer, see Silver 2004, pp. 149–62.

[14] Panofsky 1942, 39–54; Spitz 1958.

[15] Especially after 1530. Knecht 1992, pp. 224–25, 233–34, 294–95. For the best recent survey of the Habsburgs and the Ottomans in the sixteenth century, see Press 1994 and Kafadar 1994.

[16] *Im Lichte des Halbmonds…* 1995, pp. 78–79, no. 36; Landau & Parshall 1994, pp. 227–28, figs. 233–34; Moxey 1989, pp. 78–79, n. 28 for references.

[17] Colding Smith 2010, pp. 72–73; Hale, 1990, pp. 17–19; Clifton 2009, pp. 41–50; Landau & Parshall 1994, pp. 227–28.

[18] *Im Lichte des Halbmonds...* 1995, pp. 79-80, no. 37. *Wien 1529...* 1979-80, pp. 63-69, no. 151.

[19] Colding Smith 2010, pp. 54–82, esp. 65–67 (I am grateful to Dr. Smith for sharing her research with me prior to publication); *Kunst voor de Beeldenstorm…* 1986, pp. 175–76, no. 59.

[20] Colding Smith 2010, p. 54, with translation; Moxey 1989, pp. 76–77, fig. 4.7.

[21] Colding Smith 2010, p. 1, with translation.

[22] Luther 1960, vol. 35, p. 407.

[23] Campbell 2002, pp. 385–91, 428–34; Jardine & Brotton 2000, pp. 82-87; also Horn 1989, pp. 13–17, 35-37, 41–47, 111–223; Seipel 2000. Scholarly debate continues about whether Vermeyen designed the tapestries alone or whether he collaborated with experienced designer Pieter Coecke van Aelst.

[24] History, indeed, but not without bias. The *Sack of Tunis* uses its Latin inscription to editorialize: 'The troops sent against the outskirts of the town lay siege to and take them, slaughter the enemy [*hostemque*] in armor and, taking the houses, spare the inhabitants. They use the right of conquest [*iure belli*]. More than twenty thousand captives recover their liberty and thrice salute Charles the Avenger [*Victorem Carolum*] with cries of gratitude. The conqueror reestablishes the unfortunate Hasan on the throne of his ancestors, though he hardly merited this, as he had promised so much and performed nothing,' translated by Campbell 2002, p. 429, no. 50. Or the Latin from the initial tapestry: 'Wishing to overcome the infidel armies of the Turk and the warrior [Barbarossa] who, obeying the orders of Suleiman, raises cruel war against the realms of Spain, Caesar, Charles the Fifth of that name, gathers together with the blessings of heaven, the armies and fleets of Spain and Italy to threaten the African troops. Not brooking delay while time and the hour proceed, he energetically hastens to his ships and his loyal companions,' translated by Horn 1989, p. 181.

[25] Horn 1989, p. 181.

[26] Fischer 1962; Fisher 2009; St. Clair 1973, nos. 6–10.



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[27] Westbrook, Rainsbury Dark & van Meeuwen 2010, pp. 62–87; Evans 2004, pp. 406-08, no. 249; Sievernich & Budde 1989, pp. 241–44; Mango et al. 1989; Romanelli 1999, pp. 154–58, no. 16; Yerasimos 1990, pp. 294–97; Fisher 1962, p. 24. For the general phenomenon, see Nuti, 1996.
[28] *Schätze aus dem Topkapi Serail* 1988, p. 72, no. 6. For the building complex, Goodwin 1971, pp. 215–39; now see Necipoglu 2005.
[29] Silver 1999, pp. 194–214, with references.
[30] Fischer 1962, pp. 38–58. After several false starts, the publication first appeared in 1626 in Hamburg with Michael Hering. Ward-Jackson 1955, 83–93.
[31] *Dessins de Dürer…* 1991, pp. 128–29, no. 120, argues that the drawing was done at a later moment back in Germany, with the date recording the period of observation.
[32] Kaufmann 1988, pp. 64–65, nos. 14–15; and Fisher 1962, pp. 58–64, nos. 64–78.
[33] The translation of the Latin inscription will be added here.
[34] *Soldan Soleyman Turckischen Khaysers... Whare und eigenliche contrafectung und biltnuss*, dated 21 April 1574.
[35] Humfrey 2007, p. 368, no. 293; Checa 1994, pp. 52–56; Panofsky 1969, pp. 72–73.
[36] Humfrey 2007, p. 367, no. 292; Checa 1994, pp. 58–60; Panofsky 1969, pp. 186-90. Also Wittkower 1977, pp. 143–46, which sees the Church Triumphant in the Minerva figure and the nude figure as the Magdalene, Sin redeemed. But see a seventeenth-century assessment of the image by Fray Francisco de los Santos, Wittkower 1977, p. 145, n. 8. Humfrey 2007 rejects the notion that this picture is a reworked version of a much earlier painting, seen the artist's studio and described in 1566 by Vasari (VII, 458) as a work begun for Alfonso d'Este, who had commissioned the Ferrara *Camerino d'alabastro*. However, recent technical examination does not show changes to the attributes of the main allegories, so the Vasari work is probably lost, though it is possibly identical to a work sent to Emperor Maximilian II and engraved in 1568 by Giulio Fontana. In the engraving the suppliant nude is described in Latin as 'the pious image of the religion of the unvanquished Emperor of the Christians,' in Panofsky 1969, p. 187. A workshop copy of the Escorial painting is in Rome, Palazzo Doria–Pamphilij.
[37] Brown et al. 1982, pp. 231–32, no. 12; Blunt 1939–40, pp. 58-69.
[38] Panofsky 1969, p. 188.
[39] Kappel 1995, pp. 125-33; Haupt 1988, vol. I, 97–98. For the complex diplomatic history via an imperial perspective, Evans 1997, pp. 75–78; the Ottoman outlook, between Europe and Persia, is conveyed by Goodwin 1998, pp. 164–67.
[40] Jacoby 2000, esp. pp. 174–75, 178–80, 182–203; nos. 56, 58, 60; more generally for von Aachen and the other artists at Prague, Kaufmann 1988, esp. pp. 133–63, nos. 1.44, 1.48–60. Ink drawing copies of the oil sketches by von Aachen's workshop show a larger original cycle.
[41] Scholten 1998-99, pp. 159–61, no. 18. This more composite work, derived from several of the von Aachen designs, speaks more generally to the Turkish War on the battleground of Hungary, and it features the Muslim dragon and serpent being attacked by imperial eagle and lion along with river personifications (Danube and Sava).
[42] Unusually for von Aachen a pair of preliminary compositional drawings survive: one in Dusseldorf, Kunstmuseum (inv. no. 941), the other in Moscow, Pushkin Museum (inv. no. 7456; discussed in *Prag um 1600*, vol. I, pp. 333–34, no. 183).
[43] Pfaffenbichler 1998, pp. 161–65.
[44] This proposed alliance was brokered by the Englishman Robert Shirley; see Evans 1997, pp. 77-78; see also the remarkable double portraits in Persian ambassadorial dress (1622), painted in Rome by Anthony van Dyck of Sir Robert and Teresia, Lady Shirley (Petworth House), in Brown & Vlieghe 1999, pp. 160–63, nos. 29–30.
[45] *Im Lichte des Halbmonds*, nos. 132-34; *Prag um 1600*, vol. I, nos. 19, 36–37, esp. Husein Ali Beg, depicted in 1601, who also visited the Elector of Saxony.



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