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and a Contribution by Marco Iuliano

Melchior Lorck

VOLUME 4

The Constantinople Prospect

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The Royal Library

Vandkunsten Publishers, Copenhagen

MMIX

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Published with the generous support of

The VELUX Foundation
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The Ludvig and Sara Elsass Foundation

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Catalogue Raisonné

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Introduction

The Constantinople Prospect, c. 1560-1565

Universiteitbibliotheek Leiden, inventory number BPL 1758

The Constantinople Prospect was originally mounted as a scroll consisting of different pieces of paper that were glued together, judging from what we can see reproduced on the prospect's self-portrait on leaf 11 and as can still be seen on the map of the Elbe River that Lorck charted out in 1568, which is located today at the Staatsarchiv in Hamburg.¹

Evidently, the prospect wound up very early in the possession of the Van der Does family, an esteemed Dutch family of noble rank, from where, already in 1598, it progressed into the confines of the library of the newly opened university in Leiden.² Here it hung in the reading room, in a most prominent place, as can be seen on an engraving made by Jan Cornelisz Woudanus in 1610.³ But later on, the prospect lay around in a rolled-up state, up in a loft, for quite an extended period of time, under inappropriately unfavorable conditions. It was in this state that it was rediscovered in the nineteenth century. Largely because the prospect had suffered so much damage from the ill effects of being neglected, a decision was made to split the work up into the twenty-one sheets of paper of which it consists today.

The prospect bears the marks of having been executed in a number of different tempi. This can be substantiated by considering that the types of paper, the colors of the ink and even the languages of the inscriptions (Latin, Italian, German) are different in various spots in the prospect, although these respective variations are disseminated around the entire extent of the original roll of paper in such a way that it is utterly impossible to identify any specific chronology that might have unfolded among the sequence of leaves and similarly impossible to trace any kind of chronological progression from one end of the prospect to the other. The technical differences

and the differences related to materials seem rather to indicate different levels of how the motives have been worked through and prepared; in some instances, we can even see variable layers of finishing and retouching. These can be seen quite distinctly, for example, on leaf 10, where the Süleymaniye mosque has been beautifully modeled and delineated in an extremely detailed way, while a whole area of surrounding buildings that have been drawn with a gray-black ink is rough and succinct in the expression. The Süleymaniye mosque has been the object of scrupulous studies, as can be seen in *The Turkish Publication's* woodcut of the edifice,⁴ while there can be no question that Lorck sketched the more anonymous buildings in the large sections of the residential neighborhoods in a rough way, if he bothered to sketch them at all. Similarly, the differences that can be seen on leaf 11 with respect to the drawing's technique would seem to suggest that the different hues of ink mark out chronological phases in the history of the work's genesis: The Sehzade mosque and the Valens Aqueduct, the major part of the wall situated across the water (from all the way on the left side to slightly to the right of the midpoint) and the entire surface of the water as well as the foreground, i.e. the main architectural and archaeological monuments proximate to the section around the self-portrait, have all been rendered with brown ink. These elements appear to represent a primary phase in the genesis of the drawing, while the rendering in black ink appears to mark out a secondary phase in the process. (For example, the aqueduct is brown, and thus primary, while what we can see through the aqueduct's arcades is black, and thus secondary.) These features would appear to indicate a logical conclusion already formulated beforehand: the prospect is constructed on an extensive

1. Catalogue no. 1568,1.

2. See Document no. 1599-n.d. with commentaries.

3. See Iuliano's contribution, p. 40.

4. *The Turkish Publication*, catalogue no. 3.

Technique and Inscriptions

series of sketches that Lorck himself created during his sojourn in Constantinople in 1555-1559 and very likely in the latter part of the sojourn especially, when the artist enjoyed greater freedom of movement,⁵ while parts of the prospect are generalized fantasy architecture, which merely reproduce the city's topography in its general character.

What is especially interesting in connection with the prospect's genesis is a comment concerning the Süleymaniye mosque appearing on leaf 10, which really can only be understood as a mnemonic aid for a later alteration or as a remark addressed to some potential publisher: "sol mit sampt alles ihrer zugehörenden Gebewe etwas grösser sein" (It must, just like all the adjacent buildings, be somewhat larger ...). This kind of commentary could be taken to indicate that the prospect was conceived as a prototype, which would be modified in certain respects in the final rendition; a publication which, technically speaking, could best be conceived as a series of woodcuts also seems highly plausible. Assuming such a character of prototype also serves to explain why the inscriptions appear in a number of different languages, even though they are authentically autographs – it was not necessary for the artist to translate them since they would be translated, in any case, at such time as they would be reworked as blocks for the woodcuts, most likely into Latin, which is the language that appears inside the large title cartouche.

As described by Marco Iuliano in the article that follows, it is possible, to a certain extent, to identify the astounding number of vantage points from where the different sketches were made.⁶ It is also obvious, however, that Lorck supplemented his own experiences and notes with secondary material *after* returning to Western Europe. The Italian inscriptions, accordingly, were unquestionably transposed from other existing maps of the city, most especially from Vavassore's picture of the city, dating from c. 1520.⁷

In what follows, each and every one of the leaves will be succinctly described in a purely technical way, while the description of the leaves' contents

will be consigned to the latter portion of Marco Iuliano's treatise, which follows immediately after the enumeration of technical specification.

The prospect is complete in the sense that we are certain that no leaves that might precede leaf 1 (where the text-cartouche commences) have ever existed and similarly, that no leaves after leaf 21 (which is terminated by a vertical stripe on its right side) have ever existed. The prospect's total length is c. 11.52 meters, assuming that the single severely ruined leaf once possessed, judging by its placement, the "normal" width of 580 millimeters.⁸ The uncertainty about the prospect's total length revolves primarily around what we can surmise about the almost totally destroyed leaf 7, the width of which simply cannot be reconstructed. The height of the paper is augmented at the top on leaves 3-11.

The paper types used in making the prospect can be categorized in the following fashion, according to the different watermarks:

a: Leaves 1-5: Zonghi nos. 1215-16
(dating: 1553)

b: Leaves 6-9: Briquet no. 2121
(dating Augsburg 1552-1561)

c: Leaves 10-11: no visible watermarks

d: Leaves 12-21: Briquet no. 13165
(dating: Augsburg 1565)

This would indicate that the prospect was drawn sometime after Lorck's return from Constantinople – a conclusion that also seems to be logical in relation to the prospect's size.

The application of the pink-hued watercolor is found only in the portion of the prospect that spans from leaf 1 up to and including the rendition of the Hagia Sophia complex on leaf 5. This means to say that the pink color was used only while the artist was making use of Zonghi 1215-16 paper.

The exclusive application of black ink can only be found on leaves 19-21.

The technical specifications for each one of the individual leaves follows here, along with a recitation of their inscriptions.⁹

Leaf 1

DIMENSIONS 410 × 540

TECHNIQUE Pen and ink, brown ink; watercolor: The seraglio's gateway and wall: pinkish-red; the landscape on the other side of The Strait of Bosphorus had once been green but has now faded into a tone that is pale and yellowed; the two winged genies' garments are brownish yellow.

WATERMARK 2 crossed arrows, as on Zonghi 1215-16: 1553.

INSCRIPTIONS

1. brown, faded:
 - a: **Isole chiamate principe lequali / sono abitate da Turchi**
 - b: **porta de [continues on leaf 2:] lisole**
2. black:
 - a: **Turckien**
 - b: **Die heillig insula / [continues further down, underneath a heavy spot, which may well have been there at the time ML wrote this inscription, which renders it plausible that the black inscriptions were made secondarily!] oder puluerturm. / ist auch ein Wacht Thurm.**
 - c: **Der heillig Berg**
 - d: **Lustgarten des Kayßers**
 - e: **das hinderst / Schloss thor**
 - f: **Botschafft des Romischen. <Kaisers>**
 - g: **Bottscaff Schiff**
 - h: **Nassern Schiff**
 - i: **persianische Bottschafft**
 - j: **Turckischen Kayßers Galehen**
 - k: **Prouiant / thurn**
 - l: **Prouian <....>**

[The lengthy inscription:]

MID-POINT: [within the cartouche:] Ein ... welches Suldan / Selÿ<m> ...hatt dahir <dahin?> / der ...Zur Rechtterhandt / wa<s?r?> auss ... , hispanien, We<nedig? Wenetien?> /.. en <?> Zu der Linckhen <?> handt, was auss <E?>gipten, Sirien etc. <?> komptt <?> . Zu seiner Recht. / ... die Christen <?> kamen <?> , zu seiner Lincken / / .. ga <?> ... er ... Heiden kumen. Als dan Wan er da ist / ha<ndt?> kl ... e ... s In heer, mit Christen, Turcken, Juden / Da ... d ... Kayser zu ... da <?> stehen <?> gemeiniglich sine stumen, die weder / reden So h... / vn<dt?> / <r>eden noch horen können ... e bedeuten jene mit vil seltzamen Zeichen was sÿ willen vor jn

BELOW: [to the right of the cartouche, but the insertion marks at the beginning of the text and just outside the cartouche's lower right corner are marked as

5. See volume 1, pp. 97ff.

6. See p. 49.

7. See Iuliano's contribution, p. 58f.

8. Eugen Oberhummer: *Konstantinopel unter Sultan Suleiman dem Grossen, aufgenommen im Jahre 1559 durch Melchior Lorichs aus Flensburg*, München 1902, p. 8, has calculated a total width of 11.45 meters.

9. See also: Stéphane Yerasimos and Cyril Mango: *Melchior Lorichs' Panorama of Istanbul 1559*, Bern (1999).

being a continuation of the text inside the cartouche:] Seine des Kayßers stumme Leute müssen stum, vnd / vnd hörlos geboren sein auch nicht schreiben noch / Lesen kennen, der seyn etwa beÿ 30. die haben seine / Buecher Brieffe vnd geheime schreiben in verwarung / Sie bringen Jhm auch für was wndter seine Hoffgesindt vnd in <der?> / Statt ja was in der welt neuwes geschiehet, vnd dasselben / vnd deutungen mit dem haubt, hand vnd Füßen vnd a ... [supplemented on leaf 2:] ... sich dessen ser hoch zu verwundern hat, können Jme d<i>e/ Personen namen vnd gestaltdt der leiber, ob sie kurtz oder lang / [supplemented on leaf 2:] ... n ganngk haben ,vnd niemandn vertraut Jnen, es um<...>n / wie auch die türcken selbst sagen, der Teuffel mit Jnen redt [supplemented on leaf 2:] ...t kinder vnd was seins geblützt ist Todten, wan es der K<aÿse>r Leben wil- / [continues alone onto leaf 2:] ... niemandt weren [crossed out word] zum Kayßer zu gehen, weder beÿ tage <no>ch beÿ nacht.

COMMENTARY The faded (here: the Italian) inscriptions are, in all likelihood, older than the black ones.
There are no visible traces of any vertical framing line on the left side that would correspond with the right edge that is visible on leaf 21; putting this fact together with the fact that the leaf is actually 3-4 cm. narrower in width than leaves 2-5 made on the same type of paper, what we can surmise is that the leaf has been cropped, to a small degree, on its left side.

Leaf 2

DIMENSIONS c. 415 × c. 575

TECHNIQUE Pen and ink, brown ink; watercolor: buildings and turrets on both sides of the water are pink; the seraglio's garden is luminous light green. The inscription's cartouche with the two genies has been drawn into the picture after the clouds were rendered.

WATERMARK 2 crossed arrows, as on Zonghi 1215-16: 1553.

INSCRIPTIONS 1. brown, faded:
a: the cartouche with: BYZANTIVOM SIVE / CONSTANTINOPO= / LIS.
b: [almost faded away:] der park zum Schloss des Kaysers / [better preserved:] darinn laufft mancherleÿ Wildt als / dentchlen, <re?>h, gemsen, Kaningen / vnd anders mehr. [these three last lines might possibly have been added secondarily?]
c: Demetri
d: S. Chlara / portten

2. black:
a: [the text that was reproduced in the catalogue text for leaf 1, which supplements the inscription on leaf 1].
b: S: Dimitri
c: pottschaft
d: Romischen Kayßers Bottschaft.

COMMENTARY In all likelihood, the faded inscriptions are older than the inscriptions entered in black.

Leaf 3

DIMENSIONS c. 437 × c. 581, including the authentic augmentation at the top; without this augmentation, the height is actually 341.

TECHNIQUE Pen and ink, brownish ink; pink and green watercolor; framing line is partially preserved: a pink border.

WATERMARK 2 crossed arrows, as on Zonghi 1215-16: 1553.

INSCRIPTIONS 1. brown, faded [such an inscription is found only at the top of the attached piece of paper]:
a: [following three dots positioned in a vertical row, which refer to three analogous dots positioned to the left of the thickest on the turrets in the seraglio] einne Latern von Christallÿn haben die Venediger / dem Türckischen Kayßer geschenckt, hat ein thurn bauen / vnd die Leuchte oder Latern darauff setzen lassen, / wan nu der Kaiser fest hielt oder froilig sein will, / dann werden etliche wackskertz oder wackslichter / darin gestellt vnd angezündet, welchs dan weitten / schein gibt unnd fern leuchtet.
b: Seray

2. brown, faded, but retouched:
a: D<a>s Schloss des Türckischen Kayßs.
b: das lusthaussl des Kayßers

3. black:
a: Antiqua [above the The Column of the Goths]
b: Kayßers Schloss
c: [which continues on leaf 4] Ein Caruasareÿ mit viel gewelben mit Bleÿ gedeckt, dar Jn die Christen Kauffleutte Jr guetter haben [leaf 4:] zu Gallata oder Pera

Leaf 4

DIMENSIONS c. 445 × c. 569, including the authentic augmentation at the top; without this augmentation, the height is actually 344.

TECHNIQUE Pen and ink, brown ink; in general, identical with that of leaf 2 as far as the colors and the strokes' retouching are concerned.

WATERMARK No visible watermark.

INSCRIPTIONS 1. brown, faded:
a: [on the attached piece of paper:] Durch das .3. thor des Keÿßers gehet niemandt dan nur die / welche auff des Kayßers eigen person wartten

