

SCIENTIFIC REPORT ESF SHORT VISIT TRAVEL GRANT: PALATIUM

Thanks to the short visit travel grant of the European Science Foundation, granted by the Steering Committee of the Research Network Programme *PALATIUM. Court residences as Places of Exchange in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, 1400-1700*, I was able to participate as an ‘early-career researcher’ in the conference *The Habsburgs and their Courts in Europe, 1400-1700*, hosted by the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna.

During the conference, I presented my current research project (*‘Victor Orbis’: the Eschatological Self-Image of the Emperor in Europe and the Ottoman Empire (c. 1453-1640)*), which is embedded in my work as an exhibition curator for Bozar – Centre for Fine Arts (Brussels). Here, I am preparing for the exhibition *Fear and Fascination: the Ottoman Orient and the Worlds of Bellini, Dürer and Vermeiren* (working title).

My paper for the conference focused on the theme of the so-called ‘Last World Emperor’ and the apocalyptic self-image of the Holy Roman Emperor on the one hand, and of the Ottoman sultan on the other. In my lecture, I discussed 1) several case studies related to the imperial court, with focus on Charles V and Philip II; 2) Archduke Ernest of Austria, as the slain tipped successor for Emperor Rudolph II, and his artistic usage of the eschatological imagery; 3) the Ottoman situation, in particular under Sultan Mehmed II and Sultan Süleyman II. This approach not only gave me the opportunity to study the possibility of interchange between East and West, but also let to go into patterns of interaction between ‘central’ and ‘peripheral’ Habsburg courts.

The results of my short stay are fourfold: 1) I received useful feedback of specialists on my research; 2) I had a chance to hear lectures by both specialists and junior researchers which were enriching, either on a methodological level and/or regarding contents; 3) I was given the unique opportunity to exchange ideas and network with other leading scholars and researchers; 4) I gratefully used my stay in Vienna to visit both the Kunsthistorisches Museum and the Albertina, where I was able to study useful material for my ongoing research.

When it comes to the first point on my list, I would like to especially mention the names of prof. dr. Larry Silver (University of Pennsylvania), prof. dr. Pal Àcs (Hungarian

Academy of Sciences), and dr. Robert Born (Universität Leipzig): all three of them had very interesting tips, ideas and additions for me, which will no doubt enrich my research. Particularly my contact with dr. Robert Born proved to be very inspiring: it is highly likely that our respective research projects – including (parts of) my conference lecture – will be transformed into an article on the Turks in court art, to be published in the catalogue of the aforementioned Bozar exhibition project. I have good reason to believe that several other participants in the conference are also willing to contribute, and as the editor of this catalogue, it is an honour for me to be able to offer them a forum.

Secondly, it is hard for me to describe how fruitful several of the lectures were when it came to the literal and figurative widening of my research horizons. It is self-evident that the section on ‘Habsburgs and Muslims’ was a highpoint for me, and I specifically would like to refer to Jochen Martz’s lecture on the symbolical importance of rare tulips, to Pal Àcs focus on the Turks from a humanist perspective, and to Andrea Sommer-Mathis’s paper on the role and function of Turkish elements in theatre and festivities at Habsburg courts. All of them proved to be ‘eye opening’ moments, not only intellectually, but also on a more concrete level, since these papers led to the addition of several more artworks on my list of possible loans for the Bozar exhibition project. Of course, the same goes for the opening lecture by professor Silver, in which he presented a fascinating overview of the Turkish imagery in Habsburg Europe. However, there were also several other papers that gave important leads for further reading and reflection, because of their various interfaces with my own research. To list here only the most important ones: miss Laura Fernandez Gonzalez’s (University of Edinburgh) presentation on the ‘Universal Ruler’ gave me valuable insights when it came to the military counterpart of the eschatological imperial theme, which I hitherto mainly studied from a religious or mythological perspective, while I also felt very inspired by dr. Madelon Simons’s (University of Amsterdam) paper on the role and presentation of collections of ‘naturalia’ and ‘artificialia’ within palace walls, since in my dissertation, I have suggested that princes used their collections to literally re-create paradise, thus profiling themselves from an eschatological perspective as the new Adam or the returned Christ. Furthermore, the symbolical usage of specific types of art works, and their relationship to individual spaces, as featured in the lecture by prof. dr. Dagmar Eichberger (Universität Trier & Universität Heidelberg) is a theme which I am hoping to

study in the near future, be it with focus on the Brussels's court. Moreover, I felt very much inspired by the refreshing methodological approach of for instance prof. dr. Luc Duerloo: by combining his archival research with cultural patterns, he brought an inspirational interpretation of the religious court rituals. The insights I gained during his lecture will help me with preparatory work for the publication of my dissertation, which consisted of a contextual-iconological analysis of the arts at the court of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. This book will be published at Leuven University Press, and is scheduled for 2013.

That I gratefully took the opportunity of the conference to network, already became clear throughout this report. Yet, I would like to explicitly mention my talks with prof. Duerloo, dr. Born and prof. Silver. Although I had met prof. Duerloo in the past, we had never had a real opportunity to talk and exchange ideas, and I would like to stress how much I enjoyed talking to him, be it about Albert and Isabella as our common research interest, about the relevance of archival research, or about the sense and nonsense of art historical research. I am already very much looking forward to reading his book on Archduke Albert, which is to appear in the Spring of 2012. While prof. Duerloo had ample suggestions for me when it came to the publication of my dissertation, dr. Robert Born proved to be a source of inspiration when it came to the theme of the Turks in Western art. Especially his knowledge of Eastern European collections is priceless for my own research, and I am much obliged to him for the tips he gave me. Like I already wrote, it is our ambition to combine our knowledge in at the very least one article, while he is also considering on assisting me with the editing of the Bozar exhibition catalogue. Last but not least, I was honoured to be able to discuss not only his recent book about Emperor Maximilian (*Marketing Maximilian. The Visual Ideology of a Holy Roman Emperor*, Princeton, 2008), but also his current research on Europe and the Turks with professor Larry Silver, and we agreed on keeping in touch. Other examples of interesting and useful exchanges of ideas were, amongst others, the ones I had with dr. Till Holger-Borchert (Groeningemuseum Bruges), prof. dr. Ilaria Hoppe (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin), and dr. Annick Born. Both dr. Holger-Borchert and prof. dr. Hoppe gave me advise and suggestions concerning the making of an exhibition; with dr. Born I had interesting discussions on the iconography of Pieter Coecke van Aelst's prints on the Turks. Finally, sharing experiences with other young researchers about our topics and

methods, about the problems and possibilities of/for finding funding or getting articles published was of course enriching and motivating as well.

Last but not least, my stay in Vienna not only allowed me to participate in the fascinating excursion to Emperor Maximilian's Schloss Neugebäude, but it also gave me the chance to visit the Kunsthistorisches Museum, in order to study several art objects which play a role in my current research projects. Moreover, I also used the opportunity to go to the Albertina, where I had the unique chance to study the so-called 'Löwenklau manuscript', in which the author describes the private and public life in Istanbul. What is more is that Löwenklau's book is infiltrated by apocalyptic expectations, and for this reason I am currently working on it as a case study.

Reason enough for me to warmly thank the European Science Foundation and the Steering Committee of the Research Network Programme *PALATIUM. Court residences as Places of Exchange in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, 1400-1700* for awarding me my grant: it was an honour for me to participate in this conference, and a delight to meet so many specialists.