

Art After Lepanto

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Research for 2018 NEH Seminar: *Modernity & Transformation in the Mediterranean 1400-1700*
Hill Museum and Manuscript Library at Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota

Course Development Project <https://studyingteachingthemediterranean.wordpress.com/2018/07/10/art-after-lepanto-syllabus-for-art-history/>

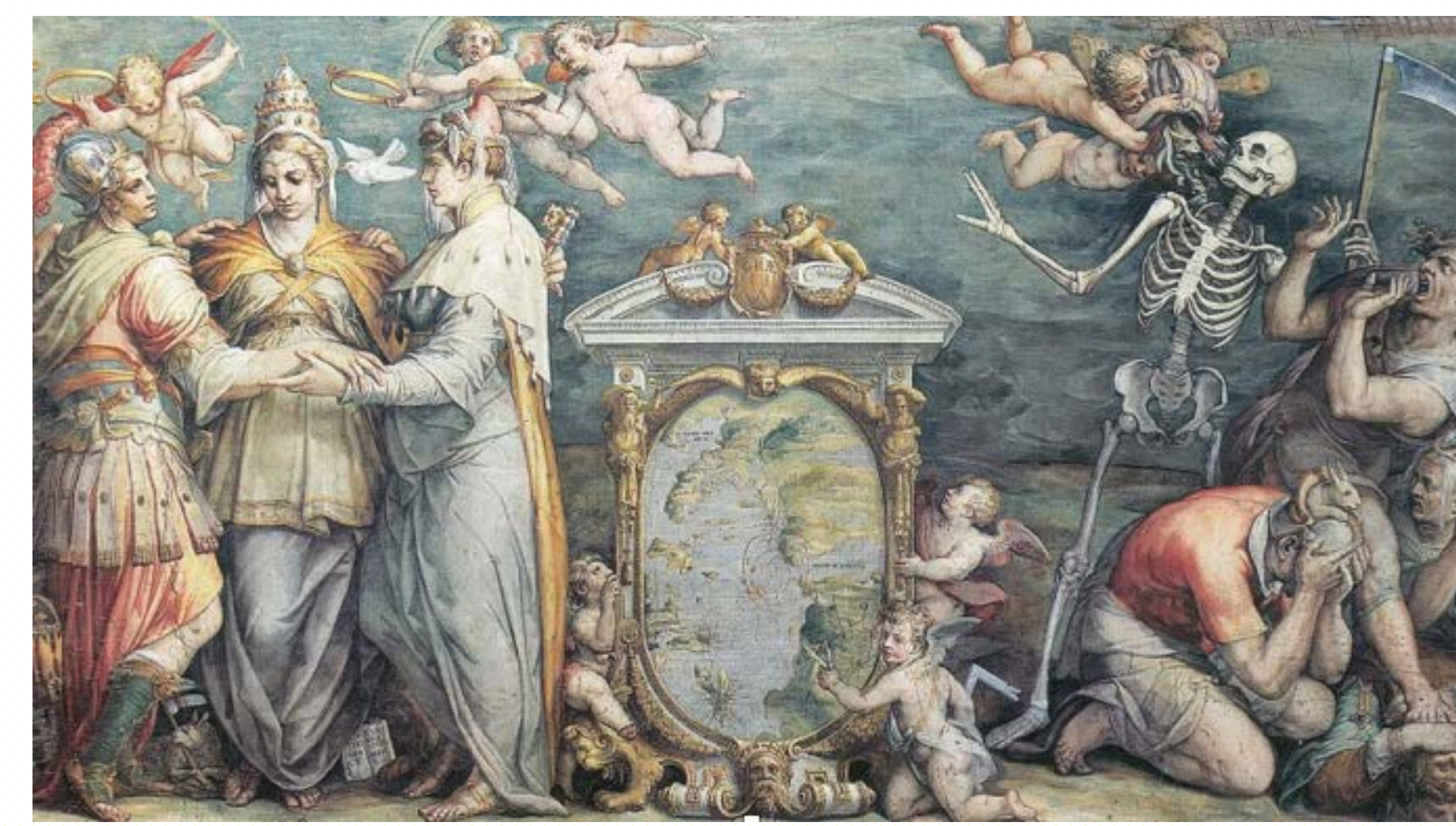


Introduction to Course of Study

The analysis of art created after the Battle of Lepanto (7 October 1571) considers the perspectives of, and interactions between, those involved in the military confrontations:

- the Christian Holy League of Spain, Venice, and the papacy,
- the Duchies of Florence, Urbino and Savoy
- Genoa and the Knights of Malta
- (in conflict with) Ottoman forces (Herz 41 and Brummett 63).

The course will address the reception of the imagery by these groups in the early modern period and will ask students to analyze the way in which the Mediterranean is represented today.



Imaging Naval & Tactical Warfare During the Age of the Artillery Revolution:

Methodological Framework for Study

In his essay on Southern thought, sociologist Franco Cassano writes of the Mediterranean as a place that facilitates exchange among disparate groups and of an episteme, or system of knowledge that emerges that is informed by the context. In his words, as an epistemological construct Southern thought allows for “the criticism of fundamentalism” or orthodoxies and the “deconstruction of hostility” (10).

Topics related to the conceptual framework discuss art in terms of the historical context as outlined in the course syllabus developed during the NEH seminar and available online as follows:

<https://studyingteachingthemediterranean.wordpress.com/2018/07/10/art-after-lepanto-syllabus-for-art-history/>.

The course syllabus provides material for fifteen weeks of study on the social history of art after Lepanto and units that have informed the subsequent original analysis of the representative imagery featured above.

Top Left: Turkish flag captured at the naval battle of Lepanto. Museo storico navale di Venezia

Center left and detail in lower middle register: Giorgio Vasari, *Battle of Lepanto*. Sala Regia, Vatican, 1573

Center top register: Matteo d'Aleccio, *Dis-embarkment of the Turkish Armada, Siege of Malta*. Council Hall, Malta, 1577

Right: *Turkish galleys in the Black Sea*. Manuscript folio. British Library, London

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Results / Conclusions from faculty research

Vasari's Vatican frescos and d'Aleccio's paintings of the earlier Siege of Malta (1565) for the Knights of Malta from 1577 just a few years after the Battle of Lepanto, offer two different perspectives of naval and tactical warfare during the age of and the artillery revolution (Bonnici 110; Herz 45; Scorza 143).

Comparisons of paintings by these artists and Ottoman paintings of war require critical thinking about the Mediterranean. Vasari promoted the interests of the Holy League, while d'Aleccio represented the Ottoman leaders and provided information about Malta's topography and military defenses (Herz 41-43; Balbi). d'Aleccio also employed art techniques from the East (Bonnici 107). The paintings of Vasari and d'Aleccio record different responses to the battle and when analyzed encourage critical, deconstructive Southern thought (op. cit.).