

LUTHERANISM AND THE TURKISH PERIL

Christian writers of the later medieval and early modern periods marvel at the almost unending advance of Islam, but the secret of Islamic success lay partly in the disunion of Christianity. In this context Islam of course relates to the Turks. Profiting by the schism between the Greek East and Latin West, the Turks had settled in Europe in the later fourteenth century and taken Constantinople in the mid-fifteenth. Profiting by the division between the Protestant North and Catholic South during the next century, they drew their huge tribute in boys and money and plunder from eastern Europe and the Balkans. It is often said that the Reformation aided the Turks; certainly the Turks aided the Reformation; without them Protestantism might conceivably have gone the way of Albigenianism¹.

1. The chief bibliography of German history in the era of the Reformation is Karl Schottenloher, *Bibliographie zur deutschen Geschichte im Zeitalter der Glaubensspaltung, 1517 - 1585*, 6 vols., Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1933-40, where tens of thousands of references are given: contemporary tracts and later material relating to the "Türkengefahr" may be found in vol. IV (1938), 677-87. It does not seem necessary and no effort will be made here to give an extensive bibliography. Of modern secondary works dealing with the first half of the sixteenth century mention may be made of Karl Brandi, *Kaiser Karl V.*, 2 vols., Munich, 1937-1941, of which the second volume, on the sources, contains much bibliographical and archival material (there is an English translation of the first volume by C. V. Wedgwood, New York, 1939). More specifically on the subject of the present article are: Helmut Lamparter, *Luthers Stellung zum Türkenkrieg*, Munich, 1940; George W. Forell, "Luther and the War against the Turks", *Church History*, XIV (1945), 256-71; Stephen A. Fischer-Galati, "Ottoman Imperialism and the Lutheran Struggle for Recognition in Germany, 1520-1529", *Church History*, XXIII (1954), 46-67; *idem*, "Ottoman Imperialism and the Religious Peace of Nürnberg", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, XLVII (1956), 160-79; and *idem*, *Ottoman Imperialism and German Protestantism, 1521-1555* (Harvard Historical Monographs, XLIII), Cambridge, 1959, with a good bibliography; Harvey Buchanan, "Luther and the Turks, 1519-1529", *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, XLVII, 145-59, rather careless. Especially interesting, with its new perspectives is the monograph by Ernst Benz, *Wittenberg und Byzanz: Zur Begegnung und Auseinandersetzung der Reformation und der östlich-orthodoxen Kirche*, Marburg, 1949, which describes the relations of the Wittenberg reformers, especially Melancthon, with Eastern

Through most of the long reign of the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520 - 1566) the Turks were much assisted in the westward expansion of their empire by the religious and political conditions which obtained in Europe. While the dynastic wars of Hapsburg and Valois distracted the attention of Christendom from the Turkish menace, the religious revolt from the dominance of Rome was contributing notably to the same effect. It might well be, of course, that even without the absorbing struggle with King Francis I, the Emperor Charles V would have spent his resources consolidating the Hapsburg position in Europe rather than combatting the Turk, but such a policy might nevertheless have kept the Turk east of the Theiss and south of the Danube.

Although the Turkish problem had been a frequent topic of debate at meetings of the Reichstag for generations, the Germans had done relatively little to assist their eastern neighbors. Dislike of the Hungarians and distrust of the papacy were added to a natural reluctance to expend men and money on another's behalf. To most German burghers as well as peasants the Turks were apparently a far-away people who had not yet done them much harm. Despite occasional periods of excitement or alarm,

Orthodoxy—Greeks, Serbs, and the South Slavs in general, as well as Czechs, Wends, and others, with much attention given to the social and religious importance of the Turkish *Drang nach Westen*. Old but still valuable is Carl J. Cosack's study of the *Türkengebete* (prayers against the Turks), in his study *Zur Geschichte der evangelischen ascetischen Litteratur in Deutschland*, ed. Bernhard Weiss, Basel-Ludwigsburg, 1871, pp. 163 - 243. Of recent Catholic critics of Luther, Fr. Heinrich Denifle, *Luther und Luthertum*, 2 ed., 2 vols. in 3, with suppl., Mainz, 1904 - 9, says nothing about Luther's attitude toward the Turkish problem, but Fr. Hartmann Grisar, *Luther*, trans. E. M. Lamond, 6 vols., London, 1914 - 17, esp. III, 76 - 95, 99, 104, 106, gives a fair amount of attention to it.

This article is part of a chapter, with reduced footnotes, from an unfinished book on *The Papacy and the Levant, 1204-1571*, in which other chapters already written deal in considerable detail with the political, diplomatic, and military problems presented to the papacy and the house of Austria by their simultaneous struggle with the Lutherans and the Turks. In these chapters such sources are of course used as the *Concilium Tridentinum*, especially vol. IV (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1904); Walter Friedensburg's *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, part I, Gotha, 1892 ff; Karl Lanz's *Correspondenz des Kaisers Karl V.*, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1844 - 46; Chas. Weiss's *Papiers d'état du Cardinal de Granvelle*, 4 vols., Paris, 1841 - 48, especially the papers preserved by the elder Granvelle, the cardinal's father, and Eugenio Alberi's *Relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti*, 3 series, Florence, 1839 - 55: since their contents are exploited in other chapters, they are not employed here although the *Nuntiaturberichte* are alluded to once or twice (for the *Nuntiaturberichte* published to date, cf. K. A. Fink, *Das Vatikanische Archiv*, Rome, 1951, pp. 173 ff.).

the Turks probably did not weigh very heavily upon the German mind until eastern Hungary fell under Turkish domination after the battle of Mohács. Year after year the estates of the Reichstag had seemed to be short-sighted, selfish, and stubborn on the Turkish question, providing (or merely promising) niggardly sums and inadequate forces to help preserve Hungary as Europe's buffer against the Turks. But of course no people wishes to fight another's battles; in many ways the Reichstage were correct in their appraisal of Turkish expansion westward; despite occasional raids of flying columns into Germany, the Turks did not in fact get beyond Vienna. But the Germans had their own difficulties. To class conflicts and internecine wars must be added the Lutheran movement as a disruptive force in the empire. Although the various roots of German secession from Rome go back far beyond the sixteenth century, there were many who regarded Lutheranism as merely the consequence of the persistent failure to effect needed ecclesiastical reform.

The "protestation of Speyer" and the siege of Vienna came in the same year (1529), the first milestone in the political organization of Lutheranism and the beginning of a new period in German-Turkish relations. Anti-Lutheran leadership fell of course to the busy Emperor Charles V, to whom his brother Ferdinand, archduke of Austria, also looked as his chief support in the struggle against the Turks. The Lutherans might seem at first to be in a good position to play off the Catholic and Turkish ends against the imperial middle. But the disunion of their leadership, widespread fear of the Turk, and the force of public opinion made it very difficult to make their assistance to the Hapsburgs conditional upon the redress of their religious grievances. The Protestant leaders were quite aware of the opportunity presented to them by the Turkish menace.

On 9 December, 1529, for example, the young Landgrave Philip of Hesse wrote Martin Luther of "the protest lately made at the diet of Speyer". Philip emphasized that "since...necessity demands that his Majesty [Charles V] and his Majesty's brother [Ferdinand of Austria] and others shall ask for help against the Turks from all, and especially from us, the estates, who are not the least but the greatest and chief source of help—therefore it is our idea that, if we were all agreed not to render any aid unless his Majesty were first to promise that we would be left in peace and not disturbed because of the Gospel..., our resolution would under such circumstances have its effect upon his Majesty, and we trust to God that in this way our cause could be maintained and much trouble avoided" 2.

2. *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar, Böhlau,

Time was to show that the Protestant cause was indeed to be maintained, but much trouble was rarely avoided.

The Hapsburgs certainly dealt indecisively with the religious issue in Germany (it was difficult to do otherwise), tending sometimes to compromise and again to the rejection of Protestant demands and insistence upon the edict of Worms. Charles's interests lay naturally in the West where his vast possessions were; his chief enemy was Francis I, and his chief preoccupation remained Italy where he could put little faith in Pope Clement VII. He hoped for men and money from the German Reichstag to combat the Turk and to secure beyond dispute Ferdinand's title to the throne of Hungary. Although Ferdinand was already his *Staatthalter* for Germany, Charles wished to contrive his election as King of the Romans, which would enable him more effectively to look after the Hapsburg lands in central Europe. For the fulfillment of these plans peace was necessary in Germany, and peace could only prescind from the settlement of the Lutheran problem. Despite opposition Ferdinand was elected King of the Romans at Cologne in January 1531, but Charles's intransigence on the religious question at the diet of Augsburg provoked the Protestant League of Schmalkalden (in February 1531). Rather reluctantly Charles had to pin his hopes for the Lutherans' peaceful return to religious conformity upon settlement of the questions relating both to doctrine and ecclesiastical authority by a church council, to which of course Clement VII was quite opposed. Conciliarism had long been the bane of the Holy See, and a council in Germany would be too difficult to control. Basel was well remembered in the Curia Romana. Charles was scarcely in control of the situation in Germany where opposition to Hapsburg pretensions was to be found among Catholics as well as Protestants. After the collapse of the Hungarian kingdom, many Germans were quite content to regard Austria as a buffer against the Turks, and the (Catholic) dukes Wilhelm and Ludwig of Bavaria looked benignly upon John Zapolya's efforts to maintain himself against Ferdinand in Hungary. Although Zapolya was an obvious ally of the Turks, he seemed to many Germans, especially the Lutherans, a desirable counterweight to an increase of Hapsburg power in the East.

1883 ff., hereafter usually cited as *W. A., Weimarer Ausgabe*), *Briefwechsel*, V (1934), no. 1503, p. 198, trans. Preserved Smith, *Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters*, II (Philadelphia, 1918), no. 861, pp. 507-8 (Smith was assisted in the preparation of his second volume by Charles M. Jacobs.) Luther returned a non-committal answer to Philip (*W. A., ibid.*, no. 1507, pp. 203-4; Smith, II, no. 862, p. 509).

Zapolya survived on German encouragement as well as on Turkish support. It was not for nothing that he addressed his successive appeals to the Reichstag.

As for Charles, finding the Catholics quite as unwilling as the Protestants to pull Hapsburg chestnuts out of the Hungarian fire, and both groups consistently opposed to adequate annual grants for employment against the Turks, he was finally obliged in the mid-summer of 1532 to reach an accord with the Lutherans at Nuremberg whereby peace was to be maintained in the empire, ecclesiastically and otherwise, until a church council should provide solutions to the vexed religious problems which divided Germany.

In the sixteenth century religion was a more absorbing topic even than the Turk. Proponents of both old and new doctrines engaged in a continuous pamphlet warfare. The reverberations of the printing press resounded in the ears of Europe far beyond the sound of the cannon at Belgrade, Rhodes, and Mohács. The Turks could hardly be forgotten, however, whether in the religious or dynastic struggle, and sometimes they appeared almost as the ally of the Lutherans, as they were in fact of the Valois. The misfortunes of the age predisposed men to superstition, mysticism, and gloomy flights of fancy. The Turks had long been looked upon as the scourge of God, and now simple people as well as scholars discussed and disputed their origins, some tracing their derivation from the Trojans (*Teucri*), others seeing them as true successors of the Scythians and Tatars. The anti-Turkish indulgences were, as we know well, among the earliest examples of jobprinting, and broadsides (the newspapers of the time) were filled with material concerning the Turks in the later fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth. Possibly the first occurrence in print of the German word for "newspaper", an important memorial in the history of the modern press, appears in a "Neue zeytung von orient und auff gange", printed in 1502, and full of news from the eastern fronts in the last year of the Venetians' disastrous three-year war with the Turks³.

3. H. H. Bockwitz, ed., "Neue zeytung von orient und auff gange", Leipzig, 1920, a facsimile edition published in 300 copies. In this broadside Mytiline figures prominently, part of the island of Lesbos having been won and lost by Venice in 1500 - 1501, on which note Sanudo, *Diarii IV*, cols. 207 - 9, 242 - 43, and J. W. Zinkeisen, *Gesch. d. osman. Reiches*, II (1854), 537 - 39. Cf. in general Maurice Gravier, *Luther et l'opinion publique*, Paris, 1942, which gives however little attention to the Turks. Reporting the Turkish news figures very prominently in the first "newspapers" of the sixteenth century (K. Schottenloher, *Flugblatt und Zeitung*, Berlin, 1922, pp. 156 ff.).

Year after year along the eastern fronts in Hungary and in Austria men asked the same question, Whether there would be a Turkish invasion when the campaigning season came. The Bible was searched for prophecies of the Turks' comings and goings, and from the 1520's popular songs and hymns foretold their hostile irruptions into German territory, and appealed to the Emperor, "O Karole, Kayserliche man", to avert the barbarians' fury⁴. The unknown author of the *Turckenpuechlein* of the same time presents a Turkish interlocutor — the work is in the form of a dialogue — explaining to his two Christian companions that it would be best for Christendom to submit to the all-powerful sultan and pay tribute, relying upon his justice and magnanimity to govern their lives⁵. But the sultan's justice and magnanimity were too well known for many Christians to accept this advice, and reassuring visions of the future were attributed to the Sybil, Merlin, and other figures both of legend and of history. Many placed their hopes in astrological predictions of an ultimate triumph over the Turks. It was widely believed that the Turks would overrun all Europe, and then (almost at the last hour) be destroyed by a Christian monarch who would retake the Holy Sepulchre and win all mankind over to Christianity. This monarch was often identified with Charles V. Fear of the Turk was at its height in Germany during the era of the Reformation, which is hardly to be wondered at since this was also the era of Suleiman the Magnificent. Churchmen and intellectuals had long been afflicted with the *Türkenfurcht*, which probably made its due impression on the German burghers only in the third decade of the century, when it was still largely an awesome fairy tale, for as the knights' war (1522 - 1523) and the peasant uprisings (1524 - 1525) attested, the Germans had much to distract them from the Turkish invasions of Hungary and the Hapsburg duchies in the East.

The Germans produced, nevertheless, a large literature relating to the Turks, compounded of fear as well as fact. Almost everyone was loathe to see the collection of "Turkish taxes" (*Türckensteuer*), but processions often wound their way through crooked streets, beseeching heaven for aid against the Turks. In some places knights, burghers, and peasants were to be summoned to the repentance of their sins and to daily prayers

4. On the fear of the Turk as expressed in German hymns, see Sydney H. Moore, "The Turkish Menace in the Sixteenth Century", in *The Modern Language Review*, XL (1945), 30 - 36.

5. *Turckenpuechlein. Ein Nutzlich Gespräch, oder underrede etlicher personen, zu besserung Christlicher ordenung und lebens gedichtet...*, [with the colophon:] "Geendet im Mertzzen als manzalt, Tusent funffhundert zwentzig und zwey jar [1522]".

for divine aid against the archenemy of the faith by the "Turk bells" (*Türckenglocken*), which rang their solemn warnings over fields which might some day be ravaged by the Turkish raiders. There were many famous writers, whose works were much read in Germany, ever present to speak of the Turkish threat—Martin Luther, Desiderius Erasmus, Ulrich von Hutten, Sebastian Brant, George Agricola, Johann Eck, Johann Cochlaeus, Joachim Camerarius, Justus Jonas, Joachim Greff, Johann Brenz, and various others, all addressed their warnings to the divided Germans, whose concerted effort (it was sometimes said) would in fact suffice to retake Constantinople and the Holy Sepulchre. But most Germans saw little hope of such concerted effort, Luther among them, and the princes sometimes seemed to fear destruction by the Turks less than the petty successes of their neighbors and rivals. Many were preoccupied with the Turkish problem, some of whom tried objectively to study the "Türkische Glauben und Sitten:" Luther himself conceded certain virtues to the Turks, finding it a scandalous fact that modesty, simplicity of life, and honor seemed to be traits more characteristic of the enemies than of the followers of Christ⁶.

The Turkish invasions had unsettled the very foundations of eastern European society. Drove of gypsies fled before the sultan's raiders and entered Germany; they had a hard time, for the Germans suspected them (probably correctly) of giving information to the Turks. The unpopular Jews were also exposed to the harsh consequences of the same distrust. The history of the German empire had been one of increasing disunity since the later eleventh century. Constitutional reform was badly needed, much talked about, and quite impossible; the Hapsburgs pursued as best they could, and with success, their own *Hauspolitik*. The cities and towns tried to take care of themselves by the continuance and reformation of their old leagues. The Germans were hated in Hungary where the internal strife of the Magyar nobility had reduced the old kingdom of St. Stephen and Louis the Great to an absolute shambles. The lot of the peasants was so bad in eastern Europe that they sometimes welcomed the Turks as a deliverer from oppression, but when the Crusade was preached, it was chiefly the peasants who responded. With the ever increasing secularization

6. Cf. Luther's preface to the *Libellus de ritu et moribus Turcorum* (of Georg von Mühlbach), Wittenberg, 1530, in *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2 (1909), 206-7, and see in general Richard Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der öffentlichen Meinung in Deutschland während der Reformationszeit*, Halle diss., 1904, pp. 6-27.

of society, however, as the medieval Church was losing its dominance over the minds of men, the western attitude towards the Crusade had changed.

Indulgences had long supplied one of the chief inducements to individuals either to contribute money to the Crusade or to enlist in the armies which set out to combat the infidel. Something must be said of indulgences. During the last centuries of the middle ages men had feared purgatory rather than hell. Confession and the repentance of a contrite heart were thought sufficient to escape the eternal punishment of hell, but the dreadful ordeal of purgatory was only to be shortened or forestalled by the severe penances imposed by the Church. And how could one ever know—it was the bane of Luther's early years—that he had in fact done penances enough to avoid spending aeons in purgatory? At the "Castle Church" (of All Saints) in Wittenberg, which Luther was to make so famous, was a collection of more than 5,000 relics and other *sacra*; it was said that the adoration of these relics on the day of All Saints (1 November) might secure for the faithful Christian an indulgence for some 500,000 years. That is a long time.

From the eleventh century on, penances had been remitted for good works, especially for undergoing the dangers, hardships, and expense of the Crusade against the Moslems. In this way the long punishments of purgatory were remitted, and this practice was formalized in the grant of either partial or plenary indulgence, remitting part or all of the penances required to avoid the torments of that grim abode. Since purgatory was not acknowledged in Orthodox Christianity, the indulgence could play no part for good or ill in the Byzantine Church. Early Germanic law had set elaborate payments in money or kind as punishments for all crimes against the person, and such commutation had had some influence upon the development of the indulgence in the Latin Church. Was it not better that a merchant pay the cost of a mercenary than go himself as a crusader into the eastern wars? Under certain conditions, then, good works might be commuted for money: indulgences might be purchased. In jubilee years (from 1300 on) full absolution was granted to those who, again under certain conditions, made the pilgrimage to Rome to worship for at least fifteen successive days in the city's principal churches. If pious folk could not get to Rome, the benefits of the jubilee indulgence might be gained by a pilgrimage to some other sacred site. Also in time, the jubilee indulgence could be purchased. A theory was advanced to rationalize the grant of indulgence. A treasury of grace existed, filled to overflowing by the superabundant merit of Christ and the saints; the pope administered this treasury, whence he dispensed grace to those who purchased indulgences.

In 1476 Sixtus IV granted indulgences for the dead (actually Calixtus III had anticipated him in 1457), dispensing remissions of penalty to the suffering souls in purgatory.

In the fifth of his Ninety-Five Theses, which were all concerned with penitence and indulgences, Luther had asserted, however, that "the pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any punishments beyond those which he has imposed either by his own judgment or in accordance with the canons"⁷. This limitation of papal authority (for which later medieval canonists had sometimes made extravagant claims) struck at the validity of current theories of indulgence and of course challenged the efficacy of those being sold in Germany. Luther's denial too of the efficacy of good works in the individual's quest for salvation, quite apart from other theological and social implications, made an historical travesty of a tradition which had long claimed spiritual benefits for pilgrims and crusaders. To Luther the so-called "holy war" (*bellum sanctum*) was morally offensive, the term itself an oxymoron. As time passed he came to feel that Turkish attacks were to be fought against like floods, forest fires, plagues, and famines (also sent by God to try His people). But there was to be no Crusade, no ecclesiastical leadership in war. There were many in Germany who had come to feel, like Luther, that the Christian defense against the Turk was the proper function of the state and not the Church, of the princes and not the popes. They would have nothing to do with the *Kreuzzug*, but would support the *Türkenkrieg*, which was quite a different thing. Many talked and wrote about the Turk, who was more lashed by "zunge und fedder" than by the sword. Type was set as soon as a work was finished, and the printing presses flooded Germany with a pamphlet literature concerning the Turk which still remains uncommonly interesting.

Of those who contributed to that literature certainly none was more widely read than Martin Luther, and certainly no one wrote more than he did. As a student at Wittenberg once wrote Stephan Roth at Zwickau, "Luther is the man who can keep two printers busy, each working two presses. Can you fancy one man supplying four presses? But Luther does it..."⁸. Luther did it indeed, and his views concerning the Turks naturally

7. Texts of Luther's 95 theses are easily available, as in Carl Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*, Tübingen and Leipzig, 1901 (and later editions), no. 271, p. 179, and of course in the *W. A. Werke*, I, 233.

8. Preserved Smith, ed., *Luther's Correspondence*, I (Philadelphia, 1913), no. 405, p. 472, letter dated 26 February, 1521. On this topic see Otto Clemen, *Die lutherische Reformation und der Buchdruck* (Schriften des Vereins für Re-

possessed a large importance. They tended, however, to vary somewhat, being moulded by the force of circumstance. One of Luther's alleged errors, the thirty-fourth of forty-one tenets condemned on 15 June, 1520, by Leo X's bull *Exsurge Domine*, was to the effect that "to fight against the Turks is to oppose the judgment God visits upon our iniquities through them"⁹. In after years Luther sometimes defended this dictum, and sometimes explained it away, but he had first pronounced it at a time when one could safely think of other things than the Turkish peril¹⁰.

At the beginning of the year 1521 Luther prepared in Latin a detailed defense of all the articles condemned in Leo's bull *Exsurge Domine*, and while this work was still in the press he began a German translation of it to give his views a wider hearing. Concerning the thirty-fourth of the forty-one articles in question Luther now wrote: "How shamefully the pope has this long time baited us with the war against the Turks, gotten our money, destroyed so many Christians and made so much mischief! When will we learn that the pope is the devil's most dangerous cat's paw? Was it not the pope that set good King Ladislas of Hungary and Poland, with so many thousand Christians, upon the Turks, and was he not terribly beaten at Varna because he obeyed the pope, and at his bidding broke the treaty he had made with the Turks? For to teach concerning perjury, that the pope has power to break an oath, is no heresy.... What misery has recently come to Hungary through this same Turkish war, begun with a papal in-

formationsgeschichte, Jahrgang 57, Heft 1, no. 167), Leipzig, 1939, which is brief but informative.

9. The bull *Exsurge Domine* (15 June, 1520) may be found in the *Magnum Bullarium Romanum* etc., I (Luxemburg, 1742), 610 - 14, and cf. Carl Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums* (1901), no. 273, p. 184, or Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum*, ed. C. Rahner, 28 ed., Freiburg im Breisgau and Barcelona, 1952, p. 277: "Proeliari adversus Turcas est repugnare Deo visitanti iniquitates nostras per illos". The text became well known, and was widely cited, as by Luther's opponent Johannes Cochlaeus, *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri*, etc. Leipzig, 1529, fol. VIIv. This article was not one of Luther's famous Ninety-Five Theses of 1517, as is sometimes stated (for example by Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, p. 135); none of the 95 theses mentions the Turks (*W. A. Werke*, I, 233 - 38). The article does appear, less concisely worded, in the *Resolutiones* of the Theses (*W. A. Werke*, I, 535), which Luther published in May 1518. The bull *Exsurge Domine* was officially dated 15 June, 1520, but was not published in Germany until late in September (*W. A. Werke*, VI, 578).

10. Luther showed a strong tendency in 1518 - 1521 to assume a position of non-resistance to Turkish attacks as being one of God's methods of punishment for sin, as in his *Resolutiones* of 1518 (*W. A. Werke*, I, 535) and the two works cited in the following note.

dulgence! And yet we must continue to be blind so far as the pope is concerned! Now I set up this article not meaning to say that we are not to make war against the Turk, as that holy heresy-hunter, the pope, here charges me, but to say that we should first make ourselves better and cause God to be gracious to us; not plunge in, relying on the pope's indulgence with which he has deceived Christians heretofore and still deceives them..."¹¹.

Year after year Luther attacked the papacy with a vigor and vitriol quite unparalleled in the long history of heretical opinion and theological rancor. On 24 October, 1518, Pope Leo X wrote the Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, Luther's protector: "It seems to us more necessary every day to take thought for a crusade against the Turk's unholy wrath.... But while we were considering how to bring this to pass, and were bending all our forces to this end, Satan reveals this son of perdition or of damnation, Martin Luther, of the order of St. Augustine, who has dared in your territories to preach to the Christian flock against us and the holy Roman See"¹². On 8 July, 1520, Leo sent the elector a copy of the bull *Exsurge Domine*, observing that Luther "favors the Turks and deplores the punishment of heretics,... that such a one has not been sent by Christ but by Satan..."¹³. A year and a half before this (on 21 December, 1518), Luther had written his friend George Burkhardt of Spalt (always known as Spalatin), secretary and chaplain of the Elector Frederick: "If I rightly understand you, you ask whether an expedition against the Turks can be defended and commanded by me on biblical grounds. Even supposing the war should

11. *Grund und Ursach aller Artikel*, etc., in *W. A. Werke*, VII (1897), 443, trans. Chas. M. Jacobs, *Works of Martin Luther*, III (Philadelphia, 1930), 105 - 106. This work is Luther's own (German) translation of his original *Assertio omnium articulorum...per bullam Leonis X. novissimam damnatorum* (in *W. A. Werke*, VII, 94 - 151).

In a letter of 18 December, 1518, to Wenzel Link of Colditz, Luther had written "I think I can show that Rome is today worse than the Turks" (*W. A. Briefwechsel*, I [1930], 270): "...peiores Turcis esse Romam hodie puto me demonstrare posse". In his discussion of the fourth commandment (in the treatise *Von den guten Werckenn*, Wittenberg, 1520) Luther affirmed that the true Turks are to be found in Rome, debauching the churches (trans. W. A. Lambert, *Works of Martin Luther*, I [Philadelphia, Holman, 1915], 261). On Luther's attitude toward the papacy in 1518 - 1520, see Karl Bauer, "Luther und der Papst", *Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte*, XXVII (Leipzig, 1909 - 10), 233 - 73; his view quickly became "der Papst ist der Antichrist" (esp. pp. 251 - 66).

12. Preserved Smith, ed., *Luther's Correspondence*, I (Philadelphia, 1913), 126. The pope was sending Frederick the golden rose, obviously to help enlist his sympathy against Luther.

13. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I, 334 - 35.

be undertaken for pious reasons rather than for gain, I confess that I cannot promise what you ask, but rather the opposite... [Luther had recently published a sermon against the Turkish war]. Erasmus expresses the same opinion in many places..... It seems to me, if we must have any Turkish war, we ought to begin with ourselves. In vain we wage carnal wars without, while at home we are conquered by spiritual battles.... Now that the Roman Curia is more tyrannical than any Turk, fighting with such portentous deeds against Christ and against his Church, and now that the clergy is sunk in the depths of avarice, ambition and luxury, and now that the face of the Church is everywhere most wretched, there is no hope of a successful war or of victory. As far as I can see, God fights against us; first, we must conquer him with tears, pure prayers, holy life and pure faith"¹⁴.

Like other revolutionaries at other times and other places, Luther was carried along by the impetus of his own movement. On 5 March, 1519, he wrote Spalatin: "It was never my intention to secede from the Apostolic Roman See; indeed, I am content that the pope should be called, or even should be, the lord of all. What business is it of mine? For I know that we must honor and tolerate even the Turk because of his power, and because I know, as Peter says [cf. I Peter, 2: 13, although Luther seems to have in mind Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 13: 1], that there is no power save what is ordained of God"¹⁵.

Although Luther thus sees Turkish power (like all civil power) as ordained of God, two more years were enough to convince him that papal authority was an exception to the rule that the powers that be are of divine ordination. On 22 March, 1521, he wrote Nicholas Hausmann, who had been recently appointed pastor at Zwickau: "Daily I am becoming more persuaded that no one can be saved unless he fight against the laws and commands of the pope and of the bishops with all his might through life and death. Is this surprising or novel to you? . . . If you take the pastorate, make yourself the enemy of the pope and the bishops and fight their decrees; if you do not do this, you will be an enemy of Christ"¹⁶.

Criticism of the Sancta Ecclesia Romana was becoming increasingly violent, and the Catholic past was attacked as well as the present. Examples can be chosen almost at random from scores of illustrative texts.

14. W. A. *Briefwechsel*, I (1930), no. 125, p. 282, trans. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I, no. 106, pp. 140 - 41.

15. W. A. *Briefwechsel*, I, no. 159, p. 356, trans. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I, no. 133, p. 167.

16. W. A. *Briefwechsel*, II (1931), no. 390, pp. 290 - 91, trans. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I, no. 427, p. 499.

In 1521 (to cite one of these texts), about the time Luther was writing to Hausmann, the erstwhile Franciscan preacher Johann Eberlin von Günzburg was assailing the papacy. He wrote in German, addressing his work to the people, as more and more intellectual and religious leaders were doing. In the eighth of a series of fifteen inflammatory sermons called *Bundsgenossen* he conceded the piety (three centuries before) of Sts. Francis and Dominic, "who knew how to preach the word of God", but he had come to entertain nothing but hostility and contempt for the mendicant friars of his own day. He attacked the Inquisition and lamented the flood of curial officials into Germany, fleecing his fellow countrymen, converting riches into poverty and truth into falsehood. But now God was bringing help to Germany; pious preachers were enlightening the people, speaking and writing in German. Of course the double-dealing friars and papists were also preaching, he says, and claiming that whatever the Curia Romana ordered was a command for the Christian churches. "But, against this, true teachers must make clear that the Curia Romana is not a Christian church, but rather the synagogue of Satan [*das der römisch hoff nit sy die christenlich kirch, meer die synagoga Sathane*]. The monks say the pope is god on earth. Against this the true teachers proclaim that it is not so - he is a bishop like any other bishop, and has no authority over the Roman empire of today...." The papists' efforts to misrepresent the facts made it important to put everything into German; they claimed antiquity for their letters of indulgence and their so-called scholastic theology, but these were (according to Eberlin) a mere three centuries old. Eberlin's emphasis on the vernacular is very interesting: "Erasmus, Luther, and Hutten, and many others understand how to bring the real truth to the people in the German language, and to warn everyone of the false prophets in sheeps' clothing, in the hope that God will open the eyes of his poor German people, that they may learn and accept the truth and reject the lies..."¹⁷

Despite the Reformers' unending criticism of the Curia Romana, almost every volume of papal bulls and briefs during the long period of Suleiman's reign reveals the popes on record as the advocates of peace in Europe, so that the princes might organize a crusade against the Turks. Considering the many trials of Clement VII's reign, the historian might not have thought of him as a crusader, but hundreds of documents from

17. Johann Eberlin von Günzburg, *Der VIII. bundtsgnoss*, ed. Ludwig Enders, Flugschriften aus der Reformationszeit, XI, in Neudrucke deutscher Litteraturwerke des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts, nos. 139 - 41, Halle a. S., 1896, pp. 80 - 88, quotations on pp. 85 - 86.

his papacy bear eloquent witness to his desire to see Charles V and Francis I at peace, for only thus could they take the field in sufficient strength to rescue battered Hungary from impending obliteration as a Christian country. One may turn the pages of the papal registers almost at random to find evidence that the *Türkenfurcht* was as strong in the Curia Romana as along the eastern fronts of Europe¹⁸. Also, of course, if Charles and Francis could somehow be induced to participate in a crusade, they would both be distracted from the affairs of Italy, which would in no way sadden the pope.

Germany was another problem. In 1530, at the time of the diet of Augsburg, Clement remained unalterably opposed to the summoning of a council to restore religious peace to the empire. He was quite as aware of the popes' responsibility to God for the maintenance of orthodoxy as Charles was of the imperial prerogatives which also conferred the right and enjoined the necessity of preserving the faith against heresy. Although the Catholic majority at Augsburg supported Charles in his decision to place the Protestants under the ban of the empire (after which neither they nor the emperor took any action), the harassed pope was obviously unable to raise money against either the Protestants or the Turks, and the Catholic clergy in Germany would not accede to Ferdinand's plan to sell some church property to help pay for a war against the Turks¹⁹. Little was done, therefore, against either the Protestants or the Turks.

In Rome for centuries the twin unities of religious dogma and ecclesiastical authority had been rigorously maintained as the very bases

18. Cf. Arch. Segr. Vaticano, Reg. Vat. 1440, fol 40r, "datum Bononie, anno etc., millesimo quingentesimo vigesimo nono, Kal. Decembris, pontificatus nostri anno septimo (1 December, 1529): "...Et quia speramus prefatos reges [Carolus V et Franciscum I] adversus immanissimos Turcas omne nomen Christianum extinguere et abolere conantes una nobiscum expeditionem tantis viribus ac robore suscepturos: ut non modo regnum Hungarie vi hostili penitus concussum et pessundatum recuperare, verum etiam Turcarum tyrannum cum omni suo exercitu profligare et victricia signa in hostilem regionem transferre possint omnemque illam perniciem in eos conferre quam sevissimi hostes adversus Christianam rempublicam assidue machinantur....". Such references are far too numerous and repetitive for us to take specific stock of the chief statements which Clement made concerning the Turkish problem. It is quite obvious that Italy was not his sole preoccupation. Cf., also in the same Reg. Vat. 1440, fols. 41v, 100r, 116v-117r, 146v-147r, 148v, 150r, esp. 169v-172v, and 174r-175r. Although the Vatican and Venetian Archives have supplied much of the material for my projected study of *The Papacy and the Levant*, referred to in the first footnote, archival references have been largely excluded from this article.

19. Cf. Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, pp. 307-16.

upon which the universal Church exists. Now both the doctrine and the discipline were challenged together in a vast and terrifying social upheaval. The Lutheran hostility to Rome was heartily reciprocated by all members of the Curia, who in consternation saw large areas of Germany being removed from Catholic jurisdiction. There is, again, no dearth of documents illustrating their point of view. On 10 January, 1523, for example, the papal nuncio Francesco Chiericati wrote from Nuremberg to the Marquis Federico Gonzaga of Mantua that "we are occupied with the negotiations for the general war against the Turk, and for that particular war against that nefarious Martin Luther, who is a greater evil to Christendom than the Turk"²⁰.

To Catholics and Lutherans both, the Turk was much like sin itself: he was a constant danger, and they worried about him. Luther had made various statements about the Turk, widely bruited about, and (to say the least) they required some explanation. He informs us himself that from about 1523 certain persons had been urging him to write a book about the Turkish war²¹. When a half dozen years later he published his first anti-Turkish tract (*Vom Kriege widder die Türcken*, 1529), he began with a consideration of the famous thirty-fourth article condemned by the pope: "I still confess freely that this article is mine and that I put it forth and defended it at the time; and if things in the world were in the same state now that they were in then, I would still have to put it forth and defend it. But it is not fair to forget how things then stood in the world, and what my grounds and reasons were, and still keep my words and apply them to another situation where those grounds and reasons do not exist. With this kind of art, who could not make the Gospel a pack of lies or pretend that it contradicted itself?"²². Luther had made his statement when it was safe to do so.

20. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, no. 566, p. 159, and cf. pp. 169 - 70. The Catholics sometimes stated a preference for the Turks to the Protestants, because the latter threatened the soul as well as the body, but the Turks were a physical danger only: Calvin expressed indignation at the comparison and the choice (Jacques Pannier, "Calvin et les Turcs", *Revue historique*, vol. 180 [1937], 275).

21. Cf. Luther's letter dated 9 October, 1528, to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse (Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, 456 - 57; *Works of Martin Luther*, V [Philadelphia, 1931], 79): "Certain persons have been begging me for the past five years to write about war against the Turks....".

22. *W. A. Werke*, XXX - 2 (1909), 108 - 9, trans. Chas. M. Jacobs, *Works of Martin Luther*, V, 81.

* * *

From 1514 to 1518 the Sultan Selim I had been fully occupied in the East where he won Diarbekir and Khurdistan from the Persians and thereafter Syria and Egypt from the Mamlukes. During this period the Danube valley enjoyed a welcome respite from Turkish attack. But the Turks captured Belgrade in 1521 when the Germans were giving more attention to Luther's appearance at the diet of Worms than to the cries of the stricken Hungarians for help. Rhodes fell at the end of 1522, and the terrible defeat of the Christians at Mohács came in 1526; some three years later Suleiman held Vienna in a harrowing if unsuccessful siege. It is easy then to understand how in late October 1529 Luther could write his old friend Nicholas Hausmann at Zwickau that "I'll struggle even unto death against the Turks and the God of the Turks"²³. On the Turkish question he remained consistent in his inconsistency, and his views flowed to some extent from the current of events. While he pleaded for a united front against the Turks, he was himself the most divisive force in Europe. The Sultan Suleiman appreciated this fact, seeing in Luther an unwilling ally. On one occasion, having asked an embassy about Luther, he is said to have expressed regret that the latter was then already forty-eight years old. It might have been, the sultan declared, that Luther could have found in him a gracious lord. When Luther was informed of the sultan's tender regard for him, he crossed himself and besought God "to preserve him from this gracious lord"²⁴.

With the internal formation of Luther's thought and his various statements concerning the Turks we cannot be concerned in full detail.

23. *W. A. Werke*, XXX - 2 (1909), 149 - 50; *Briefwechsel*, V (1934), no. 1484, p. 167: "Ego usque ad mortem luctor adversus Turcas et Turcarum Deum". Cf. P. Smith, ed., *Luther's Correspondence*, II, no. 857, p. 503, letter dated at Wittenberg, 26 October, 1529. Before this, however, Luther had acknowledged the righteous necessity of armed opposition to Turkish invasion; cf. the conclusion of his tract *Ob Kriegsleute auch in seligem Stande sein können*, written in 1526, in *W. A.*, XIX, 662; on the date of this tract note, *ibid.*, XIX, 617, and P. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, 381, 385. There is an English translation by Chas. M. Jacobs, "Whether Soldiers, Too, Can be Saved", in *Works of Martin Luther*, V (Philadelphia, 1931), 34 - 74.

24. *W. A. Tischreden*, II (1913), 508 (from Conrad Cordatus): "Egregius quidam vir nomine Schmaltz Hagonensis civis, qui fuit in legatione ad Turcam, Luthero retulit Turcarum regem ipsum interrogasse de Martino Luthero, et quot annorum esset; qui cum eum annorum 48. aetatis esse dixisset, respondisse fertur: Ich wolt, das er noch junger were, dan er solt einen gnedigen herrn an mir wissen. Respondit Martinus Lutherus facto crucis signo: Behut mich Gott vor diesem gne-

Besides references to them in many different works he devoted three special tracts to warning Christendom "against the Turks". During the winter of 1528 - 1529 he wrote *Vom Kriege widder die Türcken*, which was printed by Hans Weiss in Wittenberg on 16 April, 1529, some months before the siege of Vienna. Just after the siege he published *Eine Heerpredigt widder den Türcken*, printed in Wittenberg by Nickel Schirlenz (in the late fall of 1529), and a dozen years later he issued his *Vermanunge zum Gebet wider den Türcken*, also printed by Schirlenz in Wittenberg (1541)²⁶. Luther was as much afraid of the Turk and as much opposed to his doctrine as anyone in the Curia Romana. To him the Turk was the servitor of the devil. He constantly urged the princes to support the emperor's efforts against the Turk, and deplored the German people's tendency to put the growing peril out of their minds every time the Turk ended some campaign of invasion and withdrew to the Bosporus. If strong emotion led him to find even worse evils in the *Papisten* than in the *Türcken*, he was no more irrational than his opponents who assailed Lutheranism as a more debased form of heresy than Islam. Luther claimed, quite untruly, in his work *Vom Kriege* (and elsewhere) that the papacy had never seriously intended to make war upon the Turks, but merely used the war as a pretext to extort money from Germany by the sale of indulgences²⁷. Ecclesiastical attempts at military leadership, he said, had led to the disasters at Varna and Mohács; bishops and priests did not belong on the battlefield, but at home ministering to their flocks. The Turk marched from one victory to another, sure proof that these ecclesiastics and their so-called crusades were offensive to God. Luther had been told by military men that it was the interference of clerical busybodies who had caused the defeat and capture of Francis I at

digen herrn!" The text has long been a favorite with historians (cf. J. Köstlin, *Martin Luther*, II [Eiberfeld, 1883], 290; Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, p. 34, Grisar, *Luther*, Eng. trans., III, 83, Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk*, p. 135; G. W. Forell, in *Church History*, XIV [1945], 260).

25. Luther's tract *Vom Kriege* is given in the *Weimarer Ausgabe*, XXX - 2 (1909), 107 - 48, and his *Heerpredigt*, *ibid.*, pp. 160 - 97, the *Vermanunge*, as it is spelled in the first edition, in vol. LI (1914), 585 - 625. The tract *Vom Kriege* was dedicated to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse.

26. Cf. Luther, *Vom Kriege widder die Türcken* (1529), fol. 4r, unnumbered (=sign. Aiiiii): "Denn die Bepste hattens nie mit ernst ym synn, das sie widder den Türcken kriegen wolten, sondern brauchten des Türckischen krieges zum hütlin, darunter sie spieleten und das gelt mit ablas aus deudschen landen raubeten, so oft sie es gelustet, wie das alle welt wol wuste aber nu auch vergessen ist...". Also fol. 29r (=sign. Hi). *W. A. Werke*, XXX - 2, 110, 145. Cf. Grisar, *Luther*, Eng. trans., III, 81 - 82.

Pavia. "If in my turn I were a soldier and saw in the battlefield a priests' banner or cross, even if it were the very crucifix, I should want to run away as though the devil were chasing me!"²⁷ The Turk was the scourge of God: "der Türcke ist unsers herr Gottes zornige rute", and man must needs appease His anger by prayers²⁸. Long interested in the Koran, Luther was not without some knowledge of Islamic worship and society, which he outlined for his readers and contrasted with Christian belief and practice, cautioning against the falsity of Islam (and the rapacity of the popes). He took the Turks to task "das ein man zehen, zwentzig weiber hat", and observed that a multiplicity of wives probably went with their warlike natures: "Mars and Venus, sagen die Poeten, wollen bey einander seyn"²⁹.

The Turks were said to be loyal and friendly to one another and also to tell the truth, which Luther could well believe, but to which he did not attach overmuch importance, for there was also honor among thieves. He wrote with a robust clarity, his style informed by an emotional eloquence, but he was forever depicting the ubiquity of the devil, which becomes rather tedious to most modern readers. In his tract *Vom Kriege* Luther made a strong appeal to the German princes to support the Emperor Charles V against the Turk, whose lands exceeded in manpower all the European states put together. It was God's commandment that the princes should protect the people. The Germans must take much more seriously the Turkish threat to their lives, liberty, and property; withstanding the Turkish assault was not like meeting an attack of the king of France. The king of Bohemia, for example, was a powerful prince, but God be thanked that he did not have to stand alone, "sondern habe Keiser Carol zum heubtman und nachdruck mit aller macht". The princes could not leave their future to chance. Yesterday it was the king of Hungary, today the king of Poland, tomorrow it would be the king of Bohemia—"bis sie der Türcke einen nach dem andern auffresse"³⁰! Although Luther did not expect his book to have much effect, still he had tried to do his duty by telling his fellow Germans the truth as far as he knew it, whether they wished to hear it or not. He tried to serve them as he tried to serve

27. *Ibid.*, fols. 6-7 (=Bii - iii); *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 113-15; Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, p. 50.

28. *Vom Kriege*, fols. 8r, 10v-11 (=Biiii, Cii - iii); *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2 116 ff.

29. *Ibid.*, fols. 11v-15v (=Ciii - Diii); *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 120-27. Luther describes Islam as the murderous basis of the Turkish state, whose success against Christianity was due solely to the wrath of God.

30. *Ibid.*, fols. 16r (=Diiii), 28v-31v (=Giiii - Hiii), quotations on fol. 30 (=Hii). *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 127 ff.

Christ, and might He help them! and come from heaven with His last judgment "und schlage beide Türcken und Bapst zu boden sampt allen tyrannen und gottlosen"³¹! Pope and Turk, to Luther these were the chief enemies of Christendom.

In the *Table Talk* Luther is quoted as saying: "Antichrist is at the same time the pope and the Turk. A living creature consists of body and soul. The spirit of Antichrist is the pope, his flesh the Turk. One attacks the Church physically, the other spiritually. Both however are of one lord, the devil, since the pope is a liar and the Turk a murderer. But make a single person of Antichrist and you'll find both liar and murderer in the pope"³². Luther is thinking of course of the office, not the person, of the pope, but it is small wonder that his vituperative extremism lost him the support of more moderate reformers like Erasmus.

Like Ulrich von Hutten, Luther employed the techniques of the pamphleteer and publicist. His style had a personal note, was simple and direct, dramatic, readable, earthy, and all too often vulgar. Even in the sixteenth century it took a peasant's stomach to digest his gross witticisms. But the scholastic presentation of his pro-papal opponents was not very effective, and their sermonizing of traditional points of view fell upon unlistening ears. Luther's works were sold and reprinted with astonishing speed, but booksellers were loathe to carry the works of his opponents, which they could not sell. As a matter of fact the Catholic apologists found it difficult to get their works published, for most of the German printers seemed to have become Lutherans³³.

Luther's impact upon his times is too well known for extended comment here, but a few words may not be amiss to help the reader assess conditions in Germany. While the force of a self-conscious nationalism was helping to create strong states in France, England, and Castile, the German mind was still enthralled by vague theories of universal imperialism. In Germany the cities and towns were not prospering like those in Italy, France, and England; the growth of capitalism was being retarded by the German nobility, too strong for the burghers to contend with. The towns suffered from the monopolies of the guilds, and the journeymen from the selfish conservatism of the guild masters. Luther was a staunch advocate of the agrarian virtues and very suspicious of the effects of

31. *Ibid.*, fol. 31v (=Hiii); *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 148.

32. *W. A. Tischreden*, III (1914), 158, 159 (from Conrad Cordatus) Cf. Ernst Benz, *Wittenberg und Byzanz*, p. 193.

33. Clemen, *Die lutherische Reformation und der Buchdruck*, pp. 34 - 42.

commerce³⁴. Herein Lutheranism, supported by the "Christian nobility of the German nation", differed from Calvinism, which was to find its chief adherents among skilled workers and the bourgeoisie. When Luther went back to St. Augustine, he was not trying to destroy the medieval social order but to preserve its earliest and best form. Luther was a religious reformer, not a social reformer, Men should be concerned with their faith and their moral regeneration, not with the reconstruction of the state or of society. He did not think in terms of organizing a crusade; since the crusade as such connoted clerical leadership in war, he was unalterably opposed to it; but his heart was full of love for Germany, and almost every year Germany was threatened by the Turks. The young Sultan Suleiman's three weeks' siege of Vienna in September and October 1529 made a deep impression on Luther as on so many of his contemporaries; while Vienna was under fire he began to write the *Heerpredigt*, which he finished after Suleiman had finally been forced to abandon his investment of the city. On 28 October Luther wrote Wenzel Link at Nuremberg, "We have heard that the Turk has fled, but Daniel says that he will fight against the saints until the judgment shall come, and the Ancient of Days shall sit upon his throne.... I am publishing a warlike sermon to arouse the army against the Turks"³⁵.

The first part of the *Heerpredigt* is a commentary on the seventh chapter of Daniel, who had a vision of "a fourth beast, terrible and dreadful and exceedingly strong", with ten horns, and there "came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots, and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things". Whoever will read Daniel, 7: 7-28, will quickly see how this little horn, which "made war with the saints, and prevailed over them", could be interpreted in all its elaborate detail as a quite remarkable prophecy of the Ottoman Turk's descent upon Germany. But in the end, as Daniel had foreseen in his terrifying vision, this horn which had eyes and a mouth would not win out over the elect of God. But the German Christian must play his part in the divine drama of his own salvation. He must protect the temporal structure of society and the empire from degradation or destruction by the Turk, whose

34. Cf. Hermann Barge, *Luther und der Frühkapitalismus* (Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte, Jahrgang 58, Heft 1, no. 168), Gütersloh, 1951, and Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luthers Geistige Welt*. 4 ed., Gütersloh, 1960, pp. 270-76.

35. W. A. *Briefwechsel*, V, no. 1487, p. 170, trans. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, no. 858, p. 504. Cf. W. A., *ibid.*, V, nos. 1482-86, 1530.

violence was that of the devil, and whose final defeat was going to usher in the day of judgment. The Turk was in danger of becoming a central fact in Luther's eschatology. Such an interpretation of Daniel was widespread at this time, being of course not at all original with Luther. In the second part of the *Heerpredigt* Luther advanced a general program for opposition to the Turk, who would keep returning; the necessity for moral reform was emphasized, together with the vast importance of prayer, while the resistance to the Turk of every German, male and female, must be unto death. All Christians should learn by heart, while they still had the chance, the ten commandments, the lord's prayer, and the apostles' creed, as an inner defense of their faith in the dread event they should be carried off by the Turk into captivity³⁶. In this work as in others Luther finds the pope no less a menace to the German Christian than the Turk. Constantly they go together in Luther's mind, the pope and the Turk. On 10 November, 1529, he wrote Hausmann at Zwickau: "Be strong, my Nicholas, in the Lord, and do not fear the Turk overmuch. Christ lives. There is also hope in Daniel's vision, which Philip [Melancthon] and [Justus] Jonas are now publishing, that the Turk will not take possession of Germany.... The day of judgment is at hand, and will destroy Gog the Turk and Magog the Pope, the one the political and the other the ecclesiastical enemy of Christ"³⁷.

Shortly after the appearance of Luther's *Heerpredigt*, his friend and associate Justus Jonas did publish in Wittenberg a tract on *Das sibende Capitel Danielis* (1530), identifying the first three beasts of the seventh chapter

36. Luther himself divides his *Heerpredigt* "ynn zwey stück" (*W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 161, 30), the first (*ibid.*, pp. 160 - 81) being slightly longer than the second (pp. 181 - 97). The Turkish interpretation of Daniel, 7, also runs through Johann Brenz's *Türcken Biechlein* (1537). To Luther "the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things" signified the Koran, a product of perverse human ingenuity. Actually the "little horn" of the fourth beast in Daniel, 7, was apparently Antiochus Epiphanes, who persecuted the Jews (167 - 164 B.C.), the ten horns being the kings of the Seleucid dynasty (cf. W. K. Lowther Clarke, *Concise Bible Commentary*, London, 1952, p. 585).

37. *W. A. Briefwechsel*, V, no. 1493, pp. 176 - 77. Cf. Luther's letter to Hausmann, *ibid.*, no. 1484, pp. 166 - 67, dated 26 October, 1529, trans. P. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, no. 857, pp. 502 - 3. (More than a hundred letters are extant from Luther to Hausmann).

Actually Luther was more exercised about the pope than the Turk, and it would be easily possible to exaggerate his concern for the Turkish peril. His letters show him, however, harboring no little anxiety on the score of the Turks; for the year 1529 and the earlier part of 1530 (before and after the siege of Vienna), see

of Daniel, as Luther does in the *Heerpredigt*³⁸, with the empires of the Assyrians and Chaldaeans, the Persians and Medes, and Alexander the Great and his Hellenistic successors. The fourth beast was the Roman empire, the ten horns being such invaders or successors as the Franks, Lombards, Goths, Anglo-Saxons, Huns, Byzantine Greeks, and so on, while “das klain horn bedeut das Türckisch reich, welchs drey königreiche in morgen lendern hat eyngenommen, das Egyptisch, das Asiatisch, und Grekisch”. Clearly the Ottoman Sultan Selim I’s campaigns in 1514 - 1517 had fulfilled the prophecy that three of the first ten horns were to be “plucked up by the roots”: Mohammed II had plucked the first in 1453; Selim had humbled Persia and taken two to its richest provinces, and thereafter had destroyed the Mamluke dynasty root and branch in Syria and in Egypt. We need not follow Jonas through his historical proofs and citation of other biblical texts; he ends his tract with a long “admonition” (*Vermanung*), urging his fellow Christians to fear God and make atonement for their sins to escape the chastisement of divine anger. Preaching submission to the authorities ordained of God (after Romans, 13: 1 - 7), Jonas shows himself like Luther to be no social reformer, but (again like Luther) he also lectures the princes at some length on the responsibility they bear to their people with respect to the Turk, who fought against the word of God. Jonas can end on a note of hope, however, for as the text of Daniel and other evidence made clear, the Turk was doomed to destruction. God would not brook the slander of his holy name: “Darumb ist es gewiss, der Türck muss endlich zu trymern gehen, dann Got... lesst kain lesterung seins heyligen namens ungestrafft”³⁹. Melanchthon also believed in the Turkish interpretation of the apocalypse of Daniel, and although denied by Calvin, it received a wide currency in Europe. Following Luther’s lead, most of the

W. A. *Briefwechsel*, V, nos. 1383, 1387 - 88, 1395, 1416 - 17, 1481 - 87, 1491 - 94, 1501, 1515 - 16, 1518, 1527, 1531, 1546 - 47, 1552, 1563, 1635, and cf. nos. 1556, 1590, 1600, 1602, and 1616 - 18. On Luther’s theme that the Turk was Gog, see especially *Das XXXVIII. und XXXIX. Capitel Hesechiel [Ezekiel] vom Gog*, in *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 223 - 36.

38. *W. A. Werke*, XXX-2, 166.

39. Justus Jonas’ tract bears the full title *Das sibende Capitel Danielis, von des Türcken Gottes lesterung und schrecklicher mörderey, mit unterricht* (Wittenberg, 1530). Like Luther’s *Vom Kriege*, it was addressed to the Landgrave Philip of Hesse. The two quotations in the text will be found, in the first edition, on unnumbered fols. 8v and 22r (=signs. Biiii and Fii). On Jonas (1493 - 1555), whose real name was Jodocus Koch, cf. Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, pp. 54 - 55. Jonas’ letters have been edited by G. Kawerau, 2 vols. in 1, Halle, 1884 - 1885. With Melanchthon, Amsdorf, and Bugenhagen, Jonas was one of Luther’s closest friends.

German reformers appear to have accepted it. It had figured among the prophetic studies of Johann Hilten, a Franciscan, who had died in 1502 at Eisenach where Luther had lived as a student. In after years, especially during the worst period of the Turkish peril in 1529, Luther took a great interest in Hilten's work, as shown by a most interesting letter (dated 2 December) which he received from Friedrich Myconius⁴⁰.

While Justus Jonas was expounding the Turkish interpretation of the apocalypse of Daniel, Erasmus was writing his little tract called *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo*, which is dated at Freiburg-im-Breisgau on 17 March, 1530. For many years Erasmus, as the most distinguished publicist of his generation, had indited letters to the leading sovereigns of Europe—Leo X, Henry VIII, the Cardinal Albrecht of Hohenzollern, elector of Mainz; and to Sigismund, the king of Poland⁴¹—urging always the concord of the princes and the direction of their arms against the Turks rather than against one another.

In Erasmus' opinion, as expressed in the *Consultatio*, the Turks were indeed God's punishment for Christian failure: "How often have we felt the Turkish sword avenging our violation of the pact we made with God?" But he opposes as wholly false Luther's view (*Lutheri dogma*) that in going to war with the Turks, one was resisting God, who had chosen them as his instrument of punishment for sin: one was no more resistant to the will of God in fighting the Turk than in, say, calling a physician when one felt ill, for God sends us illness also as the trial of faith and character. Erasmus too saw repentance for sin as the necessary prelude to the Turkish war, and of course he wanted to see a union of the princes, among whom unlike Luther he would include the pope. But he wanted no high ecclesiastics in military commands, for such positions were incongruous with their calling, like a statue half gems and half clay or like a centaur, half man and half horse. He criticized "those few" who said that the great struggle did not concern Christianity, but merely possession of the kingdom of Hungary, for which two contestants were fighting, one of whom (Zapolya) was being aided by the Turk; it would be better, they said, for Ferdinand to share the kingdom with Zapolya or let him have it all than to involve Christendom with so powerful and so sanguinary an enemy as

40. W. A. *Briefwechsel*, V, no. 1501, pp. 190-95, with notes. On Calvin's denial of the Turkish interpretation of Daniel, cf. Pannier, in *Revue historique*, vol. 180 (1937), 283-84.

41. Nicholas Reusner, *Epistolae Turcicae*, II (Frankfort, 1599), bk. VII, pp. 81-86, 112-16; bk. VIII, 120-22, 138-47.

the Turk. But Erasmus warned against the preference of expediency to justice. Hungary was not to be abandoned. The assumption that peace could be made with the Turk would eventually sacrifice every prince to the fate of Louis II and every kingdom to that of Hungary. Thus an inevitable necessity drove Christendom to war, "and I confess that I entertain but little hope of victory unless God shall take our side...". He must be propitiated. Church reform was necessary, especially of the high clergy and the Curia Romana⁴².

Catholics everywhere agreed with Erasmus' appeal for reform, and nowhere more than in Hungary torn by civil war, always threatened by the Turk, and now invaded by Lutheran preachers. From Buda on 1 August, 1533, the Hungarian statesman and bishop Stephan Broderic wrote his good friend, Pope Clement VII, that the two chief problems in Christendom were the affairs of Hungary and the Lutheran doctrine, *nostrae res Hungaricae et dogma Lutheranicum*. The Emperor Charles V had said as much at the diet of Augsburg—these were the reasons why he had come into Germany. Now these twin perils had become intertwined as Lutheranism was gradually spreading through Hungary, especially those parts subject to King Ferdinand, the emperor's brother. Priests were openly taking wives; indulgences, dispensations, and the like (which were formerly prized) had become objects of contempt. Some months before, hawkers of indulgences and dispensations had been making their crude sales in the pope's name "here in Hungary" as though they were selling some petty merchandise. The Hungarians not only derided them, but openly expressed their detestation. What were the bishops to say? Everyone had the flip-pant reply, *Gratis accepistis, gratis date*—"Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8)⁴³. It was no solution to threaten people with force and fire. The princes were not very ready to bring force to bear upon the offenders, "because they have also begun to understand that many practices have been received into Christian usage which must either be abolished

42. Des. Erasmus, *Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo...* [with the colophon]: "Datum apud Friburgum Brisgoiae 17 die Martii, anno a Christo nato 1530... Antverpiae, apud Michaëlem Hillenium", unnum. fols. 2r, 11v - 13r, 21v, 23v ff. (=signs. A2, B3 - 5, C5, C7 ff.). When it comes to the Turkish problem, one can obviously exaggerate Erasmus' pacifism, as has been done by Joseph Lecler, *Tolerance and the Reformation*, trans. T. L. Westow, 2 vols., New York and London, 1960, I, 115.

43. Cf. Luther's own employment of the quotation more than a dozen years before in his tract of June 1520 on *The Papacy at Rome*, etc., trans. A. Steimle, *Works of Martin Luther*, I (Philadelphia, 1915), 342.

or certainly changed: everybody understands that a council is necessary, and that the reform of many things is necessary". Broderic passed over in silence (he says) what was being preached everywhere "de abusibus Sedis Romanae", the plurality of benefices, the neglect of souls, the care of revenues, and addiction to pleasures of the body. Paper would fail him (he claims) if he sought to recount the charges made against the Catholic clergy "and especially the Apostolic See". Remedies must be found for some terrible social maladies. It would be better to make concessions than to lose everything: "The fact that Hungary has not yet openly received Luther's doctrine, your Holiness and the Apostolic See owe to no one except our most serene prince [John Zapolya] and to his modesty and goodness — although repudiated by the Apostolic See and used most unworthily by it, he is making every effort nevertheless to see that no innovation is made in his kingdom, but he also longs for a council". Broderic expressed the fear that, while the Apostolic See was delaying, one or more of the princes might take the initiative in summoning a council. There were apparently many who were advising the princes to do so. Because of his faith in the Apostolic See and his affection for the pope, however, Broderic wished humbly to warn his Holiness of these matters — his advice came from the sincerity of his heart".

* * *

Although there was sometimes much warmth, there was rarely any brilliance in the various tracts dealing with the Turkish peril. The views of Luther, Justus Jonas, and Erasmus were not peculiar to them. Luther's old opponent Johann Eck, for example, cited a multiplicity of biblical and classical sources (in a volume of *Homiliae* published in 1532) to show how God has always punished the sins of his people by heathen attacks. As the Assyrians had invaded Israel, so the Turks were invading Europe. The greater the burden of sin, the greater God's wrath would be and the more terrible his punishment. The scandalous conduct of the Lutherans, Zwinglians, and Baptists in their attacks upon the Church, the saints, the

44. Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Lettere di Principi, vol. VIII, fols. 117, 122r, original letter (divided by the binder), "datum Budae die prima mensis Augusti, A. D. MDXXXIII". Turkish depredation in Hungary and the hopelessly tangled political situation made the country especially susceptible to Lutheranism, as Clement VII was fully aware (Arch. Segr. Vaticano, Arm. XLIV, tom. 8, fols. 125-26). Broderic was well known to Clement VII, as were conditions in Hungary (cf. the Vatican Lettere di Principi, vol. III, fol. 36, by modern stamped enumeration, and fols. 39, 40, 50, 104, 299-301, 355, *et alibi*, and in the Lettere, vol. IV, fols. 32, 42, 59).

Virgin, and the chief sacrament had excited the divine anger against Christendom. But as the Jews were freed from their Babylonish captivity, so would the Christians be free in due time "from Turkey, the daughter of Babylon".

In a *Sendbrief* of 1527 one Paul Anderbach had compared Lutheranism to Islam in their respective attitudes toward freedom of worship and belief, the individuality of faith, sin and "good works", cloisters and churches, chastity and celibacy, and so on. In his comparison between Islam and Lutheranism in fact Anderbach claims that in various ways the latter was more perverse and immoral than the doctrine of the Turks. He finds this all the easier to do by attributing to Luther beliefs he never held.

Immediately after the publication of Luther's *Vom Kriege*, Johannes Cochlaeus launched a similar attack upon him in the *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri*, which was printed in Leipzig in the shop of Valentin Schuman on 30 June, 1529. Published under the auspices of the Orthodox Duke George of Saxony, Cochlaeus' tract was dedicated to Cuthbert Tunstall, a mathematician and bishop of London. In the form of a dialogue, it assigns Luther's more acceptable ideas to a sort of *alter ego* named *Palinodus*, with marginal references to passages in the reformer's works in which such ideas had been expressed; opposing views of Luther, taken from their contexts but again with references to his works, are quoted by an envoy of King Ferdinand, who holds them up to adequate opprobrium. Luther is himself the third interlocutor in the dialogue, but has much less to say than the other two (and his statements are also documented). Cochlaeus represents Luther as a Janus-like menace to Christendom, a double-headed source of evil, error, and confusion. Luther had first opposed the war against the Turks as a godless enterprise, and then assailed the opponents of such a war as stupid. He had once written, "Would that God would put the Turk over us rather than the pope!" (*Utinam Deus pro Papa super capita nostra Turcam ponat!*). He had praised the Koran and condemned it. The Lutherans were quite as dangerous as the Turks: the peasants who had rebelled against their lords a few years before had been Lutherans. At the end of his work Cochlaeus lists fifteen contradictions in Luther's recently published *Vom Kriege*. Cochlaeus is concerned with the moral plight of Christendom, "for in the capture of Constantinople Christ has again been crucified by the Turks!"⁴⁵

45. The two quotations from Cochlaeus, *Dialogus de bello contra Turcas, in antilogias Lutheri*, Leipzig, 1529, may be found on fols. VIIv and XVIIIr. Cochlaeus had already produced a *Septiceps Lutherus, ubique sibi, suis scriptis, contrarius...*,

The Lutheran literature on the Turkish problem provides no more novel and sweeping ideas than those expressed by the Rhenish knight Hartmudt von Cronbergk in his open letter to Pope Adrian VI, *Eyn send-briefff an Babst Adrianum*, which was printed at Wittenberg in 1523. The author tried to prevail upon Adrian to give up the papacy, "Nemlich, das du mit guttem willen abtrestest von aller herschafft und reichthumb des Babstumbs zu Rom...". In this way he could reconcile Charles V and Francis I, the two most powerful rulers in Christendom, by dividing between them the so-called Patrimony of St. Peter. Adrian should also deprive the bishops, monks, and priests of the great wealth to which they had no right. While the resources of the Church should provide decent maintenance for the clergy, the excess wealth of bishoprics, endowments, and cloisters should be used for the deliverance of Christians whose lands the Turks had overrun. With papal funds a great expedition could be organized against the Turks. There were plenty of high-minded, able-bodied soldiers. Everything could be provided "von den genannten geystlichen gütern", so that no poor man need be burdened for this purpose. Indeed from the abundant wealth of the clergy many poor folk might be given something to relieve their pressing needs. If the Turk were properly instructed in the Christian faith, one might hope that he would willingly adopt it as the true religion, after which presumably all people on earth would follow him. But the unbelievers must realize that our faith rests upon the foundation stone (*grundtstain*) of Christ and true brotherly love, not upon Rome or the Roman papacy. While Hartmudt von Cronbergk hopes that Adrian will solve the world's problems by following his advice, he made clear that the Germans (*wir teutschen*) would never be obedient to a corrupt papacy. Whatever the failings of the officials in the Curia Romana, who may or

also printed by Valentin Schumann in Leipzig, 1529. On the difficulties encountered by Cochlaeus and Eck in getting their works published (most of the printers were Lutherans), see Clemen, *Die lutherische Reformation u. der Buchdruck*, pp. 32-39. Cochlaeus' true name was Dobneck. He is known to have met Luther on 24 April at the Diet of Worms (cf. Aleander's letters dated 27 and 29 April, 1521, to the Cardinal Giulio de'Medici, later Clement VII, in P. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, I, 543-44, 553, and Luther's own letter of 3 May to Count Albrecht of Mansfeld, *ibid.*, I, 557-58, and cf. pp. 562-63). See in general Martin Spahn, *Johannes Cochläus*, Leipzig, 1898, and note Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, pp. 43-47. Cochlaeus is often mentioned in the despatches sent to Rome by the papal nuncios in Austria and Germany as are other such Catholic apologists as Bishop Johann Fabri of Vienna, Frederick Nausea, and Johann Eck (*Nuntiaturreportage aus Deutschland*, part I, Gotha, 1892 ff.).

may not have studied his letter, Hartmudt was himself not without the sin of pride⁴⁶.

The reformers of the sixteenth century were much aware of the ills of the world and singularly adept at defining them. As far as the Turk was concerned, he was a consequence of some of these ills, but actually was the cause of none of them. Already in the *Heerpredigt* Luther had said that the Turk was a harsh schoolmaster, but he knew how to chasten the callous Christian and turn his thoughts to God. In the *Vermanunge* he emphasized again that the Turk was the schoolmaster of Germany, "and must flog us and teach us to fear God and to pray: otherwise do we wholly rot in our sins..."⁴⁷. Insofar as fighting the Turks had meant an attempt to frustrate God's employment of them as an instrument to awaken the Christian conscience to repentance, and to move the Christian spirit to prayer, Luther had opposed the "proeliari adversus Turcas". But having made their own lives righteous, the Germans must fight the Turks and defeat them to secure their own earthly deliverance (just as they would fight against floods, forest fires, or famines). But the un-Christian armies of the past had been no better than the Turks, and so what choice might God have made between them? The Moslem Turks did not have preachers of the word of God, and their bestiality could be easily understood; but the Christian Turks disregarded God's word and those who preached it, thus defaming the very name of Christ and showing themselves to be worse Turks than the followers of Mohammed⁴⁸. In the *Vermanunge* Luther expressed his disappointment in the princes, the landlords, and the burghers,

46. *Eyn sendbrieff an Babst Adrianum darinn mit Christenlichem warhafftigen grundt angezaygt wirt ein sicherer haylsamer weg zu aussreuttung aller ketzereyen und zu haylsamer rettung gantzer Christenhait von des Türcken tyraney*, Wittenberg, 1523, on which cf. Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, pp. 55-56. Member of a noble Rhenish family, Hartmudt von Cronbergk was a follower of the famous Franz von Sickingen, losing all his property in von Sickingen's fall (1522); some twenty years later (in 1541) he recovered most of his possessions from the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, but remained neutral in the War of Schmalkalden. There is a biography of Hartmudt by W. Bogler, Halle, 1897.

47. *Vermanunge zum Gebet wider den Türcken*, Wittenberg, 1541, unnumbered fol. 7v (=sign. Biii): "Also ist der Türck auch unser Schulmeister, und mus uns steuper und leren, Gott furchten und beten sonst verfaulen wir gantz in sunden...." *W. A. Werke*, LI (1914), 594.

48. [Luther], *Verlegung des Alcoran Bruder Richardi, Prediger Ordens, anno 1300, verdeuscht durch D. Mar. Lu.*, Wittenberg, 1542 (see below, note 55); *Dr. Martin Luther's Sämmtliche Werke*, Erlanger Ausgabe, LXV (1855), 197-98, and cf. Hans Pfeffermann, *Zusammenarbeit der Renaissancepäpste mit den Türken*, Winterthur, 1946, p. 164, and note 147.

who were getting rich by exploiting the work of reform, but the poor man who struggled for a crust of bread might well prefer to live under the Turks than Christians such as these⁴⁹. The confiscation of ecclesiastical properties had contributed greatly to the wealth of the lay lords who received them, but had in no way alleviated the hardships of the poor. From the brutality of the German noble and the smugness of the burgher, the peasant and journeyman could expect no consideration; Luther clearly felt that the social injustice of his time, which increased the wrath of God, was one of the reasons for the Turkish success. At the time of the peasant revolts many looked upon the Turks as possible deliverers from oppression; it was in fact reported that many peasants from Salzburg and Würzburg had fled to the Turks, and even German *Landsknechte*, who had been lured from their loyalty to the Emperor Maximilian by French gold at Brescia, had taken the road to Hungary, after the conclusion of peace, to offer their services to the Turks⁵⁰. A righteousness which found favor in the eyes of God would prove the only defense against the Turks. This is Luther's constant refrain.

To Luther social as well as theological problems were to be solved by the Bible whenever possible. Since "the powers that be are ordained of God" (Romans, 13: 1), Luther could only condemn the peasant revolt of 1524 - 1525 although he must stand charged before the bar of history with some measure of responsibility for the outbreak. But to say that Luther betrayed the peasants would be quite unjust. His attitude toward the peasant revolt has often been studied, but we may note here his interesting letter of 4 May, 1525, to Johann Rühel at Mansfeld: "If there were thousands more peasants than there are, they would all be robbers and murderers, who take the sword with criminal intent to drive out lords, princes and all else, and make a new order in the world for which they have from God neither command, right, power, nor injunction, as the lords now have to suppress them. They are faithless and perjured, and still worse they bring the Divine Word and Gospel to shame and dishonor, a most horrible sin.... I hope they will have no success nor staying power although God at times plagues the world with desperate

49. *Vermanunge*, fol. 26 (=sign. Gii); *W. A. Werke*, LI, 623 - 24.

50. Ebermann, *Die Türkenfurcht*, p. 31. On affairs in Brescia in May 1516, cf. Predelli, *Regesti dei Commemorativi*, VI, bk. XX, nos. 40 - 41, pp. 137 - 38. There was, however, much resistance among the Lutherans to the acceptance of French gold (cf. Sanudo, *Diarii*, XLIX, 126, a report from Switzerland in October 1528).

men as He has done and yet does with the Turks"⁵¹. When Luther thinks of evil, he thinks of the Turks. When the Catholic secretary of Lorenzo Orio, Venetian envoy to England, thinks of the Lutherans, he also thinks of the Turks: "This sect has taken such root throughout Germany that there is no visible remedy whereby to extirpate it, nor could the Church in those parts suffer greater persecution, even were the Turks to come"⁵².

Whatever the divine use to which the Turks were put, and whatever their inadvertent services to German Protestantism, Luther entertained a good Christian's strong hostility toward Islam. But it is never well to be ignorant of the enemy's ways. Since war with the Turk seemed almost everlasting, as Philip Melanchthon wrote Duke Johann Ernst of Saxony in October 1537 (in the preface to a Wittenberg edition of Paolo Giovio's *Turcicarum rerum commentarius*), "and since in this era a war has broken out in which we must fight the Turks not only in defense of our liberty, laws, and the other refinements of civilization, but also for our religion, altars, and homes, it is of the very greatest importance for our princes to get a thorough acquaintance with Turkish affairs"⁵³. Luther was also much interested in Turkish affairs, especially Turkish religious affairs, and made his own contribution to the long series of polemic studies of the Koran. In 1542 he published a German translation of the Florentine Dominican Ricoldo da Montecroce's justly famous *Confutatio Alcorani*, which had been written at the beginning of the fourteenth century (and was first printed at Seville in 1500). Sometime member of the convent of S. Maria Novella, traveller and missionary to the Levant, Ricoldo had studied the Koran for several years at Bagdad, and his *Confutatio* reveals him to have been one of the best informed medieval commentators on Islam⁵⁴. It was in his usual role as teacher and preacher that Luther translated Ricoldo's book, "weil man kein bessers

51. W. M. L. de Wette, ed., *Luthers Briefe*, II (Berlin, 1826), no. 696, p. 652; *W. A. Briefwechsel*, III (1933), no. 860, p. 480; trans. P. Smith, *Luther's Correspondence*, II, no. 677, 308 - 309.

52. P. Smith, ed., *Luther's Correspondence*, II, 314, Gaspare Spinelli to his brother Luigi, dated at Antwerp 10 May, 1525.

53. From Melanchthon's preface to the Latin translation of Giovio's *Turcicarum rerum commentarius...*, *Ex Italico Latinus factus, Francisco Nigro Bassianate interprete...* [the colophon being]: "Vitebergae ex officina Josephi Clug. Anno MDXXXVII". For the bibliography of Melanchthon, see Otto Beuttenmüller, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Melanchthon - Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Halle (Saale), 1960.

54. Cf. Reinhold Röhrich, "Lettres de Ricoldo de Monte - Croce", trans. Furcy Raynaud, in *Archives de l'Orient latin*, II (Paris, 1884), pt. 2, pp. 258 - 63 and ff.

hat", to expose to his large following the evils of the devil and his apostle, Mohammed; his saints, the Turks; and his Heilige Schrift, the Koran. Luther believed that all hope of salvation depended on the divinity of Christ. This Mohammed had denied, and had destroyed a great many people, body and soul, with his lies, and betrayed them into eternal damnation, "wie der Bapst auch gethan und noch thut"⁵⁵.

To Luther of course the evil papacy had become an obsession, but it is also to be observed that he regarded Mohammed as the apostle of Satan. If Lutheranism sometimes seems to have assisted the advance of Islam into eastern Europe, Luther was nevertheless no more the ally of the Turk than he was of the pope, *der römische Satan*. But certainly the political leaders of Protestantism, such as Philip of Hesse and Johann Friedrich of Saxony, appreciated Ferdinand of Hapsburg's long contest with both John Zapolya and the Turks in Hungary as well as Charles V's constant preoccupation with Francis I, the pope, and the Moslems of North Africa. All such activities diverted the Hapsburgs' strength and attention from imperial affairs, while Lutheranism spread throughout Germany and sank its roots ever more deeply into the soil. Over a period of some thirty years the fear of Turkish attacks helped to induce the Hapsburgs to make a series of at least eight important concessions to German Protestantism—the recess of Speyer (1526), which accorded the Lutherans some vague immunity from legal and military interference until a council should undertake the solution of the great problem; the religious peace of Nuremberg (1532), which went beyond the recess in granting toleration to Protestantism in such states as it then existed until the summoning of the council; the compact of Kaaden (1534) and the Frankfort *Anstand* (1539); the declaration of Regensburg (1541) and the second recess of Speyer (1542); and finally the treaty of Passau (1552), which prepared the way for the religious peace of Augsburg (1555), whereby the religious issue and many a political problem were either settled or postponed until the Thirty Years' War.

The Turks helped place each of these great stones, one by one, into the foundations of political Protestantism in Germany, but on no occasion do the Lutheran princes appear to have sought an entente with the Turks

55. [Luther], *Verlegung des Alcoran Bruder Richardi, Prediger Ordens, anno 1300, verdeutscht durch D. Mar. Lu., Wittenberg, 1542*. The book was printed by Hans Lufft. Luther wrote a prologue and an epilogue to his translation in both of which (especially in the latter) he makes his usual attack upon the pope. Cf. G. W. Forell, in *Church History*, XIV (1945), 261 - 64.

after the fashion of Francis I of France. The Lutherans derived much benefit from the activities of the Turks without having any kind of alliance with them; the French, at least in the time of Francis I, derived very little if any benefit from the Turkish attacks upon the Hapsburgs despite the several embassies they sent to Istanbul and the definite alliance which was negotiated between France and Turkey. To suggest that Luther was an ally of the Turk is an historical libel, whether pronounced in the sixteenth century or the twentieth. We must beware, certainly, of the kind of paradox that asserts Darwin was no Darwinian, and Marx was no Marxist; Luther was to be sure a Lutheran, and his princely adherents knew how to profit from the Turkish menace without seeking alliances in Istanbul. But it would not be easy to show that Luther desired to profit from the Turkish menace.

When in the mid-summer of 1545 he learned of the negotiations for peace between Charles V and Suleiman, he indignantly denounced them, to be sure, as a betrayal of Christendom. The emperor, the king of France, the pope, and Ferdinand (he wrote) had sent off their embassies loaded with costly gifts for the Turk—now there they were, on the road to Istanbul, those Roman swindlers, currying favor at the Porte by actually donning oriental clothes: "That's how they make war against the Turk, whom they have for so many years called the enemy of the Christian name, against whom the Roman Satan has drained off such a vast sum of money in indulgences, annates, and infinite rapacities. Now you see the ruin of the empire at hand and the day of our salvation. Let us be glad, rejoice, exult—the end of the world is coming!"⁵⁶ Such a text is hardly to be interpreted as showing a desire to see the Turkish war go on for the benefit of the Protestant princes. Luther talked and wrote too much. His home-spun eloquence had a great appeal for his German contemporaries, but he was not too careful of the facts when he wished to hurl charges at the pope. The pope had sent no envoy to the Porte, and indeed the end of the world was not coming. The Curia Romana had rather a firmer grasp of the latter fact than Luther, and long after his death its members were still seeking practical ways to defeat the Turk, as was to be done in 1571 at Lepanto and again in 1683 at Vienna.

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The relation of the Wittenberg reformers to Eastern Orthodoxy is a topic which should be considered in any account of the Lutheran attitude

56. W. M. L. de Wette, ed., *Dr. Martin Luthers Briefe*, V (Berlin, 1828), no. 2280, pp. 743-44; *W. A. Briefwechsel*, XI (1948), no. 4136, p. 142, letter to

towards the Turkish peril. Melanchthon, who was a competent Greek scholar was much interested in the East. At one time or another he carried on a correspondence with Antonius Eparchus of Corfu, a Greek refugee humanist who was teaching in Venice in the 1540's; with the Greek Despot Jacobus Basilicus Heraclides, who gained fame after Melanchthon's death by his brief seizure of Moldavia (1561 - 1563) from a Turkish vassal; also with Heraclides' cousin Jacobus Diassorinus, known as the "lord of Doris"; and even with the Patriarch Joasaph of Constantinople in 1559, to whom he sent a Greek translation of the Augsburg Confession. In 1559 Melanchthon had as a guest in his house for the entire summer a certain well known Demetrius, sometime deacon of the patriarchal church in Constantinople, a Serbian scholar with a wide acquaintance among the German reformers in central Europe. Behind all such relations of Melanchthon with these easterners lay the dark shadow of the Turk, who was the subject of a long letter which Antonius Eparchus wrote Melanchthon from Venice on 22 February, 1543. But as the Reformation moved eastward, it still seemed to play into Turkish hands. In Moldavia, for example, after Heraclides' conquest of the land, the reformers fought under his aegis against Orthodoxy as they had been doing against Catholicism. With gross impatience they objected to long familiar ecclesiastical processions and ceremonies, and insisted on the immediate alteration of the liturgy; they attacked the veneration of saints and images, revised the sacramental system, seized monastic property, and converted into coin gold and silver reliquaries, crucifixes, vessels, and other sacred objects⁵⁷.

Among the Wittenberg reformers Melanchthon had always occupied

Justus Jonas dated 16 July, 1545. For the truce of 1545, see J. Ursu, *La Politique orientale de François I*, Paris, 1908, pp. 159 - 67.

57. See Ernst Benz, *Wittenberg und Byzanz*, pp. 4 - 128. In 1540 Antonius Eparchus (ca 1492-1571) presented his Greek MSS. to King Francis I, who gave him 1000 écus for them. Thereafter Eparchus tried to make a business of supplying Greek MSS. to the royal library at Fontainebleau (cf. Alex Tausserat-Radel, *Correspondance politique de Guillaume Pellicier*, Paris 1899 pp. 13, 54 - 58, 79, 96 - 97, 174 ff). He also sought MSS. for Popes Paul III, Julius III, Paul IV, and Pius IV, as well as the Cardinals Marcello Cervini and Sirloto, and Duce Cosimo I of Florence, on which see Léon Dorez, "Antoine Éparque: Recherches sur le commerce des MSS. grecs en Italie au XVIe siècle," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome*, XIII (1893), 281 - 364, and cf. also Henri Omont, "Catalogue des MSS. grecs de Guillaume Pellicier," *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes*, XLVI (1855), esp. pp. 611 - 24. On the Greeks (unfavorable) attitude toward the Lutherans, note Eparchus' letter to Cardinal Cervini dated at Venice 1 June, 1546 (ed. Dorez, *op. cit.*, p. 316).

a unique place. A nephew of Johann Reuchlin, Melanchthon seemed born a scholar. After the death of Luther, who was unstinting in his praise of him, Melanchthon's reputation suffered some eclipse, but he always remained a most influential figure. More logical in thought than Luther, more moderate in expression, more conciliatory in theology, more urbane in manner, Melanchthon had admirers throughout Christendom, and not least among the Czechs and South Slavs, for the evangelical faith was spreading east and southward. Melanchthon's son-in-law Caspar Peucer was of Slavic (Wendish) origin and could read the Slavic languages. Peucer became a professor of medicine in the University of Wittenberg (in 1559), and although Melanchthon's mantle never fell upon his shoulders, he was always most interested in the religious Reform, especially (for example) in Jan Blahoslav's Czech translation of the New Testament (1564). It had been the hope of Peucer, Blahoslav, and others that the spread of Lutheranism and the faith of the Bohemian Brethren into the Turkish border lands and even into the interior of the Ottoman empire might preserve Christianity against the wiles of Antichrist and the temptations of Islam.

Wittenberg did little, however, to further the work of that zealous soldier and statesman Hans Ungnad, Freiherr von Sonnegk, who established presses in Urach and Tübingen for printing Bibles and evangelical tracts in Slovenian and Croatian. These translations were made by Primus Trubar and Stephan Consul. From Ungnad's presses came books printed in Glagolitic and especially Cyrillic types, books which were read and understood throughout Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Wallachia, Bulgaria, and even in Istanbul. (They also went into Russia). The Turks themselves used the Slavic dialects, as well as Greek, in official correspondence; Ungnad had fought against the Turk for more than twenty years before adopting Lutheranism. He was neither professor nor preacher, but very much a statesman, as shown by his correspondence with King Maximilian of Bohemia, the Landgrave Philip of Hesse, Duke Christopher of Württemberg, Duke Albrecht von Hohenzollern of Prussia, and other princes and cities⁵⁸. Ungnad looked to Lutheranism for the spiritual renewal of the German Reich against the Turks. He sought the political and social embodiment of the Lutheran gospel in forces which under secular leadership, eschewing the "antichristliches Papsttum", might stop and ultimately push back the

58. As a Catholic supporter of Ferdinand and the house of Austria, Ungnad had sought his reward in the irregular bestowal of monastic properties on his sons (cf. *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, pt. I, vol. 1, nos. 108, 110, pp. 291, 293 - 95; vol. 2, no. 22, pp. 111 - 12, letters dated August 1534 and February 1537).

Turkish invaders. He was impatient with theologians who put dogmatic beliefs before evangelical unity, and he was equally impatient with the Hapsburgs, who (in his opinion) were putting Catholicism and popery before the political needs of the Reich, whose eastern marches had lain open to Turkish attack since the Hungarian defeat at Mohács. In South-Slavic lands the reformers still preached that Antichrist was a Janus-like being whose one face was borne by the pope, the other by the Turk. The South Slavs could find particular significance in this portrayal of Antichrist, for some of them lived in Turkish territory, always exposed to abuse and oppression and always subject to the tribute in boys (the *devşirme*), while others lived in the lands of the propapal Hapsburgs where they also knew oppression, heard the reformers always denouncing the wickedness of Rome, felt the heavy effects of papal crusades and Venetian efforts against the Turks — and whence they had watched the catastrophe of Mohács. But Ungnad hoped that, when the Slavs read his Bibles and tracts, further unity would enter both their minds and speech, a Christian unity against the Turks, for in their writings the reformers often emphasized the close association of thought and language (and hence their addiction to the vernaculars). Ungnad was an ardent missionary, and his work supplies equally interesting, if not equally important chapters, in the histories of religion and philology⁵⁹.

Ungnad's extraordinary program for the translation and dissemination of Reformation tracts and the Bible attracted a good deal of attention and won much approval in evangelical circles in Germany as well as in central and eastern Europe. The Croatian Gregor Vlahović, a preacher in Möttling, proposed that such material, including the Bible, should also be published in Turkish: the word of God had already laid the pope low, and would do the same to the Turk. Venice, with her shipping facilities and numerous Levantine ports of call, was believed to be the best place from which to distribute the Slavic translations, which were also sent into the Ottoman empire from Vienna. Numerous texts, including the entire New Testament, were prepared in editions of 1,000 and even 2,000 copies⁶⁰. These were large editions.

It is thus quite clear that, although the Turks had obviously helped serve the cause of the Reformers by distracting the Hapsburgs and the Vatican from the effective suppression of Protestantism, the Reformers

59. Benz, *op. cit.*, pp. 129 - 239, with some of the correspondence between Ungnad and Philip of Hesse.

60. Benz, *op. cit.*, pp. 202 - 3, 229 - 30, 233 - 34.

had not the slightest intention of serving the cause of Turkey and Islam. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged, Protestantism was not good stuff from which to make crusaders. The Catholic sociology of viewing institutions and their functions in terms of the purposes they are supposed to achieve was breaking down under the impact of the Protestant emphasis upon the individual's inner experience and his own choice. In politics this Protestant emphasis would help lead (it is often asserted) to social democracy and in economics to laissez-faire capitalism, brooking little interference and bridling under discipline. In any event Protestantism did bring with it an increasing tendency to seek the solution of problems in the light of personal experience. But variety of thought and diversity of opinion tend in the mass to confusion and to neutralism, pros and cons cancelling out one another; it becomes almost impossible to get popular support for any grand design which will require the self-sacrifice of many individuals or groups. Luther condemned the Crusade (*Kreuzzug*) as we have seen, because of its clerical connotations. But however much the German empire might be threatened, and Luther preach the necessity of its defense, the Protestants were hardly capable of organizing even a *Türkenkrieg*, a secular war against the Turks.

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