

The *Moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcs*

Süleyman and Charles V: Iconographic Discourse, Enhancement of Power and Magnificence, or Two Faces of the Same Coin? ¹

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Introduction

In court culture, sets of tapestries were often commissioned to celebrate the glory of princes, kings or the Emperor, with iconographic programmes emphasizing these personages' bravery or illustrious provenance. The political use of tapestries as visual paraphernalia (or artefacts) of monarchal and imperial status designed to be displayed during public events such as processions, coronations and receptions of foreign ambassadors is well established today. In the context of the long-standing conflict between the Ottoman Empire and Emperor Charles V (r. 1519–1556), the series of the *Moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz*, intended as tapestry designs, made after drawings by Pieter Coecke van Aelst (Aelst, 1502 – Brussels, 1550) is of great interest.²

The iconographic programme cannot be grasped without an in-depth understanding of Ottoman history bound by ideology rather than race,³ and without a reassessment of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566),⁴ particularly with regard to the political, economic and cultural exchanges with the West and to court ritual and rivalry. In this respect, the 1989 study of Gülru Necipoğlu has highlighted the mimetic discourse between Süleyman and Charles V, focusing on the symbolic meaning of the regalia as a visual representation of sovereign insignia supporting a clever *mise en scène* of political power-lust.⁵ Elaborating further on the *topos* of a self-fashioning compelling image of imperial power, Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton shed light on the permeable nature of the political and artistic boundaries between the Ottoman empire and Christendom on the basis of a re-evaluation of the cultural production of the Renaissance with particular attention to the political-ideological use of tapestries as a common court language that prevailed all over Europe.⁶ For these authors, the journey to Constantinople 'was not simply an unprincipled attempt to sell sumptuous but iconographically incomprehensible tapestries to the Ottoman court [...] it showed an astute understanding of the shared imperial and iconographic preoccupations of the courts [...] skilfully [...] manipulated by a firm, and designer, situated at the nexus of the European tapestry industry.'⁷

The present study aims to review critically the documentary value of these prints as primary sources, the circumstances of Coecke's journey to Constantinople, and finally the artistic and cultural context in which this chorographic frieze was created.

The Moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz

Several copies of the original edition of the *Moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz* are conserved in public collections (fig. 1). Mostly, only the seven woodcuts with panoramic scenes divided from one another by terms⁸ with alternate male and female figures in Turkish costumes are preserved.⁹ When assembled, the seven compositions form a frieze framed by an entablature and a base, with a title page and a colophon, like the set in the British Museum.¹⁰ The work was intended to be presented together in the form of a scroll or perhaps as a mural decoration.¹¹



Fig. 1 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Les moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz...*, *Feast of the Circumcision outside of Constantinople*, Antwerp (?), 1553, London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.

The title page and the colophon (fig. 2–3) with elaborate strapwork and scrollwork-like design, in the style of Cornelis Bos ('s-Hertogenbosch, before 1515 – Groningen, 1555)¹² and Cornelis II Floris de Vriendt (Antwerp, 1514 – 1575), provide the data about this set, mentioning explicitly that the scenes were '*au vif contrefaictes par Pierre Coeck d'Alost, luy estant en Turquie, l'An de Iesuchrist M.D. 33*' and that the woodcuts were published posthumously, three years after the death of the artist, by his widow, Mayken Verhulst (Malines, 1518 – after 1593/1596).



Fig. 2-3 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Les moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz ...*, title-page and colophon Antwerp(?), 1553, London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.

The same year she published in de ‘*coopstadt van Antwerpen*’ the Dutch translation of Sebastiano Serlio’s Books I, II and V on Architecture that open with similar title pages decorated with strapwork (fig. 4).¹³ The place where the *Moeurs* woodcuts were printed is not mentioned, but it is very likely that it was Antwerp.



Fig. 4 *Den eersten boeck van architecturen Sebastiani Serlij ... / overgesedt uitien Italiaenische in nederlands, duer Peeter Coecke van Aelst ... Gedruet inde vermaerde coopstadt van Antwerpen : ... duer Mayken Verhulst vveduwe des seluen Peeters voers*, 1553, Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent.

Mayken Verhulst, mentioned by Guiccardini among the female painters, was well acquainted with the Antwerp humanist and printer milieu, first and foremost with the book printer Gillis Coppens van Diest (? , c. 1496 – Antwerp, 1572), who printed for Coecke several of his translations of books on architecture by Serlio, but also the famous account of the Joyous Entry of Philip II in Antwerp written in 1549 by Cornelius Grapheus, city secretary, with woodcut illustrations of the ephemeral decorations after designs by Coecke.¹⁴ Mayken Verhulst, as mother-in-law of Pieter Bruegel the Elder (Breda (?) c. 1525 – Brussels, 1569), also maintained close ties with Hieronymus Cock (Antwerp, 1518 – 1570), founder in 1548 of the printing house *Aux Quatre Vents* or the ‘House of the Four Winds’.¹⁵ Moreover, from 1548 on, Cock published series of prints with cartouches framed by interlaced bands and scrollwork with *grotesque* figures, garlands and trophies after designs by the architect and sculptor Cornelis Floris.¹⁶ Although no conclusion can be drawn about the author of the title page and the colophon of the *Moeurs*, it is more than likely that Floris knew personally Coecke and his entourage.¹⁷

The London series mounted on canvas shows clearly that the architectural frame was printed from separate woodblocks repeating the same motif, whereas the commentary in vernacular French

along the bottom underneath each scene was most probably impressed with block letters. Contrary to what is found in the literature, the frieze preserved in the Brussels Royal Library was assembled in the nineteenth century prior to its entrance in the collection, the entablature and base being later additions based on the London set or even after the facsimile edition of Sir Stirling Maxwell.¹⁸

The material description raises questions concerning the genesis of the woodcut series. Does the whole composition with an architectural border along the top and the bottom reflect faithfully the original project of Coecke, even though *modelli* for tapestries usually did not include borders? This could also explain the blank space of the borders. Nevertheless, the title page mentions that the artist drew the design on the blocks later: '*Lequel aussy de sa main propre a pourtraict ces figures duysantes à l'impression d'ycelles*'. This would suggest that he was only responsible for the preparatory drawings, though the well-balanced ratio between the height of the compartments and the entablature and base testifies to the artist's personal knowledge of the principles of architecture. Finally, the French text is problematic as far as its author is concerned. Is it an accurate record of the notes made by Pieter Coecke on the original drawings? Or are we dealing with posthumous commentaries written down by his widow?¹⁹ Similarly, texts in Castilian in the upper border and Latin in the lower describe the events illustrated in the *Conquest of Tunis* designed by Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen (Beverwijck, c. 1500 – Brussels, 1559) after 1546 and woven in the Brussels workshop of Willem de Pannemaker between 1549 and 1554 after cartoons produced in collaboration with Pieter Coecke.²⁰

Coecke journey to Constantinople: a politico-commercial enterprise?

Although the exact circumstances of Coecke's travel to Constantinople remain uncertain, all written sources situate it within the context of the Antwerp-Brussels tapestry. In his life of Pieter Coecke of 1604, Karel Van Mander reports in much detail on the voyage to Turkey:

[...] He [i.e. Coecke] was urged on by some tradesmen, tapestry-makers from Brussels called Van der Moeyen, to travel to Constantinople in Turkey where they were planning to undertake something special by making beautiful, costly tapestries for the Great Turk, and they got Pieter to paint some things for that purpose to show the Turkish Emperor; but since the Turk, according to his Mohammedan Law, did not want figures of people or animals, it was fruitless and nothing came of it—except that a useless journey and high expenses incurred.²¹

Another important account is by André Félibien, who reported in 1666 that '[...] he went to Turkey, from where he brought the secret of beautiful dyes of silk and wool [...]'.²²

Some archival sources have been connected to these literary ones. On 15 June 1533, Jacob Rehlinger, merchant from Augsburg and his Antwerp associate Pieter van der Walle, trader, jeweller and merchant of luxury goods, signed a contract with Willem Dermoyen for an option on re-editing the set of the *Hunts of Maximilian* and of the *Battle of Pavia* series. Rehlinger declared that he had received a tapestry of each set as samples to send off abroad. For the *Hunts*, the example was the *Month of September*, though the document does not specify which one was selected from the other

series. Rehlinger and his associate committed themselves to informing Dermoyen, before the end of year or at last in December 1533, whether they would acquire the first, the second, or both series. The document provides other valuable data concerning the transaction that are also found in another contract concluded at the request of Marco Casarli by a notary in Venice on 18 Augustus 1533, between Jacob Rehlinger and the Venetian jeweller Marco di Niccolò. This second source, dated two months later than the first contract, mentions explicitly that the samples of tapestries were to be offered for sale to Süleyman by their Venetian partner Marco di Niccolò.²³ The delay of a maximum of four months between the signing of the second contract and the commitment vis-à-vis Dermoyen concerning the commercial issue of this enterprise is very short, which allows us to conclude that this trading network operated efficiently. The average time for couriers to travel between Venice and Constantinople was forty-six days, with a minimum of fifteen and a maximum of eighty-one days.²⁴ Similarly, a Venetian traveller undertook the journey to Constantinople in January 1534 and arrived sixty-seven days later; a month to six weeks seems to have been the usual time span.²⁵

Until now, no archival document mentioning the name of Coecke can be connected to this attempt to penetrate the Levantine market. Nevertheless, it is very likely that the artist could have been involved in one way or another. Indeed, business ties linked Coecke to the Antwerp merchant Peter van der Walle, who sold a set of the *Seven Deadly Sins* to Mary of Hungary in 1544. According to Thomas Campbell, '*maistre pierre van aelst peintre d'anvers*', as he is cited in a contemporary manuscript describing the iconography of the designs prepared for the Brussels weaver Willem de Pannemaker,²⁶ may have designed this series just before he left for Turkey. Campbell also suggests that Van der Walle commissioned the cartoons as a speculative venture.²⁷ Coecke, as a pupil of Bernard van Orley (Brussels, c. 1491/92 – 1541), was also very familiar with the Brussels circle of tapestry designers and weavers and maintained close connections with it during his entire career. Moreover, the name of Coecke has been associated with the cartoons for three series woven in Brussels during the 1520s: the *Life of Christ*, the *Battle of Pavia* and the *Hunts of Maximilian* (fig. 7), the last two sets being attributed to Van Orley and assistants.²⁸ Although it is still a matter of conjecture, Coecke's collaboration on the design of the *Hunts* was already mentioned by André Félibien in 1666, and this was the first time that he was directly associated with a set of tapestries in a written source, which thus provides a direct link between Coecke and Dermoyen.²⁹ Finally, Jacob Rehlinger, one of Charles V's important financiers and factor for the Fugger Company in Antwerp in 1520–21 and again in 1538–40, translated Serlio's Book IV on architecture, which had been published in 1542 by Coecke, into German.

While a commercial purpose of this whole enterprise cannot be denied, it is also likely that it was a pretext to send spies to the Ottoman Court. As recorded in various letters kept in the Imperial archives, the Roman Emperor endeavoured to keep himself informed on a daily basis about what was happening in Turkey, especially as of 1529. To achieve this, he established a diversified network of informants that was parallel or complementary to the one created by his brother Ferdinand. Amongst these informants was Marco di Niccolò, double agent for both Charles V and Süleyman the Magnificent, who was decapitated in Mars 1536 in Constantinople.³⁰

After years of hostilities at the eastern borders of the Habsburg empire, the constant threats to Vienna, and at last the alliance of Francis I with Süleyman, Charles V delegated the Fleming

Cornelis de Schepper to negotiate an agreement concerning Hungary. He entered into *pourparlers* with the Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha between May and July 1533 and concluded a truce allowing free trade between the Holy German Empire and the Ottoman Empire.³¹ De Schepper went back to Brussels and then joined the Roman Emperor in Monzón (Aragon); by the end of December 1533 he had returned to Constantinople via Venice and Ragusa (today Dubrovnik), where his presence is attested on 26 April 1534. In a letter dated 2 June 1534 and addressed to a certain Monsieur de Malines, an encoded name for Charles V, references are made to the tapestries sent to Constantinople:

Last, I wrote to you how I arrived at that place, and what I thought could be said to Pierre Vande Walle concerning the tapestries and other goods. Since then the merchants have had much to suffer, and are oppressed increasingly from day to day, to such an extent that I don't advise them to come any more, and I think they will follow my advice. Other ways have to be found to sell off the said merchandise.³²

Regarding the intense political exchange and the flow of information that circulated at that time,³³ it is impossible to credit Van Mander's assertion that the trip to Constantinople led to nothing because of Islamic law, first and foremost because human representations are indeed found in contemporary miniatures but also because sets of tapestries were already sent to Constantinople in the late fourteenth century.³⁴ It could even be argued that the Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha was eager to compete with the lustre of the Western courts, as attested by the tiara commissioned in Venice and delivered in 1532; the luxury goods consisted mostly of jewellery and curiosities. After his death in 1536 his successors avoided conspicuous consumption at the Ottoman court.³⁵ The political events themselves necessitated a radical break with the diplomacy of reconciliation. Before the end of 1533 Süleyman summoned the pirate leader Barbarossa from Algiers to the court in Constantinople and ordered him to reorganize the Ottoman fleet in the Mediterranean. De Schepper left Constantinople on 13 June 1534 for Vienna, via Belgrade (30 June), Pressburg (today Bratislava, 15 July), and Prague (30 July).

With the exception of the date of 1533 on the front-page of the woodcut series and Van Mander's statement that Pieter Coecke '*was there for about a year*', no accurate information with respect to his trip is known,³⁶ neither the dates of his departure from Antwerp and Constantinople, nor his itinerary for the outward or the return journey. Many scenarios are plausible. The artist could have been a member of the entourage of De Schepper who arrived in the Ottoman city in May 1533 or, as a representative of the Dermoyen firm, he may have left Venice soon after the 18 August 1533, the date of the second contract, with the samples of tapestries and could have accompanied De Schepper on his return, but this is pure speculation.³⁷ Only the drawings that the painter brought from his journey, which are considered as the first reliable and illustrated reportage on Turkish civilization with views of landscapes and cityscapes from life, and the commentaries that located the scenes allow a partial reconstruction of the countries he visited.

The seven panoramic scenes 'au vif contrefaictes'

According to Van Mander, this long frieze should be read from right to left, starting with *Süleyman riding through the ruins of the Hippodrome* (fig. 6), so that the Sultan and the cavalcade are looking left from the epitomized centre of the Ottoman Empire to his widely spread territories with the representation of *An Encampment in Slavonia* (fig. 5) at the borders of the Habsburg empire ensuring that even the most recently conquered territories are included. After the invasion of the kingdom of Hungary and the defeat at the battle of Mohács, from 1529 until 1552 the Ottoman army gradually conquered the eastern part of Slavonia, one of the three core regions of the medieval kingdom of Croatia. This scene reflects everyday life in a camp and the difficult conditions encountered by travellers in the mountains, especially during winter. At the time, caravanserais were not yet built along the whole Imperial road between Constantinople and Belgrade, via Sofia and Edirne. Cornelius de Schepper, on the way back from Constantinople in July 1533, related that, after Edirne, they put up pavilions and tents in order to sleep in the countryside.



Fig. 5 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Les moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz ...*, *Encampment in Slavonia*, Antwerp (?), 1553, London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.

The commentaries are a mine of information for viewers unfamiliar with the Turkish civilization and Muslim traditions. The detailed description of each scene interacts with the visual depiction and draws attention to particular situations, customs and beliefs that are confirmed amply by other sources, not only the letters and travel diary of Cornelius de Schepper already mentioned, but also the accounts of other ambassadors, the most famous being the *Turkish Letters* of Ogier Ghislen de Busbecq, who was appointed by Ferdinand between 1554 and 1562 as ambassador to the

court in Constantinople to negotiate, *inter alia*, the disputed territory of Transylvania (which more or less corresponds to present-day Romania).³⁸

The iconography of the whole set attests to a high sense of observation and a thorough understanding of Ottoman society, emphasizing the diversity of culture in the extensive lands around the eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans under Ottoman control. Everything is depicted with a great respect for foreigners and a non-Christian civilization, which it even glorifies.³⁹ It is tempting to follow Friedländer's assumption and to consider the woodcuts as being based on the *modelli*⁴⁰ intended to be submitted to Süleyman's approval before tapestries were commissioned. Necipoğlu suggested that the decision to show tapestries with pro-Habsburg subjects was probably meant to incite the Sultan to order similar tapestries for Ottoman propaganda.⁴¹ However, after the truce negotiated by Cornelius de Schepper, the sending of the *Month of September* was probably not insignificant, given that it featured a horseman seen from the back whose profile and beardless face recall that of Ferdinand in the *Month of December*.⁴² Indeed, the figure of a rider perfectly controlling his horse, in this case the king of Bohemia and Hungary, could be considered, in light of the recent political events, as a message delivered for the attention of the Sultan. Even if these hypotheses cannot be ignored, especially in the context of court culture, the samples probably also had another function as well, namely, to show with concrete examples the refinement of execution and the high quality of the material used in the tapestries woven by the Brussels firm of Dermoyen.

The very similarity that the generic iconographic programme of the woodcut frieze shares with the *Hunts of Maximilian* is striking. The same rhetoric prevails: in *the Hunts*, the depiction of the leisure of the Emperor and other noblemen is the pretext to represent the centre of Habsburg power in the Low Countries during the reign of Charles V on the first tapestry of the set, the *Month of March*. The cityscape offers a unique view of Brussels with the old Coudenberg palace on the left, the tower of the town hall as a symbol of the civic authorities and the church of St Nicholas in the middle, and finally the church of Sts Michel and Gudule on the right. Both tapestries feature representations of places and buildings directly associated with the Emperor and court ritual and practices, for example, the Soignes forest, the castle of Tervueren, or the *Place des Bailles* created by the Emperor in front of the Coudenberg palace.

In the *Moeurs et Fachons de Faire des Turcs*, the ethnographic reportage made by Coecke was also a way to visualize for the 'others' the vast territories of the Ottoman Empire. As for the *Hunts*, the first scene presents the ruler, the *Padisha riding through the ruins of the Hippodrome* in Constantinople, the heart of the Ottoman Empire, formerly capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, and a strategic place for trade with Asia and Africa. Since the fall of the city in May 1453, the reconquest of old Byzantium constituted a leitmotiv at Western courts, reflecting its high symbolic significance for Christendom.

As a court painter familiar with the imperial propaganda programme, Coecke intentionally chose to situate the scene on the Hippodrome, which was filled with statues of gods, emperors and heroes as well as with looted trophies such as three sculptures of antique gods and nude goddesses placed on a column (Hercules and Venus or Diana and Apollo?) that had taken from the royal castle at Ofen in Hungary in 1526 and destroyed in 1536 after Ibrahim Pasha fell into disgrace. Pieter Coecke and Cornelius de Schepper were the only ones to record having seen these sculptures.⁴³ This almost topographic view of the site with the cityscape of the imperial capital shows many of the

monuments visible at that time, not only those of the Ottoman civilization but also ones from the Byzantine period and from antiquity.⁴⁴

The similarity in *mise en scène* with the *Month of March* is obvious, with its strong relationship between the ruler and the city. Easily identifiable urban landscapes are used as markers of sovereignty and power, at the same time delivering a strong political message, namely, the recognition of Süleyman the Magnificent as the legitimate ruler of the former Eastern Roman Empire. Both emperors are portrayed on horseback, a strong reference to the antique Roman code of representation that enhanced the legitimacy of their title. Moreover, both were the temporal representatives of their respective religious world, Charles V being head of the Holy Roman Empire and the sultan likewise being a ruler with moral and religious authority. Even if not explicitly expressed, the representation of Charles V and Süleyman also emphasizes a semiotic analogy between the image of the royal portrait and God.



Fig. 6 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Les moeurs et fachons de faire de Turcz ...*, Süleyman riding through the ruins of the Hippodrome, Antwerp (?), 1553, London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.



Fig. 7 Bernard van Orley (after designs by ca. 1528–31), *Departure for the Hunt (Month of March)* from a twelve-piece set of the *Hunts of Maximilian*, Brussels, Dermoyen workshop, 1531–33, Paris, Musée du Louvre.

Pieter Coecke, who was well aware of the discourse delivered in tapestries intended for large-scale public display at the Habsburg court, translated it quite literally in a set considered to have been designed originally for Süleyman. As mentioned before, this attempt to penetrate the Levantine market led to nothing, with the exception of the record that still survives in this chorographic woodcut frieze.⁴⁵

Two decades elapsed between the printing of the *Moeurs* and the journey to Constantinople. We can legitimately ask what the original plan was, and even if *modelli* were ever submitted to the Sultan or his entourage. That Pieter Coecke was a privileged observer of the Ottoman civilization in all its diversity of culture, manners and customs is amply demonstrated by scenes such as the *Turkish funeral* and the *Feast of the Circumcision outside of Constantinople* (fig. 1), even though no original drawing ‘from life’ survives.

In 1553 (or maybe 1554 if we take into account the Easter Calendar, as the precise date of the edition of the *Moeurs* is not given), the tapestry set of the *Conquest of Tunis* was already woven or at least almost completed. It was displayed for the first time at the wedding of Philip II of Spain and Portugal and the English queen Mary Tudor on 7 July 1554 in Winchester Cathedral and again in January 1555 at the church of Notre-Dame in Antwerp for a meeting of the Order of the Golden Fleece.⁴⁶ It is tempting to hypothesize that at that time Mayken Verhulst saw a unique opportunity to print the travelogue made twenty years earlier by her husband. Before Coecke’s premature death, an event that was closely associated with the realization of the cartoons of the *Tunis tapestries series*,⁴⁷ it is obvious that he reworked the drawings taken from life during his trip and sojourn. But for what purpose did he do so? The unusual oblong format of the scenes separated by terms, the entablature and the base does indeed suggest that the series was well designed as models for tapestries and was only later on turned into printing blocks.⁴⁸ Several elements point in that direction. First and

foremost, the style is much more compatible with Pieter Coecke's late works, such as the *Lisbon triptych*, but one also notices the same creative spirit that prevails in the *Tunis tapestries*, even if their iconography diverges drastically. The compositions exhibit similarities in layout, with the action being concentrated mainly in the foreground to leave a maximum of space for the development of the panoramic views. The presence of the painter in the last scene dressed in a Slovenian costume, which affirmed that he was there, just as Jan Vermeyen portrayed himself twice in the *Tunis tapestries* in order to certify his presence during the Emperor's campaign in 1535, attests to a kind of mutual emulation between the two court painters. Moreover, the text in the tablet of the first tapestry of the *Tunis series*, *The Map of the Mediterranean Basin*, displays the same rhetoric as the title page of the *Moeurs*. It testifies that Vermeyen reported the action according to nature but also that the project was represented with geographical accuracy.⁴⁹ Again, a similar willingness to convince the viewer that what he was seeing had been depicted with all possible topographical rigour is found in the French commentary on *The Feast of the Circumcision outside of Constantinople* (fig. 1), in which it is explicitly stated that the cityscape is a true representation of the city outside made after nature: '*La vraye assiete ou qualite de la Ville de Constantinople par le dehors contrefaict apres le nature*'.⁵⁰

More than fifty years before Van Mander introduced the notion of '*naer het leven*' into Dutch art theory, the term of '*au vif contrefaict*' had already appeared in the title page of the chorographic frieze of the *Moeurs et Fachons de faire de Turcz*, and the same idea prevailed as well in the introductory text of the *Tunis series*. Both ensembles started as independent records of 'topographical views' and events with ethnographic interest and were only later transformed into works of art.⁵¹

From 1540, Antwerp became a major centre for the printing of accounts and travelogues of the Levant. At that time the Europeans were better informed about what was happening in the Ottoman Empire than anywhere else in the world.⁵² In 1544, Gillis Coppens van Diest published the accounts of Bartolomej Georgijević, a Hungarian captured by the Turks who returned to the West after thirteen years in slavery, and the same year Gregorius Bontius printed a book by the same authors on the origins of the Turks and various aspects of their social life.⁵³ As Cecilia Paredes has pertinently noted, although the *Moeurs* innovate in terms of iconography, the set is still part of a figurative and literary tradition. It assumes the literal transposition into image as much as it represents and illustrates the voyage of Coecke in Turkey.⁵⁴

Conclusion

Because of the whole cultural and artistic context in which first the drawings were re-elaborated and then the woodcut frieze created, it seems difficult to consider this series as an illustrative example of the mimetic discourse in a self-fashioning image of imperial power-lust between Charles V and Süleyman. If it was not, then who was behind the initiative?

More than ten years elapsed before Mary of Hungary commissioned Vermeyen to execute the *Conquest of Tunis* to celebrate the victory of the Emperor. However, the repercussions of this

military success were of limited scope, since the Ottoman fleet quickly regained control of the Eastern Mediterranean.

The *Moeurs*, which can be considered as an ethnographic reportage or an illustrated travelogue, also contains a powerful political message, as is shown by the comparison with the *Hunts of Maximilian*, a typical example of Habsburg propagandistic discourse. By showing Sultan Süleyman as the Magnificent, the victory of the Holy Roman Emperor at the Battle of Tunis was made even more glorious.



Fig. 8 Pieter Coecke van Aelst, *Les mœurs et fachons de faire de Turcz ...*, detail of Süleyman riding through the ruins of the Hippodrome, Antwerp (?), 1553, London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.

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Illustrations

Fig. 1-3, 5-6, 8 The Trustees of the British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings.

Fig. 4 Photo author.

Fig. 7 RMN, Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre), photo by Daniel Arnaudet.

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² On Pieter Coecke, still worth referring to Friedländer 1917 and Friedlander 1975, pp. 32–39 and on this series, see especially Stirling Maxwell 1873; Marlier 1966, pp. 55–74.

³ Constantinople alone was a multi-ethnic society where the Turks cohabited with non-Muslim ethnic groups, mostly Jews, Greeks and Armenians. The bibliography on the subject is very abundant, see Wittek 1938 (ed. 2001); İnalçik 1994; Kafadar 1995.

⁴ Considered as the 'golden age' of the Ottoman Empire, see Bacqué-Grammont 1989; Kunt & Woodhead, 1995. On the politics of Charles V, see Parker 1999 and on the mutual influences between Europe and the Ottomans, see İnalçik 2002.

⁵ Necipoğlu 1989.

⁶ Jardine & Brotton 2000. This view has been challenged. Nancy Bisaha 2004 notes that the authors' claim to cultural openness and respectful exchange relies on material goods and artwork, though she presents a superficial treatment of written sources (esp. pp. 6, 191–92 n. 13), whereas Silver 2011 emphasizes that in the Holy Roman Empire the Turks were seen as a marker of difference, with the usual stereotype of exotic and cruel warriors. Nevertheless, the importance of the East-West luxury trade in decorative art is well documented and attests to the European taste for 'exotic objects'. Paintings provide evidence of the dissemination of such consumer goods as well as models for the emergence of new artefacts produced locally. For Italy, see Mack 2002; Brotton 2002. For a broad overview of the import of textiles, tiles and ceramics, carpets, arms and armour in Eastern and Western Europe: Atasoy & Uluç 2012.

⁷ Jardine & Brotton 2000, p. 120.

⁸ And not caryatids as often mentioned. Similarly, the title page of the second edition of Coecke's Dutch translation of Sebastiano Serlio's Book IV on Architecture (1549) is decorated with male and female terms supporting a pediment. A copy is preserved in Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent, ACC.028738.

⁹ Like the set kept in Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent, BHSL. RES. 1323/2 and in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund 1928, inv. 28.85.7a,b; Boorsch and Orenstein 1997; Orenstein 2004.

¹⁰ London, British Museum, Department: Prints & Drawings, inv. E,6.1-7, 455 x 4825 mm (overall).

¹¹ As suggested by Stirling Maxwell 1873 (p. 2) this may explain the destruction of the greater part of the impression. On procession friezes and their origin, function and use, see Silver 2008.

¹² As early as 1962 Schéle considered a collaboration between Cornelis Bos and Pieter Coecke. In 1542, Coecke supplied Bos with three hundred copies of the 1539 Dutch edition of Serlio's Book IV, six of the 1542 German edition and 650 of *Die inventive der colommen* published in February 1539 (n.s. 1540). Schéle speculated that Bos was involved in the production of the books and that he was responsible for the woodcut illustrations. See

also Schéle 1965, pp. 18–23. This hypothesis is questioned by Van der Coelen (1995, pp. 191–92) who emphasized that Bos was a specialist in engraving on copper. Nevertheless, the banishment of the artist in 1544 makes it unlikely that he was implied in the series of the *Moeurs*, though he does seem to have maintained contacts with the artistic community in Antwerp until the end of his life (Van der Coelen 1995, p. 143).

¹³ Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent, ACC.028724/1 and ACC.028738. See also: <http://adore.ugent.be/OpenURL/app?id=archive.ugent.be:0D7B5258-B864-11E0-8849-E58E37D8FA8C&type=carousel>

¹⁴ The collaboration with Gillis Coppens started as early as 1539 with the Dutch edition of Book IV: *Generalen reglen der architecture*. That Pieter Coecke, who explicitly used the title of sworn bookseller of the Emperor, had permission to publish the memorial book of the Entry printed in 1550 under his own name attests that he enjoyed a privileged status within the Scheldt city, whose council forbade painters, sculptors and printers to reproduce in any form whatsoever the decorations erected on the occasion or even to publish descriptions. In other words, only the official publications were authorized. Concerning the decree of the city council: Van der Stock 1998, pp. 152–53, 370 (transcription of the document). On the Books of Architecture, see a.o. De la Fontayne Verwey 1976; De Jonge 2004 (with bibliography).

¹⁵ Bruegel started to work for Cock as soon as 1554 or even in 1552. The earliest testimony of Bruegel's activity in Cock's printing house is illustrated by a print *Wooded landscape with the Temptation of Christ* bearing the signature *H. Cock. fecit*. Sellink 2007, pp. 13, 57 cat. 16 with previous bibliography. On Cock and the publishing house, see Van Grieken 2010; Van der Stock 2013; Van Grieken 2013.

¹⁶ The title page of the 1548 series of twenty designs for pitchers and shells with grotesque decorations displays similarities with that of the *Moeurs*. One might wonder what the participation of Cock was in the preparation of this set; he did indeed have knowledge of similar works based on antique models by Agostino Veneziano, Eneo Vico and Leonardo da Udine. For the print series and the collaboration with Cock, Van Mulders 1996 and for the 1548 series, esp. pp. 43–49, 142–45, figs. 119–139; see also Van Grieken, Luijten & Van der Stock 2013, cat. 76a-b, pp. 280–283.

¹⁷ His brother, Frans I Floris, painted the decoration of the Triumphal Arch erected by the Genovese for the 1549 Joyous Entree of Philip II of Spain in Antwerp.

¹⁸ Bruxelles, Bibliothèque royale de Belgique/Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, inv. S. II 32364, frieze of fourteen woodcuts; the title page and the colophon, on separate sheets, are also late additions (probably nineteenth century). A second set on fourteen sheets of a later edition (seventeenth century?) is also kept in the collection: inv. S. II 148040–148049.

¹⁹ See the discussion below.

²⁰ The original tapestry set is preserved in Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, and the cartoons in Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie. A close examination of the cartoons sustains this hypothesis. Campbell (2002, pp. 387–90) has suggested that some of the main figures in the foreground are by Coecke, unlike Horn (1989, pp. 122–25), who denied the participation of the artist. Several figures that present recurrent stylistic analogies with later works by Coecke were pasted over the vertical strips of the cartoons. A technical study of the cartoons would probably help us to understand the genesis of the work and the collaboration between the two masters and their workshop. Nevertheless, beside stylistic features that some main figures share with Coecke's works, some pieces of technical evidence reinforce this assumption, such as the comparison of the underdrawing of the *Triptych of the Descent of the Cross* (Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, inv. 112), which shows idiosyncratic handwritten characteristics in the drawing outlines and shadowing effects. This will be developed in another study devoted to the Lisbon altarpiece.

²¹ Van Mander ed. Miedema 1994, I, pp. 130–31.

²² Félibien ed. 1705, p. 255.

²³ Necipoğlu 1989, pp. 419–21; Balis, De Jonge, Delmarcel & Lefébure 1993, pp. 39–40; Campbell 2002, p. 379.

²⁴ Estimation for the period between 1497 and 1522. See Parker 1999, p. 114.

²⁵ For the account of this voyage and comments, see Stirling Maxwell 1873, pp. 22–30. In a letter (Constantinople, 2 June 1534) to 'Monsieur de Malines' (the Emperor), Cornelius De Schepper writes that he will leave on Friday next and hopes to be in Vienna in twenty-five days. See Gachard & Piot 1881, III, p. 541.

²⁶ Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, see Bauer & Steppe 1981, pp. 90–99.

²⁷ Campbell 2002, pp. 381, 414.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

²⁹ Félibien ed. 1705, pp. 254–55; Marlier 1966, pp. 31–32. For the author of the drawings and the cartoons: Schneeberg-Perelman (1982, p. 191–226) attributed them to François Borreman and Coecke whereas Balis, De Jonge, Delmarcel & Lefébure (1993, pp. 54–79, esp. p. 78) reject the view that Coecke could have played a role in the elaboration of the set.

³⁰ Servantie 2005, pp. 271–74 and n. 68.

³¹ The travel journal of Cornelis de Schepper is published by De Saint-Genois & Yssel de Schepper 1856, pp. 118–222.

³² *'Par mes dernières, vous ay escript comment j'estoie arrivé en ce lieu, et ce que me sembla que pourrez dire à Pierre Vande Walle touchant les tapisseries et aultres marchandises. Depuis ce temps les marchandts ont eut assez à souffrir, et de jour en jour se treuvent oppressez de plus en plus ; de sorte que je ne conseille pas qu'ilz y vieignent plus, comme aussi je croy qu'ilz ne feront. Il fault trouver aultre mode pour hwyder lesdictes marchandises'*. Quoted after Gachard & Piot 1881, III, pp. 539–42 (esp. 539). In the note it is stated that *hwyder* means 'faire écouler', i.e. to sell.

³³ Servantie 2005.

³⁴ During a military expedition against the Sultan Beyazit, the future John the Fearless was taken prisoner. He was released in exchange for Arras tapestries that represented good old stories. Philip the Bold provided tapestries with the story of Alexander the Great's triumphs that were displayed on the walls of the Topkapi Saray. Jardine & Brotton 2000, p. 76.

³⁵ Necipoğlu 1989, p. 421. In the letter to the Emperor above mentioned, De Schepper complains that during the absence of Ibrahim Pasha things are not going as they should and that business is bad: *'par l'absence d'Imbrahim Bassa, les choses vont aultrement qu'elles ne souloient [...] Seulement je vous veulx prier vouloir dire à Pietre Vande Walle ce que ensuyt, affin qu'il ne se fie pas sur ces pierreries; car ce Grand Seigneur n'achapte plus ainsi qu'il souloit. C'est par l'absence d'Imbrahim Bassa'*. After Gachard & Piot 1881, III, pp. 539–40. The content of the entire letter is ambiguous and clearly shows that trade, diplomacy and espionage were closely related.

³⁶ Lewy (2007, pp. 67–74) believes that Pieter Coecke made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the period he was in Constantinople. The author's argumentation is based on an anonymous drawing of *Jerusalem as seen from the south* (Antwerp, private collection, pen and ink, 140 x 395 mm) that he ascribes to the artist. The view appears repeatedly with some alterations on several works attributed to Coecke, as for instance in the tapestry with the *Stoning of St Stephen* belonging to the cycle of Paul's tapestries (Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, inv. n° T 71/8) and the triptych of the *Resurrection* (Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle, inv. 153). Nevertheless, as for the *View of the Saint Peter basilica under construction* (Roma, Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ashby collection, inv. 329, pen and brown ink, 198 x 408 mm), the attribution of the drawing does not rely on strong stylistic similarities with undisputed drawings by the master but merely on the fact that Coecke is the only Netherlandish artist whose presence is attested in the Southern Levant at the time. On the Romain drawing, see Born 2008, pp. 96–97.

³⁷ On the road to Constantinople, see Stirling Maxwell 1873, pp. 21–30. Marlier (1966, p. 60) suggested that Coecke could have been part of De Schepper's embassy, whereas Hamilton (2001, p. 41) presents this as a fact but without any reference.

³⁸ Aedigius Beys, Plantin's son-in-law, printed the first completed edition in Paris in 1589 under Busbecq's supervision. See Hamilton 2001, pp. 41, 45. On European sources on Ottoman history (travellers, diplomats, pilgrims, merchants, etc.), see Faroqhi 1999, pp. 110–43.

³⁹ The topic of the image of the Turk has been also widely discussed in the literature. See for example St. Clair 1973, Raby 1982, Silver 2011 and the recent overview of Atasoy & Uluç 2012, pp. 327–63.

⁴⁰ The style and the well-balanced compositions of the woodcuts point to a later date, suggesting that Coecke reworked them.

⁴¹ Necipoğlu 1989, p. 419.

⁴² Identification suggested by Balis, De Jonge, Delmarcel & Lefébure 1993, pp. 32, 122.

⁴³ De Schepper visited on the 27 May 1533 Ibrahim Pasha in his palace situated on the Hippodrome and provided a description of the site. See De Saint-Genois & Yssel de Schepper 1856, p. 119.

⁴⁴ The buildings around the Hippodrome and the axis of the different obelisks and columns are slightly rearranged and shifted for compositional reasons. For a discussion on the accuracy of the site and monuments, see Marlier 1966, pp. 69–72.

⁴⁵ Until now, no preliminary drawing has been associated with this woodcut series. A large woodcut: *Description de la court du Grand Turc Solimans faisant son sejour en Constantinople, avec la maniere des*

vestements de ceux de sa suite (Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus Prentenkabinett, 189 x 36 cm) is associated with the *Mœurs* but erroneously in my view. Illustrations in Hamilton 2001, pp. 28–33.

⁴⁶ Campbell 2002, p. 428 (with previous references).

⁴⁷ Coecke died in Brussels on 6 or 16 December 1550. In a letter dated 17 December 1550 from Mary of Hungary to Charles V concerning the *Tunis tapestries*, we find the following statement: '*il a plut à Dieu prendre à soy le peintre mestre Piere*'. If it cannot be formally excluded that there is more than one painter whose first name is Pierre, it seems unlikely that two court masters painters died unexpectedly in Brussels at the same time. For the epitaph, see Marlier 1966, pp. 29–31, 35 and document published by Horn 1989, II, p. 381.

⁴⁸ Even after the artist's death, the statement '*Lequel aussy de sa main propre a pourtraict ces figures duysantes à l'impression d'ycelles*' should perhaps not be taken literally but adds credibility to the assumption that the scenes from nature were not altered by the hand of another person.

⁴⁹ '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'. Quoted after Horn 1989, pp. 181, 230 n. 32 (Spanish text).

⁵⁰ The city is depicted from a place called Kassimpasha, seen from across the Golden Horn, the city's harbour. Marlier 1966, pp. 66–69.

⁵¹ Nevertheless, there are, of course, drawings preserved that are portraits of cities or monuments, like for instance Jan Gossart's *View on the Colosseum Seen from the West* (Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. kdz 12918) with a later sixteenth century inscription at upper right: '*Jennin Mabusen eghenen / handt. Contrafetet in Roma / in [?] Coloseus*' or the *View on Bergen-op-Zoom* made by Dürer during his stay in Antwerp in 1520 (Vienna, Graphische Sammlung, Albertina, inv. 3165 D 139). The notion '*naer het leven*' has been developed further in our presentation *The Customs and Fashions of the Turks « au vif contrefaictes »* by Pieter Coecke van Aelst: critical reading and visual evidence, in *Netherlandish Culture of the Sixteenth Century. Interdisciplinary Conference*, Toronto, 19–20 October 2012.

⁵² Hamilton 2001, pp. 26, 35 and ff.

⁵³ *De Afflictione tam captivorum quam etiam sub Turcae tributo viventium Christianorum*, Antwerp, Copenius, 1544, 8° and *De Turcarum ritu et caeremoniis*, Antwerp, 1544, 8°, Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek Gent: Hi 4013 and Hi 7026.

⁵⁴ Paredes 2005, pp. 146–48.