Cross-Cultural Artistic Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean

A PIMO COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AROUND THE EXHIBITION TITLED "ŞEYH HAMDULLAH ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH" AT THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

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Edited by Zeren Tanındı

This volume is based on work undertaken as part of the research project 'People in motion: Entangled histories of displacement across the Mediterranean (1492–1923)' (COST Action 18140), supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology).

Submitted 7 June 2021, accepted 15 September 2021.

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Book design
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Photographs
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Istanbul 2022
ISBN 978-625-7329-98-9

Printing and binding
Mas Matbaacılık San. ve Tic. A.Ş.
Hamidiye Mahallesi
Soğuksu Caddesi No. 3
Kağıthane/İstanbul
Tel: 0212 294 10 00
book@masmat.com.tr
Certificate No: 44686

Cover image:
Loose decorated pages from an album. Portrait of Mehmed II. Sinan Beg (attr.), ca. 1478-81. Calligraphies ca. 1480. Paintings early 15th century. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 145v.

Next page:
Cut-paper of a tree from an album. Qaraqoyunlu or Aqqoyunlu Turkmen, Baghdad, Shiraz, Tabriz, 1460-80. Topkapı Palace Library, H. 2153, fol. 183r.

Contents

Foreword

Giovanni Tarantino
University of Florence, PIMo Action Chair

It is a great honour and a pleasure for me to introduce this remarkable book entitled "Cross-Cultural Artistic Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean: A PIMo Collection of Essays Around the Exhibition Titled 'Şeyh Hamdullah on the 500th Anniversary of His Death' at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul", which was conceived and developed under the auspices of the COST Action *People in Motion (PIMo): Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492–1923)*.

The PIMo network consists of over 250 researchers from Europe and around the world and has a prominent focus on the Mediterranean. Oriented towards the humanities, it investigates multiple historical case studies concerning the movement of people, objects, ideas, and paper. Key drivers in this process are religious persecution, environmental and social catastrophe, war, imperialism and slavery, missionary work, trade, exploration, networks of scholars and collectors, and scientific and cultural curiosity. The members of the network are from a range of disciplines, and include historians, anthropologists, scholars of literary, visual and material culture, philosophers, mathematicians, and maritime scientists. The geographical provenance of the PIMo network is equally (and necessarily) diverse, drawing from 36 COST Member countries. PIMo also hosts international partners and observ-

ers from Australia, Egypt, Morocco, South Africa and the United States. One of the principal goals of the project is to provide a critical historical context and to better understand the current migration crisis in Europe, specifically in terms of the intensity of the emotional responses of displaced peoples and the communities they orbit and join.

This book arose out of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum workshop titled "Paper and Things: Material Mobility Between East and West," jointly promoted by two separate PIMo Work Groups: *Things in Motion*, led by Professor Rosita D'Amora from Salento University in Lecce, and *Paper in Motion*, headed by Professor José María Pérez Fernández from the University of Granada. I am deeply grateful to both Rosita and José María for their unflagging and creative commitment to the COST Action PIMo.

History can be simultaneously inclusionary and exclusionary. Its practitioners are situated in time and space, and – deliberately or otherwise – impose an intellectual agenda on their areas of study. History is also a contextually rooted discipline, and its inquiries are often bound up with broader political, social, and commercial agendas. Many of the research questions that underpin PIMo are the products of contemporary concerns about social inclusion and exclusion, and how they play out in state and political structures, power relations, and interpersonal relations. Decisions regarding what is deemed important and worth preserving for posterity are made long before historians step in to the archives. As a result, significant parts of history – and certain people's histories – are often lost or distorted along the way. A number of the papers presented at the Sabancı workshop were on archival collections, offering a great deal of insight about their history, composition, and preservation. Fascinatingly, we were also introduced to the material texture of various documents and the complex issues relating to their conservation.

Since cross-cultural interactions are the core focus of PIMo, both Istanbul and the Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum were highly appropriate venues for this workshop.

In the central period of Ottoman rule, from the sixteenth to eighteenth century, Istanbul was not only the largest Islamic city but also the world's most populous Greek, Armenian, and Jewish urban centre. Though excluded from government and military careers, the Ottoman subjects of the so-called *millet*s – usually translated as "nations" and denoting the three main non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire – were an integral part of urban society and the economy. Usually accounting for no less than 40% of the population, they were not segregated in ghettoes, but tended to live in districts where there was a predominance of one or other ethnic group, organised around a church or a synagogue. Many *millet* members (or *dhimmi*, "protected subjects") belonged to more than one cultural environment and found themselves acting as intermediaries between two worlds. This remarkable Christian and Jewish presence created opportunities for exchange and encounter between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, between the northern and the south-eastern shores of the Mediterranean.

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum is in Emirgan, one of Istanbul's oldest settlements on the Bosphorus. The villa that now comprises the main building of the museum was designed by the Italian architect Edoardo De Nari in 1925, who was commissioned by the Egyptian Khedive, Prince Mehmed Ali Hasan. The mansion was used as a summer house for many years by various members of the family until it was purchased by the industrialist Hacı Ömer Sabancı in 1951. Following the death of Hacı Ömer Sabancı in 1966, it began to be used as a permanent home by the eldest member of the family, Sakıp Sabancı, and for many years it housed his fine collection of calligraphies and paintings. In 1998, the mansion, complete with its furnishings and collections, was bequeathed by the family to Sabancı University and turned into a museum in 2002.

Our wonderfully generous hosts were Nazan Ölçer, Director of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Zeren Tanındı, Tülay Artan, and Ayşe Aldemir, who deserve great credit for gathering together an impressive array of international scholars and curators from a wide range of disciplines. They created the conditions for a productive synergy between PIMo and the curators of an exhibition about the life and work of the brilliant Ottoman calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah (1436–1520), organised at the museum to mark the 500th anniversary of his death. The establishment of an international board of experts, including prominent Ottomanists contributing to PIMo, and the commissioning of contributions from prominent essayists, successfully brought this collaborative undertaking to fruition.

Introduction

Nazan Ölçer
Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Director

Arabic script gained significance and esteem due to the divine command "Read," at the beginning of a five-verse revelation in the Koran (the Surah Al-'Alaq, 96: 1-5), the holy book of Islam. The full and definitive determination of the text of the Koran and the information it contains, preventing any misreading, was developed and perfected over the centuries through the efforts of linguists and artisans. This work resulted in the formulation of important calligraphic rules regarding spelling and the alphabet, and the establishment of a variety of writing styles.

Islam quickly spread to vast geographies from the lands of its inception, reaching societies with differing heritages, cultures, and artistic traditions. This also led to encounters between the histories and traditions of the diverse societies that accepted it. Islamic art undoubtedly drew on these sources. Writing, as the essential element underpinning the new art that emerged, was applied in fields ranging from architecture to tiles and ceramics, woodwork, stone carvings, and textiles. However, throughout the centuries, the greatest patronage and esteem was bestowed on the arts of the book. Many great artists were admired and supported throughout their careers, and extraordinary collections were established. Now, the most valued "spoils

of war" brought back from conquered lands were not material treasures, but rather the court artists, who were invited to work in new palaces where their works introduced new perspectives and styles.

Throughout its long history, the art of calligraphy was shaped by great masters who developed new schools. Their works of art and schools of style were always long lasting and became a source of inspiration and insight for later generations. Many artists who followed in the path of these masters produced exceptional works that survive today and are now preserved in leading manuscript libraries. However, very few calligraphers succeeded in establishing schools that would last for centuries.

Şeyh Hamdullah, who died 502 years ago, is accepted as the last stop in this long period of development in calligraphy and is commemorated as the founder of the Ottoman school of calligraphy. Honoured by such epithets as "the north pole of calligraphers" and "the qibla of calligraphers", Şeyh Hamdullah bin Mustafa Dede was born in 1436 (AH. 840) in Amasya, where the future sultan, then Şehzade Bayezid, served as the governor from 1455 until 1481. Şeyh Hamdullah's father, Mustafa Dede, was a scholar who had migrated from Bukhara to Amasya, and went on to serve as sheikh of the Suhrawardiyya Sufi order. Amasya, an Ottoman border city at the time, had become an important hub for religious scholars and artists from major Central Asian cultural centres such as Bukhara, Samarkand and Herat, largely due to Şehzade Bayezid's patronage of scholars and artists.

Şeyh Hamdullah was educated by the foremost scholars of this flourishing environment and gained a great reputation as a calligrapher. When Sultan Mehmed II died in 1481, his son Bayezid acceded to the Ottoman throne and invited Şeyh Hamdullah to the Topkapı Palace to serve as royal scribe. There, taking office as the "kātib-i ḫāṣṣa" within the "Ehl-i Ḥiref" organisation, Şeyh Hamdullah created his finest works and taught calligraphy, training many students. Known for his mastery of different writing styles, he made significant changes that led to a new school of Ottoman calligraphy.

Sultan Bayezid II maintained a close friendship with the artist for many years. When Bayezid was deposed in 1512 and died shortly afterwards, Şeyh Hamdullah left the court and retired to the village of Alemdağ, east of Istanbul, where he lived as a recluse and devoted himself to worship. Süleyman I, who ascended the throne in 1520 after the death of Sultan Selim I, was keenly aware of Şeyh Hamdullah's importance and reputation, inviting him to return to the palace. However, the calligrapher asked to be excused on account of his advanced age, and died soon afterwards.

During his long life, Şeyh Hamdullah created works of extraordinary beauty, breathing fresh life into the art of calligraphy, and broadening artistic horizons through his innovative practices. After his death, his works continued to guide the students he had trained and subsequent followers of his school of calligraphy. These artists carried his legacy, the Ottoman art of calligraphy, through the centuries to the present day.

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum has a significant collection of calligraphy and the arts of the book, which includes valuable works by Şeyh Hamdullah and other calligraphers in his milieu. In view of this fact, the idea to hold a comprehensive international exhibition on the great master originated several years ago. As 2020 marked the 500th anniversary of Şeyh Hamdullah's death, mounting such an exhibition that year was of particular significance.

The comprehensive exhibition that we had originally planned with leading experts in the field, Zeren Tanındı and Muhittin Serin, would have included works loaned by international museum and library collections. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic made this quite impossible. While travel restrictions prevented international loans, restructuring and ongoing inventory processes at the Topkapı Palace also prohibited us from including works from their collection. Consequently, these were only displayed in digital form.

Despite these adverse circumstances, we were still very proud to commemorate this great artist with an exhibition on the 500th anniversary of his death, albeit one reduced in scope. We are sincerely grateful to General Directorate for Cultural Heritage and Museums at the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the permission to borrow works from other museum collections; to Seracettin Şahin, the former director of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, and the museum's curators; to Hülya Bilgi, the director of the Sadberk Hanım Museum, and her team of experts; and to Sinan Uluant, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Kubbealtı Academy Foundation of Art and Culture. We also thank the Department of National Palaces, The Manuscript Institution of Turkey, Istanbul University Library, Dallas Museum of Art, the Kestner Museum in Hannover, the Bamberg Staatsbibliothek, the Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin Kupferstichkabinett, the Kunstmuseum in

Bonn, the Arthur M. Sackler Museum at the Harvard University Art Museums, the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek in Düsseldorf, the British Museum in London, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the Public Library in Saint-Petersburg, the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, the Freer Gallery of Art at the Smithsonian Institution and the Samuel H. Kress Collection at the National Gallery of Art for the digital reproduction and catalogue publication rights of works that could not be loaned.

We were very glad to have been able to carry out our project under the challenging and uncertain conditions that affected the entire world for over two years, closing museums and art institutions and bringing normal life to a halt. Therefore, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Güler Sabancı, the Chair of our museum's Board of Trustees, and all the other committee members who gave us their heartfelt support for the project from the start; the museum's secretary-general Berna Özkul, who efficiently organised every aspect of our preparations for the exhibition; Ayşe Aldemir, curator of our museum's Arts of the Book and Calligraphy Collection, who constantly kept the project moving despite all adversities and the disappointment of being obliged to reduce its scope, ensuring that it came to fruition; Nurçin Kural Özgörüş, the head of our Conservation Laboratory; our museum expert Halet Uluant; our technical team under the leadership of engineer Orhan Kamiloğlu; and our architect Umut Durmuş.

Eminent scholars on the history of calligraphy made valuable contributions to the exhibition catalogue with their profound knowledge and understanding of the subject: Gülru Necipoğlu, with her article titled "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversations with Renaissance Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople"; Zeren Tanındı, with "Decoration on Paper in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: 1400-1520"; and Muhittin Serin, with "The Calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah: His Forerunners, Contemporaries, and Followers". Ayşe Aldemir, the curator of our museum's Arts of the Book and Calligraphy Collection, wrote an essay on works by Şeyh Hamdullah and his contemporaries in the museum collection, all amassed by the late Sakıp Sabancı.

We owe the design of the book to Ersu Pekin and its publication to the support from the COST Action *People in Motion (PIMo): Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492-1923)*. I am grateful to the PIMo researchers Tülay Artan (Sabancı University), Rosita D'Amora (Salento University), Hedda Reindl-Kiel (University of Bonn) and Giovanni Tarantino (University of Florence) for their support throughout the process.

I hope that this book, dealing with the master calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah and the Islamic arts of the book within the context of conversations and encounters throughout the Mediterranean world, will be a valuable contribution to the field.

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Gülru Necipoğlu

Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversation with Renaissance in Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople

This article was first published in *Muqarnas* 29 (2012): 1-81.
The editor thanks Gülru Necipoğlu for graciously allowing us to reprint this article in this volume.

The conquest of Byzantine Constantinople by Sultan Mehmed II engendered a series of transcultural exchanges that took place in a dramatically changing world order. Perceived as a "metahistorical" event, the fall of the city in 1453 and its transformation into Ottoman Constantinople/Ḳosṭanṭiniyye gave rise to eschatological expectations for the emergence of a universal empire on the eve of the last days.[1] In this turbulent setting, a combination of apocalyptic fervor and battle for territory triggered competing projects for the renewal of the ancient Roman Empire through the reuniting of Rome with Constantinople, the "New Rome." These bold projects, promoted by successive popes of Rome and by the sultan of Constantinople, involved continually shifting political alliances, bringing together Christian and Muslim powers, in which Venice played a pivotal role. The expatriate Byzantine cardinal Bessarion (d. 1472) was a leading proponent of the papacy's attempts to reclaim Constantinople for a united Christendom that would reconcile the schism of the Latin and Greek Churches.[2] Meanwhile, Mehmed II (d. 1481) coveted Rome as the legendary Golden

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1 For the identification of Mehmed II as the Antichrist or as a precursor of the Antichrist, and the eschatological expectations that engendered an abundance of "pseudo-prophetic" apocalyptic literature after the fall of Constantinople, see Igor P. Medvedev, "The Fall of Constantinople in Fifteenth-Century Greek and Italian Humanistic Writing," *Bysantinska Sällskapet Bulletin* 17 (1999): 5–15; Agostino Pertusi, *Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo: Significato e ruolo storico delle profezie sulla caduta di Costantinopoli in Oriente e in Occidente*, ed. Enrico Moroni (Rome, 1988), 35–129; Benjamin Lellouch and Stéphane Yerasimos, eds., *Les traditions apocalyptiques au tournant de la chute de Constantinople* (Paris, 1999). The writings of George Gennadios Scholarios, who served as Greek Orthodox patriarch under Mehmed II, are filled with references to the proximity of the end of the world, which his *Chronographia* calculates as due to happen in 1492: see Marie-Hélène Congourdeau, "Byzance et la fin du monde: Courants de pensée apocalyptiques sous les Paléologues," in Lellouch and Yerasimos, *Les traditions apocalyptiques*, 55–97. Two years after the fall of Constantinople, the Sufi scholar ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Bistami (d. ca. 1455), a protégé of Murad II and Mehmed II, predicted the imminent end of time in his universal history by quoting the Prophet's hadith that "the Last Hour will not commence until Constantinople and its cities have been conquered": cited and discussed in Cornell H. Fleischer, "Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences: Prophecies at the Ottoman Court in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in *Falnama: The Book of Omens*, ed. Massumeh Farhad, Serpil Bağcı et al. (Washington, D.C., 2009), 232–36. See also Feridun M. Emecen, *Fetih ve Kıyamet 1453* (Istanbul, 2012).

2 *Bessarione e l'Umanesimo*, ed. Gianfranco Fiaccadori (exhibition catalogue, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana) (Venice, 1994); Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 36–38.

Apple whose conquest, according to medieval Islamic apocalyptic prophecies, reinforced by recent favorable omens, was to follow that of Constantinople.[3] Soon after having seized Otranto in southern Italy, however, the sultan died without accomplishing his ultimate goal, just as grandiose plans for papal crusades failed to bring about the hoped for recapture of Constantinople.

The rhetoric of crusade and jihad thus formed the backdrop to the Ottoman sultan's artistic conversations with Renaissance Italy, which were punctuated by moments of diplomatic alliance and gift exchange with such city-states as Rimini, Naples, Florence, and Venice. These intercultural transactions revolved around networks of shared political and commercial interests, which often proved more compelling than reciprocal official discourses reviling the antithetical "other." It is against this background that I will attempt to situate the patronage of Italianate art at the court of Mehmed II, a subject that has been scrutinized in specialized studies since the nineteenth century and recently revisited in publications seeking to re-orient the Renaissance between East and West.[4] Although the sultan occupies a prominent position as an active participant in Renaissance cultural production in these "encounter" studies, the implications of his interaction with Italian visual culture remain elusive, as do the contextual meanings of artworks created for him in this foreign manner.[5]

My aim here is to reinterpret Mehmed II's agency as a patron of the arts by arguing that he deliberately negotiated the expanding Western and Eastern cultural horizons of his empire through visual cosmopolitanism and creative translation. The importation of foreign artistic idioms, accompanied by the creation of an indigenous aesthetics of fusion, contributed to the construction of a multifaceted imperial identity. As we shall see, the sultan enthusiastically engaged with diverse artistic traditions in refashioning his public persona and dynastic self-image upon the reconstructed stage of his new capital, which continued to be called Constantinople (Ḳosṭanṭiniyye), alongside the popular name of Istanbul (from the Greek *eis tēn polin*, "to the city"). Strategically situated at the juncture of two continents and two seas, this was the ideal center for a world empire combining Turco-Mongol, Perso-Islamic, and Roman-Byzantine traditions of universal sovereignty. The cultivation of heterogeneous visual idioms—Ottoman, Timurid-Turkmen, Roman-Byzantine, and Italian Renaissance—resonated with the cultural pluralism of Constantinople-Istanbul, a site of encounter that was repopulated with a multiethnic and multiconfessional community to promote international trade and diplomacy. Transformed into an ecumenical Islamic capital and eventually housing the Greek and Armenian patriarchates along with a Jewish rabbinate for religious minorities, the city also featured a semi-auton-

3 Eschatological hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad had long ago included the successive conquests of Constantinople and Rome by Muslim armies among the signs of the last days, when Islam would reign triumphant as the universal religion: see Stéphane Yerasimos, *La fondation de Constantinople et de Sainte-Sophie dans les traditions turques: Légendes d'empire* (Istanbul, 1990), 183–99; Maurice Canard, "Les expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'histoire et dans la légende," *Journal Asiatique* 208 (1926): 106; Wilfred Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥimṣ in the Umayyad Age," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31, 2 (1986): 155. Supernatural signs, oracles, and auguries before and during the siege of Constantinople, to which Mehmed II "gave great weight," are mentioned in Kritovoulos of Imbros, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Charles T. Riggs (Princeton, N.J., 1954), 23, 58–59. In 1454, Niccolò Sagundino reported that, on the basis of old prophecies and omens, the conqueror of Constantinople aspired to subjugate Rome. This report is cited with other references to Mehmed II's ambition to conquer Rome in Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, ed. William C. Hickman, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton, N.J., 1978), 216, 494–95. For the related Ottoman legend of the "Golden Apple" (*ḳızıl elma*), see Lellouch and Yerasimos, *Les traditions apocalyptiques*. Rome is identified as the "*ḳızıl elma*" in the late fifteenth-century Turkish marginal captions of a Greek manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Alexander Romance*, which was inherited by the Ottomans after the conquest of Trebizond in 1461: see facsimile in Nicolette S. Trahoulias, *The Greek Alexander Romance* (Athens, 1997), 129. Curiously, this is the only known version of the *Alexander Romance* that deals with Alexander's conquest of Rome; for the dating of the captions, which were probably added in Mehmed II's court, see n. 36 below.

4 Early studies include Louis Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini et Sultan Mohammed II: Notes sur le séjour du peintre vénitien à Constantinople (1479–1480)* (Paris, 1888); Josef von Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler zu Konstantinopel im XV. und XVI. Jahrhundert*, vol. 1, *Italienische Künstler am Hofe Muhammeds II des Eroberers, 1451–1481*, Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Denkschriften 62, 1 (Vienna, 1918); and Franz Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen zur Geschichte Südosteuropas und der Levante*, 3 vols. (Munich, 1962–76). These studies culminated in the unpublished dissertation by Julian Raby, which laid the groundwork for all subsequent scholarship: Julian Raby, "El Gran Turco: Mehmed the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts of Christendom" (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1980). More recent studies on Mehmed II's artistic patronage include Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York, 1991); Susan Spinale, "The Portrait Medals of Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1451–81)" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2003); and Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park, Pa., 2009). Examples of cross-cultural studies that emphasize the sultan's patronage of Renaissance art are: Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art between East and West* (London, 2000); Gerald MacLean, ed., *Re-orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2005). Also see *Venice and the Islamic World, 828–1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (exhibition catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art) (New York, 2007).

5 Scholars have either romanticized Mehmed II as a Renaissance prince steeped in humanist culture or viewed him as an Oriental despot whose interest in Renaissance culture was primarily motivated by utilitarian, military goals. Such mutually exclusive assessments are being challenged in recent publications, but interpretations of Mehmed II's patronage of Italian art and artists continue to be controversial. One of several studies to question the Italian Renaissance's influences on Mehmed II's architectural patronage is: Uğur Tanyeli, "Batılılaşma Öncesinin Türk Mimarlığında Batı Etkileri (14–17. yüzyıl)," in *Türk Kültüründe Sanat ve Mimari: Klasik Dönem Sanatı ve Mimarlığı Üzerine Denemeler*, ed. Mehmet Saçlıoğlu and Gülsün Tanyeli (Istanbul, 1993), 157–88.

omous Latin district (Pera/Galata) for Italian merchant communities, whose members worshipped at their own Catholic churches. To avoid a loss of trade, the Genoese Signoria had instructed its ambassador in 1454 to advise the sultan of the fame he would acquire by restoring the sacked and depopulated city to its former glory, "for as much honor is to be gained in renovation as in conquest." The accomplishment of that goal is celebrated in the 1496 copy of Mehmed II's *waqfiyya* in Arabic recording his pious endowments. Probably dating to the last years of his reign (around 1478 to 1481), this document refers to the city's reconstruction as the "greater jihad" (*al-jihād al-akbar*), surpassing the "lesser jihad" of its conquest. The sultan's Italian courtier, Giovanni Maria Angiolello of Vicenza (who between 1474 and 1481 held a post in the treasury department of the imperial chancellery), described the revitalized cosmopolis with its mosques, churches, and synagogues as an aggregate of quarters resettled by deported "peoples conducted from different lands," each with their own "languages, costumes, and customs." In this multinational microcosm of empire, the Italianate (*firengī*, Frankish) manner was just one of several visual modes deployed individually and fused synthetically in a conscious celebration of cultural hybridity.[6]

Mehmed II's patronage of art and architecture was shaped not only by his personal tastes but also by the new cultural and geopolitical identity that he and his advisers were forging for the expanding Ottoman Empire, a polity mediating "between two worlds" at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. He particularly favored the practice of *devşirme* (conscription of Christian youth into the janissary corps or palace service), as noted by an Italian observer: "In this he shows remarkable tenacity of purpose, as if by his own efforts he wished to produce a new people." A contemporary chronicler reports that the sultan followed the dynastic policy of choosing youths "according to their merits" from newly conquered territories "to be in his bodyguard and to be constantly near him," or to serve as his palace pages. The male and female "youths of high family" and "splendid physique" whom he selected for his entourage after the fall of Constantinople had been well trained in the Byzantine royal palace and were distinguished by "their superiority among their race in every sort of good trait." Also wanting to "have some Latins at his court," the sultan chose for his palace the captured nephew of the former podestà of Pera and "a Venetian," whom he would not allow to be ransomed after the city's conquest.[7] By systematically promoting *ḳuls* (Christian-born slave servants converted to Islam) to the highest administrative posts of his increasingly centralized state, Mehmed II created a polyglot ruling elite no longer dominated by the Muslim-born Çandarlı family of grand viziers. His viziers and grand viziers were predominantly *kul*s, and thus not entirely "foreign" to his non-Muslim subjects and the European visitors to his court: the aristocratic Byzantino-Serbian Mahmud Pasha Angelović (grand vizier, 1456–68 and 1472–74), whose Christian brother was a courtier of the Serbian Despot; the Greek Rum Mehmed Pasha, who married a Turkic princess from the Anatolian Seljuk dynasty, which was destroyed by Mehmed II; and two descendants of the Byzantine Palaiologan dynasty, Has Murad Pasha and his brother Mesih Pasha. The sultan's provincial governors included such renegades as the Italo-Greek Iskender Beg, the offspring of a Levantine Genoese father and a Greek mother from Trebizond. He had married the daughter of a Genoese merchant from Pera, where his brother continued to live as a Christian merchant dressed *all'italiana*.[8]

6 As early as the tenth century, al-Masʿudi mentions that the Greeks referred to Constantinople as "*Stanbūlin*"; for historical names of the city whose present-day official name is Istanbul, see Halil İnalcık, *Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition* (henceforth *EI2*) (Leiden, 1954–2002), s.v. "Istanbul." Instructions given to the Genoese ambassador are cited in Raby, "El Gran Turco," 237. An early version of Mehmed II's *waqfiyya* (ca. 1472–74, in Arabic) was revised ca. 1478–81; the no-longer-extant revision was renewed by Bayezid II in 901 (1496). The lost endowment deed is datable to after 1478, since the copy of it reissued by Bayezid II mentions the outer fortress of the Topkapı Palace, completed that year, and does not refer to the keeper of Mehmed's posthumously built mausoleum (ca. 1481): see Tahsin Öz, ed., *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden des Sultans Mehmed II. Fatih* (Istanbul, 1935), 10. On the sultan's repopulation of the deserted city, his policies of urbanization, and the building projects of his grandees, see Giovan Maria Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, ed. Cristina Bazzolo (Vicenza, 1982), 24, 37; Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*; İnalcık, "Istanbul"; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*. For references to the "*firengī*" visual mode in later Ottoman and Safavid primary sources, see Gülru Necipoğlu, "L'idée de décor dans les régimes de visualité islamiques," in *Purs décors? Arts de l'Islam, regards du XIXe siècle: Collections des arts décoratifs*, ed. Rémi Labrusse (exhibition catalogue) (Paris, 2007), 10–23.

7 The sultan's wish to produce "a new people" is mentioned in the report of Giacomo Languschi incorporated into Zorzi Dolfin's Venetian chronicle: J. R. Melville Jones, trans., *The Siege of Constantinople 1453: Seven Contemporary Accounts* (Amsterdam, 1972), 128. The Latins selected for the sultan's palace are mentioned in the 1453 letter of Angelo Giovanni Lomellino, the former podestà of Pera, to his brother, in Jones, *Siege of Constantinople*, 135. The youths recruited after the fall of Constantinople are described in Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 85–86.

8 Before besieging Constantinople, the sultan instituted reforms in the janissary army: see Halil İnalcık, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar I* (Ankara, 1987), 116–18n227a. Upon executing his father's grand vizier, Çandarlı Halil Pasha, in 1454, Mehmed II appointed only grand viziers of *ḳul* origin, with the exception of the last one. For his viziers and grand viziers, see İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, vol. 2, İstanbul'un Fethinden Kanunî Sultan Süleyman'ın Ölümüne Kadar, 3rd ed. (Ankara, 1975), 529–38; Theoharis Stavrides, *The Sultan of Vezirs: The Life and Times of the Ottoman Grand Vezir Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453–1474)* (Leiden, 2001), 51–70. Iskender Beg's genealogy is outlined in I. Ursu, ed., *Historia turchesca (1300–1514)* (Bucharest, 1909), 7. This compilation, attributed by Ursu to Donado da Lezze, contains substantial sections copied

Mehmed II's intimate circle featured the sons of defeated rulers, among whom Angiolello counts the princes of Trebizond, Morea, Bosnia, and Wallachia. His Christian stepmother, Mara Branković, was a Serbian princess, whose sister Katerina (married to Count Ulrich of Cilli) became the sister-in-law of the Habsburg monarch Frederick III (d. 1493), the last Holy Roman Emperor to be crowned by a pope in Rome in 1452. The sultan's cherished stepmother and such well-connected courtiers as Mahmud Pasha Angelović played an active role as intermediaries in the Ottoman court's diplomatic relations with the West.[9] Artistic contacts with Italy were often negotiated through reciprocal gift-bearing embassies and the international networks of Greek humanists and Italian merchant-bankers affiliated with the Ottoman court. Generally apprised beforehand as to what kinds of artifacts would be appreciated, ambassadors and consuls presented carefully tailored diplomatic gifts that sharpened the discriminating European tastes of Mehmed II.[10] Moreover, the city-state of Ragusa (now Dubrovnik), which began to pay the Ottoman court an annual tribute after 1458, functioned as an "open window to the West," supplying books and objects, including "images," that were ordered on occasion for the sultan and his intimates.[11]

or derived from Angiolello: cited henceforth as Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia turchesca*. A list of passages attributable to Angiolello is provided in Pierre A. MacKay, "The Content and Authorship of the *Historia Turchesca*," in İstanbul Üniversitesi 550. Yıl, Uluslararası Bizans ve Osmanlı Sempozyumu (XV. Yüzyıl): *30–31 Mayıs 2003 = 550th Anniversary of the Istanbul University: International Byzantine and Ottoman Symposium (XVth Century)*, ed. Sümer Atasoy (Istanbul, 2004), 213–21. For Iskender Beg (later Pasha), who rose to the vizierate under Bayezid II, also see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 358–59, 361, 508; Hedda Reindl, *Männer um Bāyezīd: Eine prosopographischer Studie über die Epoche Sultan Bāyezīds II. (1481–1512)* (Berlin, 1983), 240–61.

9 Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 133–34. For the diplomatic contacts of Mahmud Pasha and Mara Branković, see Domenico Malipiero, "Annali veneti dell'anno 1457 al 1500," *Archivio Storico Italiano* 7, 1 (1843): 67, 71, 81, 107–8; Stavrides, *Sultan of Vezirs*, 110–11, 162, 214, 229, 248, 252–53; Maria Pia Pedani Fabris, *In nome del Gran Signore: Inviati ottomani a Venezia dalla caduta di Costantinopoli alla guerra di Candia* (Venice, 1994) 13, 24–25, 104.

10 In a letter dated April 5, 1467, King Ferrante of Naples instructed Bernardo Lopis, his ambassador to the pasha of Albania and Mehmed II, to find out the "things that would be pleasing" as gifts"; this document is discussed in Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 120–22. In instructions addressed to him on July 5, 1479, the Florentine consul in Pera was informed that Antonio de' Medici was being sent as ambassador to the sultan with gifts based on the consul's recommendation: "con tale ordine di presente, secondo il ricordo tuo, che speriamo sarà bene accepto." See Giuseppe Müller, *Documenti sulle relazioni delle città toscane coll'oriente cristiano e coi Turchi fino all'anno MDXXXI* (Florence, 1879), 226.

11 In 1466–67, Grand Vizier Mahmud Pasha ordered Latin translations and commentaries on the medical treatise of Avicenna (Ibn Sina) from the rector of Ragusa for the Italo-Jewish royal physician Yakub Pasha (Jacopo da Gaeta), along with objects and "images" (*obrazi*) desired by the sultan: see Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler*, 16–20; Franz Babinger, "Ja'qûb Pascha, ein Leibarzt Mehmed's II: Leben und Schicksale des Maestro Jacopo aus Gaeta," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 26 (1951): 93–94; Stavrides, *Sultan of Vezirs*, 235, 244–47, 252–53.

The artistic cosmopolitanism of Post-Mongol Islamic court cultures

To be sure, Mehmed II was neither the first nor the last Muslim ruler to display an eagerness for Western artistic and technological innovations. Already in the fourteenth century, Europeanate figural wall paintings had been incorporated into the aniconic decorations of the Alhambra palace in Granada, an apparently widespread practice in Nasrid architecture that the North African scholar Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) took to be a sign of foreign domination. In the East, the Mongols, the Ilkhanids, and their Timurid-Turkmen successors also showed a readiness to copy or refashion elements of Italian, French, and Chinese art, fused with the medieval Islamic visual heritage. The Mongol capitals included artisans recruited from China and Islamic lands, and even a captured French silversmith named Guillaume Boucher, who created a fountain that dispensed various liquors at the audience hall of the palace of Möngke Khan (r. 1251–58) in Karakorum, which was itself composed of edifices in diverse styles. In similar fashion, Timur (r. 1360–1405) transported artisans from cities he conquered in Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, and India to his capital, Samarqand, whose suburbs were named after the major cities of Islam: Damascus, Baghdad, Sultaniya, Shiraz, and Cairo.[12]

The great-grandfather of Mehmed II, Bayezid I (r. 1389–1402), known as the "Thunderbolt" (Yıldırım), shared the artistic cosmopolitanism of post-Mongol rulers in the eastern Islamic lands. He employed a Genoese architect for the construction of fortifications and demanded a ransom of figural tapestries in exchange for the captive son of the Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Bold, after crushing the crusader armies at Nicopolis in 1396.[13] Jacques

12 Overlooking the reciprocal artistic exchange between allied Muslim and non-Muslim polities in fourteenth-century Iberia, Ibn Khaldun (d. 1382) wrote: "The [Muslim] Spaniards are found to assimilate themselves to the Galician nations in their dress, their emblems, and most of their customs and conditions. This goes so far that they even draw pictures on the walls and (have them) in buildings and houses. The intelligent observer will draw from this the conclusion that it is a sign of domination (by others)." Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, 3 vols. (Princeton, N.J., 1980), 1:300. For the Mongols and Ilkhanids, see *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353*, eds. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (exhibition catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art) (New York, 2002), 27, 112, 165. On Mongol capitals and Samarqand, see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 250; A mad Ibn 'Arabshāh, *Tamerlane, or Timur, the Great Amir*, trans. J. H. Sanders (London, 1936), 309–10.

13 An unnamed Genoese architect of the Di Negro family, who built a castle for Bayezid I on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus (ca. 1397), is mentioned in Franz Babinger, "Relazioni visconteo-sforzesche con la corte ottomana durante il sec. XV," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 3:191. Later on, the "Genoese nobleman" Salagruzo de Negro constructed for Bayezid I's son, Prince Süleyman, "an enormous tower on the promontory opposite

de Helly, the Turkish-speaking messenger whom Bayezid I sent to France to negotiate the ransom, had served for three years in the army of the sultan's father, Murad I (r. 1362–89), before changing sides and being captured at the battle of Nicopolis. This messenger reported that the sultan would be especially delighted to receive Arras tapestries depicting "appropriate ancient histories," for he and his grandees had enough precious cloths of gold and silk, and found more pleasure in "novel things." Hence, the ransom for the captured prince, carried on six packhorses, included two beasts of burden laden with the finest-quality Arras tapestries representing "the history of King Alexander [the Great], with the major part of his life and his conquests."[14]

The selection of this particular subject was no doubt informed by Bayezid I's ambition to emulate the Macedonian empire-builder. According to the chronicle of Jean Froissart (d. ca. 1405), in a speech delivered to his principal grandees upon winning the battle of Nicopolis, the sultan announced his desire "to reign like Alexander of Macedonia, who ruled the entire world over twelve years and from whose blood and lineage he was descended."[15] Before releasing the captive prince (the future Duke of Burgundy, John the Fearless), he is said to have boasted that he was "born to rule the whole world" and would soon feed his horse oats on the altar of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.[16] This premature imperial project, along with Bayezid I's ongoing siege of Constantinople, would thereafter be cut short by Timur, to whom the Byzantine emperor and the Turkmen principalities of Anatolia had appealed for help. One of the Alexander tapestries seems to have been among the booty that Timur took from Bayezid I's royal treasury in Bursa and transported to Samarqand upon defeating him in 1402. The chronicler Ibn ʿArabshah (d. 1496) ranked this ten-cubit-wide "curtain" with lifelike naturalistic figural representations as "one of the wonders of the world," whose "fame is naught to the sight of it."[17]

Mehmed II's cosmopolitan tastes fit in comfortably with those of his forebears and his Timurid-Turkmen contemporaries, with whom he shared a Turco-Mongol ideal of universal sovereignty. Nevertheless, his enthusiasm for Italian artistic innovations and naturalistic representations went far beyond an eclectic whim for "novel things," as is sometimes presumed. The sultan brought about a paradigmatic shift by incomparably extending the Western horizons of the post-Mongol Islamic artistic tradition, previously characterized by a predominantly Eastern gaze focused on China. It was not until the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the Safavid and Mughal courts would engage in conversations with Europeanate visual culture, each in their own specific ways. But these later artistic exchanges lacked the distinguishing characteristic of the receptivity of the conqueror of Constantinople to the Western tradition, namely references to the Roman imperial heritage (*Romanitas*) of his empire. Mehmed II's mode of engagement with this artistic tradition was unique in its responsiveness to the combined classical Mediterranean heritage of Byzantium and the Latin West, through which he sought to articulate his own global vision of empire. Rather than stress a continuity with the weakened late Byzantine state, which he had brought to an end, the Constantinopolitan models that he set his sights on harkened back to the glorious Late Antique past (under such emperors as Constantine the Great [r. 306–37] and Justinian I [r. 527–65]).

Mehmed II's architectural commissions, to which I shall turn later, were unprecedented in their selective integration of ancient Roman-Byzantine and contemporary Italian Renaissance elements, which he apparently regarded as having an interconnected genealogy. He was also the only Muslim ruler of his time to adopt a Western pictorial language for self-representation and, by implication, for the representation of Ottoman dynastic identity. His naturalistic oil-painted and medallic portraits appropriated two media

Gallipoli": see Harry J. Magoulias, ed., *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas: An Annotated Translation of "Historia Turco-Byzantina"* (Detroit, 1975), 106. The tapestries are mentioned in Jardine and Brotton, *Global Interests*, 76.

14 For Jacques de Helly, see Jean Froissart, *Collection des chroniques nationales françaises: Chroniques de Froissart*, ed. J. A. Buchon, 14 vols. (Paris, 1824–26), 13:401, 408, 412, 417. When Jacques was asked what sorts of gifts would be appropriate, he replied that the sultan "prendroit grand plaisance à voir draps de hautes lices ouvrés à Arras en Picardie, mais (pourvu) qu'ils fussent de bonnes histoires anciennes." He added that the sultan and his grandees "prenoient en nouvelles choses leurs ébattements et plaisance": Froissart, *Collection des chroniques*, 13:420; the transportation of tapestries and other gifts is mentioned on p. 422.

15 Froissart, *Collection des chroniques*, 13:404. German humanists linked the Germans and Turks to a common Macedonian ancestry: Alexander the Great had fathered the Saxon race, which subsequently had a Christian German and a pagan Turkish branch. See Frank L. Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (Baltimore, 1971), 292.

16 Froissart, *Collection des chroniques*, 14:71.

17 The tapestry was "decorated with various pictures of herbs, buildings and leaves, also of reptiles, and with figures of birds, wild beasts and forms of old men, young men, women and children and painted inscriptions and rarities of distant countries and joyous instruments of music and rare animals exactly portrayed with different hues, of perfect beauty with limbs firmly jointed: with their mobile faces they seemed to hold secret converse with you and the fruits seemed to approach as though bending to be plucked": see Ibn ʿArabshāh, *Tamerlane*, 216–17. An inventory of the Inner Treasury of the Topkapı Palace dated 1505 cites a "European figural tapestry" (*firengī musavver perde*), but it is unknown whether this was one of the Alexander tapestries sent to Bayezid I: Topkapı Palace Archives, D. 10026, reproduced as an appendix in Tahsin Öz, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Kılavuzu II* (Istanbul, 1938), document XXI, 8.

that had only recently been invented in the Latin West. Moreover, his favorite court artist, Sinan Beg, was specifically trained in portraiture (a genre for which there was no preexisting Ottoman tradition), by a European master called Maestro Pavli. This master has plausibly been identified as the painter and medal designer Paolo da Ragusa, born in Dubrovnik, who was a workshop assistant of Donatello in Padua (near Venice) in 1447 and of Pisanello in Naples around 1450. Sinan Beg, who "grew up" in Mehmed II's court, was either sent abroad for training or trained with Maestro Pavli in the sultan's palace.[18] This Ottoman court painter, who enjoyed particular "favor and influence" with the sultan himself, mediated the visual cultures of East and West with his own pupils (such as Şiblizade Ahmed of Bursa), by translating the Italian manner to the indigenous medium of miniature painting on paper.[19] In fact, because he could so easily navigate between both cultures, he was sent as ambassador to Venice in 1480, during Gentile Bellini's tenure as Venetian "cultural ambassador" at the Ottoman court. The official position of Sinan Beg as court interpreter (*turziman* [dragoman] *del gran signor*) implies his linguistic fluency in Italian, which must have paralleled his skills in visual translation.[20]

Unlike contemporary Muslim rulers of the Mamluk court in Cairo, the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu courts in Tabriz, and the Timurid court in Herat, Mehmed II insistently (though not always successfully) sought the services of artists and architects from Italy through highly visible diplomatic channels that openly publicized his Western cultural orientation in Christian Europe. The documented embassies exchanged between European courts and the rulers of Cairo and Tabriz at that time did not engender such a demand for foreign talent (except for the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan's failed attempt to procure military engineers and masons from his Venetian allies for a campaign against the Ottoman sultan). Mehmed II's patronage of Italian artists, who intimately interacted with him, was partly an extension of his foreign diplomatic relations, a very special kind of "gift exchange" meant to promote intercultural bonding and the formation of political alliances.[21] Around that time, the king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus (r. 1458–90), and the grand Duke of Moscow, Ivan III (r. 1462–1505), similarly mediated their political and cultural relations with Western Europe

18 Contemporary rulers in Renaissance Italy often sponsored "study trips" of court artists to journey abroad and train with celebrated masters; likewise, "outsiders" were invited to school local court artists in their specialized skills. It is not known whether Sinan Beg was a convert or Muslim-born, nor is it known when and where he was trained by his European master. For a detailed consideration of various possibilities and Venetian documents related to Sinan Beg's trading activities, see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 125–48. The late sixteenth-century Ottoman historian Mustafa Āli reports that the "figural painter (*muṣavvir*)" Sinan Beg, who grew up in the palace of Mehmed II, was "the pupil of the European (*efrencī*) named Mastori Pavli, who was one of the European masters (*firenk üstādlarından*) raised and nurtured in Venice and became outstanding among the painters (*naḳḳāşān*) in his field; and the aforementioned Pavli, in turn, was the pupil of the skilled designer (*ressām*) named Damiyan." Sinan Beg, the "best of the Ottoman painters (*naḳḳāşān-i Rūm*) in portraiture (şebih yazma)," had a pupil named Şiblizade Ahmed, who was from Bursa; see Mustafa Āli, *Menāḳıb-i Hünerverān*, ed. İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnal (Istanbul, 1926), 68. A recent translation identifies this pupil as "the best of the artists of Rum in human portraiture"; it is true that the passage is somewhat ambiguous, but I prefer my translation above, since the entry refers to the leading master Sinan Beg: *Mustafa ʿÂli's Epic Deeds of Artists: A Critical Edition of the Earliest Ottoman Text about the Calligraphers and Painters of the Islamic World*, ed., trans, and commented on by Esra Akın-Kıvanç (Leiden, 2011), 273–74, 407–8. Karabacek and Raby have suggested that "Mastori Pavli" was probably Paolo da Ragusa. Karabacek tentatively identified this artist's teacher as Benedetto da Maiano. On the basis of documents from the Dubrovnik archives, Raby proposed that the teacher of "Maestro Pavla/Paolo/Paulo" may have been his partner "Damianus," with whom he collaborated in Dubrovnik during the 1470s: see Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler*, 25–26, 31–32; Raby, "El Gran Turco," 128–35. For Paolo da Ragusa, see Luke Syson and Dillian Gordon, *Pisanello, Painter to the Renaissance Court* (exhibition catalogue, National Gallery) (London, 2001–2), 231–32. All his medals, close in style to those of Pisanello, date from 1450 and were made in Naples, where Pisanello was resident or from which he had just departed.

19 For Sinan Beg's foremost pupil, Şiblizade Ahmed of Bursa, see n. 18 above. Venetian documents from 1480 cited in Raby, "El Gran Turco," refer to Sinan Beg as "*el pentor de questo Illustrissimo Signor*," who should be treated well because he was favored by the sultan (p. 331); "*Sinam-bei…el qual ha gratia et auctorita apresso el signor turco*" (p. 337); "*depentor del signor turco*" (p. 336), and "*turziman* [i.e., dragoman, interpreter] *del gran signor*" (p. 339). Sinan Beg's undated gravestone in the Bursa Museum refers to him as the painter of Mehmed II, implying that he was no longer a court painter under Bayezid II: "the possessor of the tomb, the late, the pardoned, the fortunate, the witness (or martyr), the painter of Sultan Mehmed, Sinan Beg ibn Saʿati" (*ṣāḥibü'l-ḳabr el-merḥūm el-maġfūr el-ṣaʿīd el-şehīd naḳḳāş-ı Sulṭān Meḥemmed Sinān Beg ibn Saʿātī*). For the full inscription, which is followed by an Arabic pious phrase, see Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi*, 2:617n3. Rogers misreads "possessor of the tomb" as "keeper of the royal parasol" (*ṣāḥib el-ḳubbe el-sulṭāniyye*) and interprets the patronymic "ibn Saʿātī" as "son of the clockmaker," but it could also mean "son of the timekeeper": see J. M. Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror: Between East and West," in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 89.

20 For Sinan Beg's position as court interpreter, see n. 19 above. His 1480 diplomatic mission in Venice is recorded in Pedani Fabris, *In nome del Gran Signore*, 41, 62, 90, 107.

21 For Uzun Hasan's diplomatic relations with European courts, see Şerafettin Turan, "Fâtih Mehmet–Uzun Hasan Mücadelesi ve Venedik," *Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* 3, 4–5 (1965): 63–138; Barbara von Palombini, *Bündniswerben abendländischer Mächte um Persien, 1453–1600* (Wiesbaden, 1968), 8–37; Enrico Cornet, *Le guerre dei Veneti nell'Asia, 1470–1474* (Vienna, 1856); Guglielmo Berchet, ed., *La repubblica di Venezia e la Persia* (Turin, 1865).
The Venetians sent military engineers, masons, and weapons to Uzun Hasan in 1473, but they failed to reach their destination. These are mentioned in Benedetto Dei, *La Cronica dell'anno 1400 all'anno 1500*, ed. Roberto Barducci (Florence, 1985), 170. Venetian cultural exchanges with the Mamluk world are analyzed in Deborah Howard, *Venice and the East: The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture, 1100–1500* (New Haven, 2000), and Deborah Howard, "Venice, the Bazaar of Europe," in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 12–31. Also see Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "European Arts and Crafts at the Mamluk Court," *Muqarnas* 21 (2004): 45–54. Bellini's rank as Mehmed II's "court intimate" is discussed in Alan Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul: Myths and Misunderstandings," in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 115.

through invitations to artists and architects from Italy. The selective receptivity of these three courts, situated along the eastern frontiers of Europe, to Italianate art and *all'antica* forms resonating with the Roman imperial heritage would diminish by the late sixteenth century with the gradual hardening of East-West boundaries. Even though their artistic exchanges with Western Europe hardly ceased, the nature of those interactions would never again be the same.[22]

Global ambitions and the cult of fame

Before turning to works of art and architecture created for Mehmed II, I would like to focus on the global ambitions that colored his cultural orientations. The universalism of the sultan's geopolitical vision carries, in my view, the echoes of what was arguably the most newsworthy event of his childhood: the Ferrara-Florence Council of 1438–39, during which the fantasy of resurrecting the ancient Roman Empire was rehearsed (fig. 1). The council had been convened by the Venetian pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431–47) to reunite the Latin and Greek Churches in preparation for a universal crusade. The penultimate emperor of Byzantium, John VIII Palaiologos (r. 1425–48), whom the pope invited to Italy, attended the council with a huge retinue, despite the protests of his Ottoman overlord, Murad II (r. 1421–44, 1446–51). One of the courtiers who accompanied the emperor, the Veneto-Cretan Giovanni Torcello, had been attached to Murad II's court in Edirne (Adrianople) for twelve years before changing loyalties. At Ferrara, the Byzantine legate informed the Duke of Milan that the Council would revive the Roman Empire by uniting the divided world monarchy (*divisa orbis monarchia*) with the ecclesiastical monarchy (*monarchia ecclesiastica*). Upon reclaiming the Roman world empire (*monarchia orbis*) that had been usurped by the Germans, the emperor of Byzantium would make the Duke of Milan his vicar in the West (*Vicario dell'Impero nell'Occidente*), with the pope representing the universal church.[23] The aim of the Council's global imperial project was not just the reunification of the two Churches but also the joining of the First and Second Rome, in a single sovereign entity.

Affiliated with the papal court after having attended the Council, Cardinal Bessarion dedicated his career to the twin causes of Church union and crusade. These goals informed the anti-Ottoman iconography of

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1. Antonio Averlino (Filarete), bronze doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome: narrative panel representing the Council of Florence, with Emperor John VIII Palaiologos and delegations of the Eastern Churches capitulating to Pope Eugenius IV on issues of dogma, 1441–45.

Pisanello's medal of the Byzantine monarch, identified by Greek inscriptions as "John, Emperor (*basileus*) and Autocrat (*autokrator*) of the Romans, the Palaiologos." The equestrian image of the emperor on the reverse has been interpreted as an allusion to the Christian militarism of a "new Saint Eustace" turned towards a cross symbolizing the union of the Greek and

22 Each of these three rulers sought the services of the Bolognese architect-engineer Aristotele Fioravanti, who visited Hungary and Russia but refused the sultan's invitation: see Julian Raby, "Pride and Prejudice: Mehmed the Conqueror and the Italian Portrait Medal," *Studies in the History of Art* 21 (1987): 189–90; A. Ghisetti Giavarina, *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, s.v. "Fioravanti (Fierevanti), Aristotele." The 1472 marriage by proxy in Rome of Ivan III to the niece of the last Byzantine emperor, Sophia (Zoe) Palaiologina, accelerated Russian artistic contacts with Italy. Likewise, Matthias Corvinus's wedding to Beatrice of Aragon, the daughter of King Ferrante of Naples, crowned queen of Hungary in 1476, strengthened artistic exchanges with Italian courts. For artists and architects invited from Italy to these two courts, see Jolán Balogh, *Die Anfänge der Renaissance in Ungarn: Matthias Corvinus und die Kunst* (Graz, 1975); Jan Białostocki, *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1976); *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance in Ungarn 1458–1541* (exhibition catalogue) (Vienna, 1982); Evelyn Welch, "Between Italy and Moscow: Cultural Crossroads and the Culture of Exchange," in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Robert Muchembled, vol. 4, *Forging European Identities, 1400–1700*, ed. Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge, 2007), 59–99.

23 For Giovanni Torcello, see Franz Babinger, "Veneto-kretische Geistesstrebungen um die Mitte des XV. Jahrhunderts," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 3:237–39; the Byzantine legate's statement in Ferrara is cited in Babinger, "Relazioni visconteo-sforzesche con la Corte Ottomana durante il secolo XV," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 3:202–3n56. Previous members of the Palaiologan dynasty traveled to Europe to seek military aid against the Ottomans, including Manuel II, who went to Italy, Paris, and London between 1400 and 1402, and his son John, who in 1423 journeyed for a year in Italy and visited the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund: see *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans (exhibition catalogue, Metropolitan Museum of Art) (New York, New Haven, and London, 2004), 21, 535.

2

2. Pisanello, bronze medal of Emperor John VIII Palaiologos,ca. 1438–39. London, British Museum, GIII, Naples 9. (Photo: courtesy of the British Museum)

Latin Churches (fig. 2).[24] This widely circulated and frequently recast early medal is believed to have been among the exemplars that inspired Mehmed II's passion for lifelike medallic portraits. The reverse of another version of the same medal is said to have depicted a cross held by two hands, an even more explicit symbol of the union of the two Churches, adopted by Cardinal Bessarion as his personal heraldic emblem.[25]

Mehmed II's aspiration for grandiose deeds must have been fueled by his frustratingly brief first reign as a teenager (from 1444 to 1446), during which his father, Murad II, put an end to the ongoing sessions of the Ferrara-Florence Council when he defeated the crusader forces at Varna in 1444. Deposed by a faction that supported his peace-oriented father, who reclaimed the throne after a brief abdication, Mehmed spent the five-year interval between his two reigns dreaming of creating a world empire ruled from Constantinople. In this he was following in the footsteps of his great-grandfather, Bayezid I, after whom he named his oldest son and

24 Pisanello's bilingual signature in Greek and Latin suggests to me the Eastern and Western audiences for this medal. Its patronage has variously been ascribed to the ruler of Ferrara, the Pope, or the Byzantine emperor: see Syson and Gordon, *Pisanello*, 26-34, 113-14, 163, 195; Evans, *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, 527-36; Roberto Weiss, *Pisanello's Medallion of the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus* (London, 1966).

25 For the hypothesis that Pisanello's medal of John VIII must have been known at the Ottoman court, see Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 173. Some scholars have doubted the existence of the second version of the medal, which was struck in Florence in 1439 according to Paolo Giovio, who described it in 1551. But as Ginzburg observes, the description "is too precise, as well as historically too probable, to be set down as a mistake": see Carlo Ginzburg, *The Enigma of Piero: Piero della Francesca* (London, 1985), 44, 50n81. For the view that the second version of the medal may have never existed, see Fabrizio Lollini, "Bessarione e le arti figurative," in Fiaccadori, *Bessarione e l'Umanesimo*, 152.

eventual successor, Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512). After he was deposed, the crown prince acted as a ruler in his own right while serving as governor of Manisa (Magnesia) in western Anatolia, a region dotted by archaeological remains of classical antiquity. The period between his two reigns was perceived as an embarrassing episode and hence entirely omitted from panegyrical chronicles written for Mehmed II in Greek, Arabic, and Persian. The Persian *Ghazānāma-i Rūm* of his *shāhnāma*-writer Kaşifi even denies his dethronement, claiming that Murad II continued to remain subservient to his son in the course of an uninterrupted rule. During the five-year interregnum, the insubordinate prince independently conducted naval raids on Venetian territories in the Aegean (Negroponte and Nauplia), for which he was reprimanded by his father.[26] It was then that he developed a passion for reading the texts on history, geography, philosophy, and theology that further fueled the global ambitions of his second reign, which spanned three decades (1451–81).

Cosmopolitan cultural orientations and the sultan's image as the new Alexander

The Greco-Venetian humanist Niccolò Sagundino, who met the twenty-one-year-old conqueror of Constantinople during the peace negotiations of Venice in 1453, reported that the ruler was tutored daily by an Arabic-speaking philosopher, as well as by two physicians (*medicos*), one trained in Greek and the other in Latin. These physicians read texts on the history of the Spartans, Athenians, Romans, and Carthaginians to the sultan, who took Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar as his primary role models. Informed by his spies of the strife among the Italian states, Mehmed believed that crossing from Durazzo in Albania to Brindisi in southern Italy would present no difficulty. Encouraged by recent omens and old prophecies, he resolved to make him-

26 For the crown prince's naval raids and Kaşifi's Persian chronicle, see İnalcık, *Fatih Devri*, 102–10. Mehmed's dethronement is not mentioned in the Greek and Arabic chronicles dedicated to him by Kritovoulos (1467) and Karamani Mehmed Pasha (1480), respectively, which are discussed below. Another dynastic chronicle in Persian, *Tavārīkh-i Āl-i ʿOşmān*, which was commissioned by the sultan from Mevlana Şehdi and modeled on Firdawsi's *Shāhnāma*, is lost. The poet composed ten thousand couplets but died before completing it: see Gönül Tekin, "Fatih Devri Türk Edebiyatı," in İstanbul Armağanı: Fetih ve Fatih, ed. Mustafa Armağan (Istanbul, 1995), 207. The Ottoman Turkish chronicles of Mehmed II's reign by Kıvami and Tursun Beg were written posthumously, during Bayezid II's reign: Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 174–76. For an extant chronicle in Persian verse dedicated to Mehmed II, written between 1472 and 1474 by the Khorasanian poet Mir ʿAli b. Muzaffar al-Tusi, who lived in the Ottoman Empire for twenty-one years and adopted the penname Maʿālī (or Muʿālī), see Robert Anhegger, "Muʿâlî'nin Hünkârnâmesi," *Tarih Dergisi* 1 (1949): 145–66; Refet Yalçın Balata, "Hunkarnāma (Tavārikh-i Āl-i Osmān) Mīr Sayyīd ʿAlī b. Muzaffar-i Maʿālī" (Ph.D. diss., Istanbul University, 1992).

self the master of Rome and Italy.[27] In a similar report incorporated into a Venetian chronicle, Giacomo Languschi identified the sultan's two readers in Greek and Latin as, respectively, a "companion" of the antiquarian humanist Cyriac of Ancona and "another Italian." Mehmed met Cyriac of Ancona in 1444, during an audience given at the Edirne palace by his still-reigning father. In order to obtain safe conduct for archaeological travels, Cyriac was introduced to Murad II on that occasion by the influential Genoese alum merchant Francesco Draperio (the humanist was accompanied at that time by another Italian friend, Rafaele Castiglione). As the lessee of the alum mines in New Phocaea (Yeni Foça) along the Aegean coast, Francesco would subsequently develop close ties with Mehmed when the latter was stationed in nearby Manisa as crown prince (1446–51).[28]

The Latin reader is thought to have been Jacopo of Gaeta (Yakub Pasha), the Italo-Jewish physician of Murad II, who subsequently became Mehmed II's steadfast confidant, until the day of his death in 1481, occupying the posts of finance minister and vizier after converting to Islam.[29] An emissary of the Duke of Burgundy, who accompanied the Milanese ambassador to Murad II's palace in Edirne in 1433, describes the sultan's influential Jewish interpreter as fluent in Turkish and Italian, and notes that the city's residents included many Venetian, Catalan, Genoese, and Florentine merchants. Mehmed's unidentified Italian reader of Greek texts (perhaps Rafaele Castiglione) may also have been affiliated with the court of his father, who was known for developing cordial relations with the bustling international community of merchants residing in his capital, Edirne, and elsewhere. One of them was Lillo Ferducci, who resided in Gallipoli for twenty-four years during Murad II's reign before returning to Ancona. This prominent merchant paid homage to the sultan, who frequented his luxurious residence during visits to Gallipoli, by naming his son Othman after the Ottoman dynasty's eponymous founder. The Genoese merchant Iacopo de Promontorio, who spent twenty-five years at the courts of Murad II and Mehmed II, and the aforementioned Genoese alum merchant Francesco Draperio were on friendly terms with both sultans.[30]

These examples point to a certain degree of continuity in the cosmopolitan orientations of father and son, although that of Mehmed II would be propelled to unprecedented proportions following the conquest of Constantinople. According to Languschi's chronicle, the sultan's two Italian readers catered to his interest in ancient and contemporary history with readings from "Laertius, Herodotus, Livy, Quintus Curtius, the chronicles of the popes, the emperors, the kings of France, and the Lombards." His chief enthusiasms were history, geography, and the arts of war. He had a large map of Europe and avidly studied the geography of Italy, informing himself "of the places where Anchises and Aeneas and Antenor landed, where the seat of the pope is and that of the emperor, and how many kingdoms there are in Europe." The youthful ruler, who was "eager for fame as Alexander of Macedonia," declared that there must be only one empire and one religion in the world. He boasted that Alexander had marched into Asia with a smaller army than his own. Now times had changed, for he was marching from East to West, whereas formerly the "Occidentals had advanced into the Orient."[31]

27 Sagundino's report is published in Agostino Pertusi, ed., *La caduta di Costantinopoli*, 2 vols. (Verona, 1976), 2:126–41; cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 494–95.

28 Giacomo Languschi, "Excidio e presa di Costantinopoli nell'anno 1453 (dalla Cronica di Zorzi Dolfin)," in *Testi inediti e poco noti sulla caduta di Costantinopoli*, ed. Agostino Pertusi (Bologna, 1983), 172–74. The misconception that Cyriac of Ancona (d. 1452) was one of the sultan's readers has been put to rest by Raby, who provided a correct reading of Languschi's testimony: see Julian Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II," *Journal of the Courtauld and Warburg Institutes* 43 (1980): 242–46. For the reception at the Edirne palace, see Cyriac of Ancona, *Later Travels*, ed. Edward W. Bodnar (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 35. The unsuccessful Ottoman naval expedition against Chios in 1454 was undertaken "because of a debt of forty thousand gold coins, the price of alum, for the payment of which Francesco Draperio, one of the magistrates of Galata," had appealed to Mehmed II. The sultan subsequently discharged the debt of his Genoese protégé, who had accompanied the Ottoman fleet during that expedition; see Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas*, 246–50.

29 The Latin reader has been convincingly identified in Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona." For Jacopo's immense power as an intermediary in Mehmed II's commercial relations, particularly with Venice, see Babinger "Jaʿqûb Pascha, ein Leibarzt Mehmeds II"; Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 5, 107; also see n. 11 above. The Florentine merchant and political agent Benedetto Dei accompanied "the sultan's physician from Gaeta, who was Jewish" (*medicho di Ghaeta suo ebreo fu*) to Dubrovnik the year that city-state's annual tribute was raised to 5,000 ducats (probably ca. 1467): see Dei, *La cronica*, 121. Although some have assumed that Jacopo remained Jewish, Ottoman sources state that he converted to Islam before serving as finance minister and vizier; his conversion is also mentioned in Amiroutzes's *Dialogue*: see my paragraph corresponding to n. 59 below.

30 The Burgundian emissary's report is in Charles Schefer, ed., *Le voyage d'Outremer de Bertrandon de la Brocquière* (Paris, 1892), 171, 191. For Lillo Ferducci, see Şerafettin Turan, *Türkiye-İtalya İlişkileri I* (Istanbul, 1990), 317, and n. 46 below. Iacopo de Promontorio's *Recollecta* (ca. 1475) is published in Franz Babinger, ed., "Die Aufzeichnungen des Genuesen Iacopo de Promontorio de Campis über den Osmanenstaat um 1475," in *Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte,* Jahrg. 1956, Heft 8 (Munich, 1957). For Francesco Draperio, see n. 28 above. Sources recording Mehmed II's personal informants on Italian affairs are mentioned in nn. 73 and 74 below.

31 Languschi, "Excidio e presa di Costantinopoli," 172–74. Mordtmann saw a now-lost copy of Quintus Curtius Rufus's *Life of Alexander* in the Topkapı Palace Library: A. Mordtmann, "Verzeichnis der Handschriften in der Bibliothek Sr. Maj. des Sultans," *Philologus* 9 (1854): 582–83. For an extant fourteenth-century Greek manuscript of Diogenes Laertius's *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* in the palace library, mentioned by Languschi among the classical texts read to Mehmed II, see Adolf Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai, mit einem Verzeichnis der nichtislamischen Handschriften im Topkapu*

The Greek chronicle of Kritovoulos, the former Ottoman governor of Imbros (1456–66), similarly portrays the sultan as a neo-Alexander reversing the course of history by enacting the East's revenge upon the West. Like his model Thucydides, Kritovoulos wrote his *Historia* (ca. 1467) in exile, having moved to Istanbul following the Venetian occupation of his native island. His description of Mehmed II's reign translates into classical idiom the Ottoman cult of fame perpetuated by the sultan's dynastic chroniclers, as well as by the minstrels who sang oral praises of the House of Osman at military campaigns and palace banquets.[32] Kritovoulos's dedication addresses the ruler as the new emperor of Byzantium, "the Supreme Autocrat (*autokrator*) and Emperor (*basileus*) of Emperors," who is the "Lord of Land and Sea, by the will of God." The author explains that he wrote this work to immortalize Mehmed's heroic deeds, so that his Greek-speaking subjects and all philhellenic "Western nations" would know that his accomplishments were "in no way inferior to those of Alexander the Macedonian."[33]

In the sultan's endowment deed, written in Arabic and datable to the last years of his life, Mehmed II is also compared to Alexander (İskandar), particularly in terms of his justice, benevolence, wisdom, and learning. Likewise, in the opening line of his posthumous Turkish chronicle of Mehmed II's reign, Tursun Beg (ca. 1490–95) introduces the sultan's exceptional conquests with a Koranic reference to Alexander, who is thereby presented as an Islamic role model for the divinely appointed Ottoman "world emperor" (*pādişāh-ı cihān, ṣāḥib-ḳırān*): "And they will ask you of Dhu'l-qarnayn [Alexander], the two-horned. Say: I will recite to you an account of him [18:83]." Tursun Beg compares the sultan to Alexander the Great in several passages, pointing out that Mehmed's conquest of twenty kingdoms made him more deserving of the title of "world emperor" than Timur, whose deeds had been exaggerated by the chronicler Sharaf al-Din ʿAli Yazdi (d. 1454).[34] The depiction of the sultan as a neo-Alexander in both Ottoman and Western sources suggests that the analogy was not a mere topos, as some have assumed. Soon after the fall of Constantinople, it was reported that Mehmed II had the *Anabasis*, Arrian's life of Alexander, read to him every day because he wanted "to become and be proclaimed sovereign of all the world and all the people; that is, a second Alexander." A Greek manuscript of this text, copied in the sultan's scriptorium during the 1460s, still survives at the Topkapı Palace Library, which also had a copy, now lost, of Quintus Curtius Rufus's *Life of Alexander*.[35] Moreover, two manuscripts of the Turkish *Alexander Romance* (İskendernāme) by Ahmedi (d. 1413), which incorporates a chronicle of the founding generations of the House of Osman through the reign of Bayezid I, were illustrated during Mehmed II's reign. The more lavish manuscript from the 1460s (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana), which may have been created for the sultan's palace library, features a painting depicting an audience held by his great-grandfather, Bayezid I, who, as mentioned earlier, shared his aaspiration to rival Alexander the Great in fame. Another painting in the same manuscript represents Alexander in Ottoman costume, riding with his royal guard of janissaries to the Masjid-i Aqsa (Dome of the Rock) in Jerusalem after having performed the rites of pilgrimage in Mecca (fig. 3). Mehmed II emulated Alexander as a divinely sanctioned world conqueror

Serai zu Istanbul (Berlin, 1933), 84n48. The sultan's image as a neo-Alexander is discussed in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 112, 410, 494; Raby, "El Gran Turco," 187–88; Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 11–12; Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 3–54.

32 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 10, criticizes the unsystematic nature of existing Ottoman chronicles. The aims of his own chronicle are summarized on pp. 3–11. Minstrels who, according to Ottoman custom, accompanied Bayezid I at the Nicopolis campaign ("gran nombre de ménestrels, selon l'usage qu'ils ont en leur pays") are mentioned in Froissart, *Collection des chroniques*, 13: 403–4. In 1433, during a public banquet in Murad II's palace at Edirne, Bertrandon de la Brocquière, the ambassador of the Duke of Burgundy, saw minstrels (*menestrelz*) singing *chansons de gestes* in praise of the heroic feats of the sultan's ancestors: see Schefer, *Le voyage d'Outremer*, 192.

33 For the dedication with Byzantine imperial titles, see Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 3. Kritovoulos points out that Mehmed II was determined to rule the "whole world" in "emulation of the Alexanders and Pompeys and Caesars" (p. 14). The chronicle would address not only the Greeks, but "all Western nations, indeed those beyond the Pillars [of Hercules] and those who inhabit the British Isles, and many more" upon being "translated into the language of those peoples who are Philhellenes" (pp. 3–4). The author, who apparently wrote the chronicle on his own initiative, sent it "to be examined and judged" by the sultan; if approved, he would prepare "the remaining part of the work" (pp. 5–6). He also proposed to write a separate volume covering the heroic deeds of Mehmed's predecessors (p. 10). The unicum Greek manuscript kept at the Topkapı Palace Library did not, however, reach a wide audience; it was neither translated into Latin or Turkish, nor was the "remaining part" completed. Kritovoulos may have died shortly after 1467 during an outbreak of the plague; his whereabouts are unknown after that date, although some have imagined that he remorsefully retired to Mt. Athos. I think it is also possible that he fell out of the sultan's favor, as did the former Greek Despot of Morea, Demetrios, who was sent in disgrace to Didymoteichon in 1467: see n. 100 below.

34 Öz, *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden*, 7; Mertol Tulum, ed., *Tursun Bey: Târîh-i Ebü'l-Feth* (Istanbul, 1977), 3, 123–25, 142, 150–51.

35 Lauro Quirini, "Epistola ad beatissimum Nicolaum V pontificem maximum (da Candia, 15 luglio 1453)," in Pertusi, *Testi inediti e poco noti sulla caduta di Costantinopoli*, 81. Julian Raby speculates that Kritovoulos's chronicle, with its image of the sultan as a neo-Alexander, was intended as a "companion volume" to Arrian's *Anabasis*, since both of these Greek manuscripts are identical in format and penned by the same hand: see Julian Raby, "Mehmed the Conqueror's Greek Scriptorium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983): 18. The copy of Quintus Curtius Rufus's *Life of Alexander* that was formerly in the palace library is mentioned in n. 31 above.

3

3. Alexander Riding to Jerusalem, ca. 1460. From the İskendernāme of Ahmedi. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Cod. Or. XC [=57], fol. 256r.

mentioned in the Koran, whose ecumenical mission was to unite Europe and Asia under the primordial monotheistic faith prefiguring Islam. He also fashioned himself as a wise ruler guided by the teachings of Greek and Islamic philosophers: a painting in the Marciana manuscript shows a turbaned Alexander seated on a throne as he converses with his court philosophers.[36]

36 The final updated version of Ahmedi's İskendernāme was presented to Bayezid I's son and successor, Süleyman Çelebi (d. 1411). One of the two illustrated manuscripts is in Venice, Biblioteca Marciana (Cod. Or. XC [=57]): see E. J. Grube, "The Date of the Venice Iskandar-nāma," *Islamic Art* 2 (1987): 187–202. The second manuscript is in St. Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies (Ms. 133): see I. E. Petrosyan, "An Illustrated Turkish Manuscript of 'Iskender-nāme' by Aḥmedī," *Manuscripta Orientalia* 1, 2 (1995): 47–50. On the likelihood that the Venice manuscript was commissioned by Mehmed II and the other manuscript by a prominent dignitary, such as the grand vizier Mahmud Pasha, see Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda, and Zeren Tanındı, *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı* (Istanbul, 2006), 28–32. A lavishly illustrated fourteenth-century Greek manuscript of Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Alexander Romance*, believed to have been commissioned by a Komnenian emperor and appropriated by the Ottomans after the conquest of Trebizond in 1461, features explanatory Turkish marginal captions linguistically datable to the mid- to late-fifteenth century. For the hypothesis that these captions were probably added soon after the conquest of Trebizond in Mehmed II's court, see Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 27 (facsimile in Trahoulias, *The Greek Alexander Romance*); Dimitris Kastritsis, "The Trebizond Alexander Romance (Venice Hellenic Institute Codex GR. 5): The Ottoman Fate of a Fourteenth-Century Illustrated Byzantine Manuscript," in "In Memoriam Angeliki E. Laiou," ed. Cemal Kafadar and Nevra Necipoğlu, special issue, *Journal of Turkish Studies* 36 (December 2011): 103–31. Noting that the Ottoman captions turn Alexander into a late fifteenth-century Ottoman sultan, Kastritsis concludes that their likely patron "could only have been Mehmed II" (p. 123).

It is therefore not surprising that Kritovoulos portrays Mehmed II as a philosopher-king, "one of a very few" to have united "deeds with words and wisdom and majesty." He was well versed in the philosophical works "of the Arabs and Persians, and whatever works of the Greeks had been translated into the language of the Arabs and Persians," with a particular focus "on the Peripatetics [Aristotelians] and Stoics."[37] The sultan's multilingual palace library combined manuscripts in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and other languages with an encyclopaedic collection of medieval Islamic learning, exemplifying its universal scope.[38] A recently discovered unpublished inventory of the library's holdings features over 8,000 manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish, and "*Moġoliyya*" (Chaghatay Turkish) systematically classified under all branches of knowledge. This fascinating document was compiled in 908 (1502–3) by the librarian of the sultan's successor, Bayezid II, who is known to have ordered the palace library catalogued and its manuscripts stamped with his royal seal. The majority of books listed in the inventory had been collected by Mehmed II, with additions made by his son. The inventoried Islamic texts subsume much of the classical

37 Kritovoulos avoids the term "Turks" throughout his chronicle: instead, he refers to the Ottomans as "Arabs and Persians," while the Greeks (i.e., the Byzantines) are designated "Romans": Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, viii, 3, 14. Resting in his capital in 1465, the sultan "associated daily" with philosophers and "held philosophical discussions with them about the principles of philosophy, particularly those of the Peripatetics and the Stoics" (p. 209).

38 For a modern catalogue of 135 Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Armenian, Syriac, Serbian, and French manuscripts preserved at the Topkapı Palace Library, featuring several Greek manuscripts on the philosophical writings of Aristotle and Plato, see Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*. In his "Greek Scriptorium," Raby has linked the production of some of these manuscripts to Mehmed II's court scriptorium on the basis of watermarks, dedications, and bindings. The collection, which was expanded by later rulers, nevertheless includes additional manuscripts that must have belonged to this sultan's library, that is, items not produced in his scriptorium but collected during his reign.

Greco-Roman heritage being revived by humanists in the Latin West, partly due to translations from Arabic and Hebrew.[39] The list of manuscripts sheds new light on Mehmed's engagement with Islamic intellectual traditions that must have conditioned his receptivity to Western humanist trends. The list includes an impressive array of works on literature, philosophy, and politico-historical texts consistent with the sultan's personal interest in Alexander the Great: e.g., Arabic and Persian copies of an anthology titled "Blessed Book of Aristotle on Politics concerning Advice to Dhu'l-qarnayn, and Aristotle's Epistle to Alexander on Matters of Sovereignty"; an Arabic epistolary novel compiled from a Hellenistic source in the Umayyad period, comprising a biography of Alexander, letters he exchanged with Aristotle, and the orations of his court philosophers, titled "Book on the Vicissitudes of Alexander, Traditions on [His Life], and the Traditions of Wise Men in the Age of the Aforesaid Alexander"; and a "Translation of the İskandarnāma from Greek into Turkish," as well as an "İskandarnāma in nine volumes." These texts were complemented by copies of the Alexander romance classified under the sections on Persian and Turkish literature. From such works it may be inferred that Mehmed II's curiosity about Greek histories of the Macedonian empire-builder was partly mediated by their Islamic versions, which he supplemented with new translations.[40] According to Niccolò Sagundino, the sultan especially "delighted" in reading and listening to the deeds of Alexander and Julius Caesar, which he ordered translated into "his own language," as he was "determined to challenge their fame and seems ardently inspired by their glory and praises." It is therefore tempting to speculate that the Turkish translation of the İskandarnāma mentioned above may have been based on Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, which is paired in his parallel *Lives* with that of Caesar.[41]

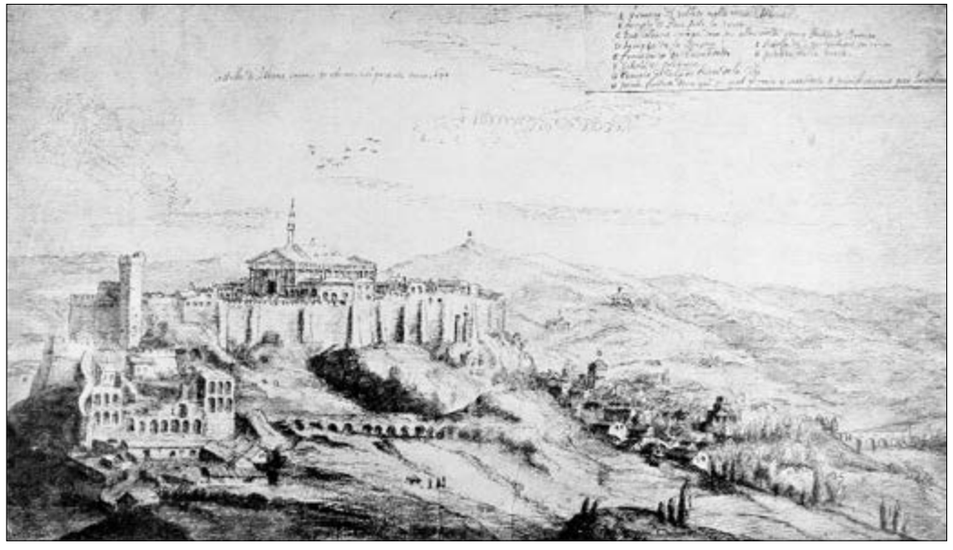
According to Kritovoulos's chronicle, the sultan, "one of the most acute philosophers," engaged in learned discussions with his court philosophers, as had Alexander, who was tutored by Aristotle.[42] Moreover, during excursions to ancient sites once visited by the Macedonian ruler, such as Troy and Athens—renowned as the "city of wise men" (*madīnat al-ḥukamā'*) in medieval Islamic sources—Mehmed II displayed an avid curiosity in antiquities and heroes. While touring Athens after the city was conquered during the Morea (Peloponnesus) campaign of 1458, he was eager to learn about all of its monuments, "especially the Acropolis itself, and [about] the places where those heroes carried on the government" and accomplished

39 For descriptions of the 365-page inventory, which lists only manuscripts in Islamic languages, see İsmail Erünsal, "959/1552 Tarihli Defter-i Kütüb," *Erdem* 4, 10 (1988): 181–93; İsmail Erünsal, "The Catalogue of Bayezid II's Palace Library," İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi Kütüphanecilik Dergisi 3 (1992): 5–66; İsmail Erünsal, "A Brief Survey of the Development of Turkish Library Catalogues," in *M. Uğur Derman Festschrift*, ed. İrvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul, 2000), 271–83. In 2004, thanks to the help of András Riedlmayer, I obtained a microfilm of this manuscript from Hungary, Magyar Tudomanyos Akademia Künyvtara Keleti Gyüjtement, Ms. Török F. 59, as well as permission to publish it as part of an interdisciplinary group project, to be edited by myself, Cemal Kafadar, and Cornell Fleischer, in the sourcebook series *Studies and Sources on Islamic Art and Architecture: Supplements to Muqarnas*. [Addendum: This work has in the meantime been published; see *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/3-1503/4)*, 2 vols., ed. Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar, Cornell H. Fleischer (*Supplements to Muqarnas*, vol. 14, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019).] Erünsal had noted in his articles (cited above) that this inventory was prepared for Bayezid II, without identifying who compiled it. The compiler is cited on pp. 151 and 166, under the entries on medical manuscripts that he authored in Arabic and Turkish: "'Atufi, the keeper of the books of the imperial treasury of Sultan Bayezid Khan." 'Atufi (Hayreddin Hızır b. Mahmud b. Ömer-i Kastamonî [d. 1541]), was the chief royal librarian and palace tutor of Bayezid II. 'Atufi's biography is included in: Nev'îzâde Atâ'î, Şakaik-i Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri, ed. Abdülkadir Özcan, 5 vols. (Istanbul, 1989), 1:415. The royal library was kept in the Inner Treasury of the Topkapı Palace: see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 133–41. A preliminary study on the inventory focused on its history books and related topics: Miklós Maróth, "The Library of Sultan Bayazit II," in *Irano-Turkic Cultural Contact in the 11th–17th Centuries*, ed. Éva M. Jeremiás (Piliscsaba, Hungary, 2003).

40 The philosophical works, which include translations of Greek classics, are classified under the heading: "Books on Islamic philosophy and the science of dialectics and books on logic and books on philosophical wisdom" (Ms. Török F. 59, pp. 339–63). The copies of Aristotle's book of advice to Alexander are classified under the sections on advice literature and government (pp. 145, 197–98). The three historical works on Alexander are listed separately as a subgroup in the history section (p. 182); versions of the Alexander romance appear under the sections on Persian and Turkish literature (pp. 231, 233–34, 251, 264). A book on the lives and traditions of Alexander and philosophers of his age is referred to as: *Kitāb al-aḥwāl wa al-akhbār al-İskandariyya wa akhbār ḥukamā' zamān al-İskandar al-mazbūr fī al-tawārīkh*. For an extant copy of this anthology (Ms. Fatih 5323), which is dedicated to Mehmed II and once belonged to his palace library, see Mario Grignaschi, "Le roman épistolaire classique conservé dans la version arabe de Salîm Abû-l-'Alâ'," *Le Muséon* 80 (1967): 211–64. According to Grignaschi, the texts collected in this anthology include an Arabic epistolary novel adapted in the Umayyad period from a Hellenistic source, which emphasizes Alexander's image as a divinely guided *kosmokrator* whose mission is to reestablish the monotheistic faith of ancient philosophers and kings that was once shared by the Greeks, Arabs, Persians and Hindus: Grignaschi, "Le roman épistolaire classique," 243, 250–51. For the two versions of this work in Istanbul libraries (Mss. Fatih 5323, and Ayasofya 4260), see Mario Grignaschi, "Les *Rasâ'il 'Arisṭâṭâlîsa ilâ-l-Iskandar* de Salîm Abû-l-'Alâ' et l'activité culturelle à l'époque omayyade," *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 19 (1965–66): 7–83.

41 The lives of Alexander and Caesar translated for Mehmed II (*in linguam suam traduci effecit*) are mentioned in Pertusi, *La caduta di Costantinopoli*, 2:132–33. These two rulers are paired in Plutarch's *Lives*, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, 11 vols. (London, 1919), 7:223–611. A thirteenth-century Greek manuscript of the *Lives*, now in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (Ms. Gr. 1672), was acquired from the Topkapı Palace Library in 1687: Henri Auguste Omont, *Missions archéologiques françaises en Orient*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1902), 1:256, 263. Gibbon writes, "I have read somewhere that Plutarch's lives were translated by his [Mehmed II's] order into the Turkish language": see Edward Gibbons, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. D. Womersley, 3 vols. (London, 1994), 3:935n6.

42 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 177. For the way in which Alexander was guided by Aristotle's ethical and political doctrines, see Plutarch, *Lives*, 241–43.



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4. Anonymous Italian view of the "Castle of Athens" in 1670: sites include (A) the Parthenon as a mosque, (F) "the school of Plato," and (I) "the school of the Peripatetics [Aristotelians] in ruins." Drawing on paper. Kunstmuseum, Bonn. (After Henri Omont, Athènes au XVIIe siècle [Paris, 1898], pl. 29)

"wonderful deeds." Amazed by the remains and ruins, he "mentally" reconstructed "the ancient buildings, being a wise man and a Philhellene." Either at this time or during his second visit to Athens in 1460 (when he eliminated the Greek despots and Latin seigneurs of the Morea), the Parthenon was converted from its then-current incarnation as a Latin cathedral into a mosque, with its mosaic of the Virgin and Child in the apse left exposed (fig. 4). The Propylaia, which had been transformed into a palace by the Florentine Duke of Athens, Neri Acciaiuoli (d. 1394), in turn became the official residence of the city's Ottoman governors. After staying for four days in Athens (praised in an Arabic chronicle of Mehmed's reign as the "city of Greek philosophers" where the "godly" scholars Socrates and Plato resided), the sultan indulged in 1458 in a sightseeing tour of Boetia and Palataea, "looking all over the Hellenic sites." He then paid a visit to Euboea (Negroponte), an alluring object of desire that he would subsequently seize from the Venetians in 1470 as one of the former territories of the "Empire of Constantinople," which was "rightfully his."[43]

43 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 136–37. Mehmed's visit to Athens, which he admired, is also described in another Greek chronicle written around 1490: Laonikos Chalkokondylēs, *L'histoire de la décadence de l'empire Grec et établissement de celuy des Turcs*, trans. Blaise Vigenère (Paris, 1577), 632. For the Latin church and mosque of the Parthenon, with descriptions of its apse mosaic, see Robert Ousterhout, " 'Bestride the Very Peak of Heaven': The Parthenon after Antiquity," in *The Parthenon: From Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jennifer Neils (London, 2005), 317–24. A reconstruction of the Acciaiuoli Palace is proposed in Tasos Tanoulas, "Through the Broken Looking Glass: The Acciaiuoli Palace in the Propylaea Reflected in the Villa of Lorenzo il Magnifico at Poggio a Caiano," *Bollettino d'Arte* 82, 100 (1997): 1–32. The reference to Athens as the "city of Greek philosophers" is in the Arabic chronicle of Nişancı Karamani Mehmed Pasha (1480): see his "Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi," translated into Turkish by İ. Hakkı Konyalı, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri I*, ed. N. Atsız (Istanbul, 1947), 356. Mehmed II, accompanied by his Palaiologan intimate, Has Murad, declared to the Venetian ambassador in 1468 that Negroponte, Crete, and all Venetian territories in the Levant belonged to him as the rightful heir of the "Empire of Constantinople" (*l'onperio di Ghostantinopoli*): see Dei, *La cronica*, 166. This was the same Has Murad Pasha who, as governor-general of Rumelia, commanded the Ottoman land forces that conquered Negroponte in 1470: see İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman VII. Defter*, ed. Şerafettin Turan (Ankara, 1991), 285–96.

Kritovoulos also recounts Mehmed's 1462 visit to Troy, en route to his victorious campaign against the Aegean island of Mytilene, held by the tributary Genoese Gattilusio family. During this visit, he inquires "about the tombs of the heroes, Achilles and Ajax and the rest," who were fortunate to "have the poet Homer to extol them." The sultan, for whom a Greek manuscript of the *Iliad* was copied around that time, boasts of having avenged Troy and its inhabitants through his own conquests: "It was the Greeks and Macedonians and Thessalians and Peloponnesians who ravaged this place in the past, and whose descendants have now through my efforts paid the just penalty, after a long period of years, for their injustice to us Asiatics at that time and so often in subsequent times."[44] This imagined soliloquy echoes an earlier speech in the chronicle entitled "Of the Courage of the Heroes," in which the sultan recites the heroic deeds of his forefathers and bitterly reviles the crusades incited by the Byzantine emperors against his father and great-grandfather to "drive us out of both Europe and Asia."[45]

Mehmed's well-known speech in Troy alludes to the legendary Trojan ancestry of the Turks (equated with the Teucri of Virgil's *Aeneid*) as de-

44 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 181–82. During a visit to Troy on his campaign against Darius, Alexander the Great makes sacrifices to Hector and Achilles, and similarly remarks, "Fortunate are you who happened upon a minstrel such as Homer": see Pseudo-Callisthenes, *The Romance of Alexander the Great*, trans. Albert Mugrdich Wolohojian (New York, 1969), 119. For a similar speech, see Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander*, trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (Harmondsworth, 1971), 67. The same speech is repeated in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, which specifies that Alexander always carried with him a recension of the *Iliad* by Aristotle: see Plutarch, *Lives*, 7:243, 263. The *Iliad* manuscript in Paris, which Girardin acquired from the Topkapı Palace Library in 1687, is dated to around 1463 in Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 20–21. Two other *Iliad* manuscripts (in Greek), one from the thirteenth century, one from the fifteenth, are recorded in the palace library: Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 42–43n2, 96n65.

45 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 23–33. Kritovoulos must have been convinced that these invented speeches would be welcomed as close approximations of the sultan's own views.

scendants of Teucer, an ancestry acknowledged in some Western sources that interpret the fall of Constantinople as Mehmed's revenge for the sack of Troy.[46] The sultan's Italian tutors and advisers may have played a role in elaborating the common Trojan lineage of the Turks and Romans (descendants of Aeneas) to make him appear less "foreign" in the Latin West.[47] His great-grandfather, who, as we have seen, claimed descent from Alexander's lineage, is also said to have entertained a Trojan genealogy. In his *Commentaries* (ca. 1433), the Milanese humanist Andrea Biglia praised the "*humanitas*" of Bayezid I, the "king of the Teucrians," and portrayed him as a friend of Italian merchants, adding that the Teucrians particularly "love the Visconti [of Milan], because they say they were descended from Aeneas the Trojan."[48]

Perhaps because of the anti-Greek bias of the Trojan legend, Kritovoulos preferred to construct an equally noble Perso-Achaemenid genealogy for his "Philhellenic" patron's ancestor, Osman, the founder of the dynasty. He thus engaged in the polemics of humanist crusade literature, which after 1453 began to argue that the Turks were neither Trojans nor Persians, but rather "barbarian" Scythians. Kritovoulos reserved the lowly term "Scythian" for Timur, the archenemy of the Ottomans, thereby participating in the humanist "politics of ethnology." His Greek chronicle, modeled on classical prototypes, can be read, in my view, as a dialogical response to the Renaissance humanists' demonization of the sultan as an "inhuman" barbarian inimical to "Western civilization," who willfully destroys ancient cities and the antiquities of Constantinople, along with its books of classical learning.[49] The chronicle emphasizes how the sultan spent the latter part of his reign reconstructing "Byzantium" (Constantinople) into a center of the arts, sciences, and trades, "as it used to be long ago" in ancient times, before its decline. Moreover, his military campaigns are interrupted by creative pauses for architectural, humanistic, and philosophical pursuits.[50]

The Muslim philosophers in the sultan's retinue—with whom he is known to have engaged in theological and philosophical discussions on the oneness of God and the merits of Aristotelian philosophy as a rational instrument for the study of dogma—are not identified by Kritovoulos.[51] The only philosopher he mentions by name is his Greek friend George Amiroutzes, one of the former "companions of the ruler of Trebizond" (vanquished by the sultan in 1461), who was "a great philosopher, learned both in the studies of physics and the analogy of numbers, and also in the philosophy of the Peripatetics [Aristotelians] and Stoics," in addition to being "an orator and poet."[52] Amiroutzes wrote several panegyrical poems in Greek in praise of Mehmed's humanistic virtues, including his understanding of Greek, thanks to which

46 For the alleged Trojan origin of the Turks, see James Hankins, "Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmed II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995): 111–207; Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (London, 2008), esp. 1–64. According to the Byzantine historian Laonikos Chalkokondyles (ca. 1490), the fall of Constantinople was interpreted by the "Romans" (i.e., Byzantines) as revenge for the fall of Troy: cited in Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 33. Giovanni Mario Filelfo's *Amyris* (ca. 1471–76) invokes the fall of Troy as a justification for the sultan's conquest of Constantinople and other Greek lands. This epic poem was commissioned as a gift for Mehmed II by an Italian merchant from Ancona, Othman Lillo Ferducci, whose father, affiliated with the court of Murad II, had named him after the founder of the Ottoman dynasty (see n. 30 above). The poem exalts Mehmed II as a legitimate Trojan descendant who vows to defeat the Greeks because they "caused so much damage to our race"; the sultan's aim is not to attack Italy, populated by fellow Trojans, but to punish the Greeks and their surrogates, the Venetians: see Hankins, "Renaissance Crusaders," 130–31, 141; Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia, 2004), 89, 91–92; Gian Maria Filelfo, *Amyris*, ed. A. Manetti (Bologna, 1972).

47 Referring to Mehmed II's speech in Troy, Babinger writes: "Here we feel the influence of his preceptors, who had persuaded him that Teucros, first king of Troy and the ruler over the Teucri, was his ancestor": see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 210. According to Hankins, the Trojan ancestry was emphasized by turcophile European humanists in order to integrate the Ottoman Turks "into Western traditions, thus (as it were) domesticating them, making them less of a threat," as opposed to barbarians, "the very antitype of civilization": see Hankins, "Renaissance Crusaders," 141. Meserve argues that Mehmed's Trojan ancestry was also a cause of alarm. In 1453, the humanist cleric Timoteo Maffei sent a letter to Italian princes urging them to undertake a crusade against the sultan, who had sacked Constantinople to avenge his Trojan ancestors and planned to attack Italy, which had been settled by Trojan refugees and formed part of his birthright: see Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 38. In the so-called letter of Sultan Morbisanus, Mehmed II argues that there is no ground for a papal crusade against him, since the Italians and Turks are both descended from the Trojans and thus bound by ties of Teucrian blood; he then states his intention to carry his revitalized Trojan empire into Europe after having avenged the fall of Troy by subjugating the empire of the Greeks. Various versions of this letter, which were addressed to Popes Nicholas V and Pius II, circulated in Europe. The earliest of these was addressed to Pope Clement IV, who in 1344 directed a crusade against Umur Pasha [Morbisanus], the ruler of the Aydın emirate along the Aegean: Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 34–47.

48 Cited in Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 182. For a friendly embassy Bayezid I sent to the court of Milan in 1396, see Froissart, *Collection des chroniques*, 13:412.

49 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 13, 28. For Kritovoulos's avoidance of the term "Turk" in his chronicle, see n. 37 above. In 1453, Aeneas Silvius (later Pope Pius II) wrote to Pope Nicholas V: "Those who are now called the Turks (*Turchi*) are not, as some think, the Trojans or the Persians. They are a race of Scythians from the center of Barbary": cited in Hankins, "Renaissance Crusaders," 137. For the polemical humanist literature on the Scythian origin of the Turks as the "inhuman" and "barbarian enemies of civilization," see Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 60–93.

50 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 139–42, 177, 207–10.

51 For debates held in the sultan's presence, including one in 1466–67 concerning al-Ghazali's eleventh-century attack on philosophers and a defense of the cause of the philosophers by the Aristotelian philosopher Averroes (Ibn Rushd), see Atâî, Şakaik-i Nu'maniye ve Zeyilleri, 1:117–20, 145–58, 193–96; Mehmet Bayrakdar, "L'Aristotélisme dans la pensée ottomane," in *Individu et société: L'influence d'Aristote dans le monde méditerranéen; Actes du Colloque d'Istanbul, Palais de France, 5–9 janvier 1986*, ed. Thierry Zarcone (Istanbul, 1988).

52 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 177.

his rule was not that of a "foreigner." The poems compare the sultan, who combined wisdom and learning with martial skills, to Alexander the Great and Achilles, eulogizing him as the legitimate emperor of the "Romans" (Byzantines) and asking God to grant him world dominion.[53]

Mehmed II composed Ottoman Turkish lyrical poetry under the pen name *ʿAvnī* (helper, protector). He not only knew Arabic and Persian, but also had a "good knowledge" of Greek (though inadequate for conversing without the help of an interpreter), and some familiarity with Serbian. In his court, Arabic was promoted as the primary international language of the religious and profane sciences, while Persian became the preferred language for literature, alongside Turkish.[54] As is well known, Amiroutzes and his Arabic-speaking son, who converted to Islam, were commissioned by the sultan in 1465 to translate Ptolemy's *Geography* into Arabic and to combine its scattered charts into a single world map. This commission testifies to Mehmed's role in the transmission of classical texts through new translations, for which a large collection of grammars and dictionaries had been gathered at his palace library:[55] the inventory lists monolingual, bilingual, trilingual, and even quadrilingual dictionaries.[56] The manuscripts of this circulating library, many of them listed in multiple copies, were not just for the edification of the sultan and his intimates. They were also intended for the education of his pages and his multilingual chancellery scribes, who were trained to conduct the sultan's diplomatic correspondence in Greek, Latin, Serbian, Arabic, Persian, Ottoman, and Uighur Turkish.[57] By contrast, starting with the reign of his great-grandson Süleyman I in the 1520s, chancellery scribes began to write official documents primarily in Ottoman Turkish.

The inventory of the palace library records Arabic translations of Greek texts known to have been commissioned by Mehmed II, such as Ptolemy's *Geography* (mentioned above) and an anthology of the Neoplatonic works of George Gemistos Plethon (d. 1452), titled *Translation of the Remains of the Book of Gemistos, the Pagan, on the Doctrines of the Worshippers of Idols*. The extant anthology includes the undestroyed fragments of Plethon's controversial neo-pagan Laws (*Nomoi*), consigned to fire in the early 1460s by the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Istanbul, George Gennadios Scholarios. The inventory also lists a Turkish and Persian translation of the Greek *History of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia*, and the *Book of the Prophet Daniel*, translated for the sultan from Syriac into Arabic. The latter is a book of prognostication on the eschatological mysteries and the apocalyptic Last Roman Emperor, which states that the final Fourth Monarchy would be that of Islam, under the "ruler of Constantinople" (*malik al-Rūm*).[58]

53 Vladimir Mirmiroğlu, *Fatih Sultan Mehmet Han Hazretlerinin Devrine ait Tarihi Vesikalar* (Istanbul, 1945), 94–102.

54 For Mehmed II's languages and some of the texts translated for him, see Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 19, 23–24. An unprecedented number of grammar books and dictionaries (Persian–Turkish, Arabic–Turkish, and Arabic–Persian–Turkish) were written during the sultan's reign, when the spoken language of Turkish became subordinated to Persian and Arabic in scholarly and literary texts: see Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 177–82. For the patronage of Persian and Turkish poets in the courts of Mehmed II and of his sons, and of Mahmud Pasha, see Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 184–21. The "compilation of the six best dictionaries, or the recension of *The Book* of Sibawaihi (ca. 753–93), the great work on the Arabic language," probably carried out under the supervision of Mehmed II's royal librarian Molla Lutfi, is mentioned in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 493–94.

55 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 209–10; Jerry Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (London, 1997), 98–103. The *mappa mundi* confirms earlier European reports about Mehmed's interest in geography. The Arabic annotations on it were written by one of Amiroutzes's two sons, i.e., Vasilikos (the godson of Cardinal Bessarion's mother), who was renamed Mehmed Beg and translated several Greek texts into Arabic for the sultan, including the Bible. Amiroutzes's second son, Alexandros, later Iskender, was nicknamed the "Philosopher's Son" (Filozofoğlu) and held the position of chief treasurer (*hazinedarbaşı*). See Mirmiroğlu, *Fatih Sultan Mehmet*, 98; Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 247.

56 Ms. Török F. 59, pp. 293–300. Besides Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Greek, and Serbian dictionaries, the inventory lists bilingual dictionaries (Persian–Turkish, Turkish–Persian, Persian–Arabic, Arabic–Persian, Persian–Latin [*Afranjiyya*], Greek–Arabic, Arabic–Greek, Greek–Persian, Greek–Turkish), trilingual dictionaries (Arabic–Persian–Turkish), and quadrilingual dictionaries (Arabic–Persian–Greek–Serbian, Persian–Turkish–Greek–Latin). Two extant copies of a quadrilingual dictionary, containing the same phrases in Arabic, Persian, Greek, and Serbian (Mss. Ayasofya 4749, and Ayasofya 4750), bear the seal of Bayezid II and are thought to have been commissioned by Mehmed II: see A. Caferoğlu, "Note sur un manuscript en langue serbe de la bibliothèque d'Ayasofya," *Revue internationale des études balkaniques* 1, 3 (1936): 185–90; Speros Vryonis, Jr., "Byzantine Constantinople and Ottoman Istanbul: Evolution in a Millenial Imperial Iconography," in *The Ottoman City and Its Parts*, ed. Irene A. Bierman et al. (New Rochelle, N.Y., 1991), 39–40. Caferoğlu thinks that this dictionary may have been compiled for the linguistic training of Mehmed II, while Vryonis speculates that it was a teaching tool for his chancellery scribes. One of these manuscripts (Ms. Ayasofya 4749) also contains sections on Aristotle in Persian and Greek, the terminology of logic in Porphyry's introduction (Isagoge) in Greek and Arabic, the rules of Arabic syntax in Greek and Arabic, and a Greek alphabet with the pronunciation of letters indicated in the Arabic script.

57 Sixteenth-century documents confirm that books from the royal library, kept within the Inner Treasury of the Topkapı Palace, were lent to palace pages and the sultan's extended household: see Emine Fetvacı, "Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566–1617" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2005), 37–40. For books borrowed by chief royal physicians in 1575 and 1580, see Aykut Kazancıgil, "Fatih Devri İlmi Hayatı içinde Tıp Eğitimi ve Tababet," in İstanbul Armağanı 1 (1995): 256. Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 26–28, argues that some of the Greek manuscripts were intended for the training of Mehmed II's chancellery staff.

58 The inventory includes many translated classical texts, but omits when they were translated; some of them date to as early as the Umayyad period. See n. 40 above for the İskandarnāma that was translated from Greek into Turkish. Three copies of the Arabic translation of Ptolemy's *Geography* (extant copies include Mss. Ayasofya 2610 and 2596) are listed in Ms. Török F. 59, p. 203. Two Greek manuscripts of this text preserved in the palace library are listed in Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 68n27, 89n57. Two different Arabic translations of Plethon's anthology are cited on p. 311 of the inventory: *Tarjama al-baqiyya min kitāb yamsiṭūs al-wathanī fī madhāhib ʿabadat*

The inventory ends with a section containing the translations of various holy texts—including the Bible, Psalms of David, and the Torah—which are also mentioned in Amiroutzes's *Dialogue on the Faith of Christ Held with the Sultan of the Turks*. During this interconfessional exchange, mediated by an interpreter, the ruler warned Amiroutzes not to distort the ancient Hebrew Scriptures because the "formerly Jewish" Jacopo of Gaeta was attending the discussion, and because these holy texts had been translated at his court. Amiroutzes's excursus in the *Dialogue* on the Prophet Daniel's prophecies concerning the four world empires, the last of which would be that of the Romans, reveals the currency of this topic at the sultan's court.[59] The Greek philosopher explains how he became one of the "intimates" (*familiares*) of the ruler in order "to be continually near him" and to frequently "discuss philosophy as well as the dogmatic differences between our two peoples." Despite the lack of consensus on some points between Amiroutzes and his royal interlocutor, the *Dialogue* exemplifies an attempt to understand doctrinal similarities and differences through the rational discourse of Aristotelian philosophy.[60]

al-aṣnām, and *Tarjama kitāb yamsiṭūs al-wathanī tarjamat thāniyatan fī madhāhib ʿabadat al-aṣnām*. Only one of these manuscripts is extant at the palace library; its contents are analyzed in J. Nicolet and M. Tardieu, "Pletho Arabicus: Identification et contenu du manuscript arabe d'Istanbul, *Topkapı Serai, Ahmet III 1896*," *Journal Asiatique* 268, 1–2 (1980): 35–57. In the preface, Koranic verses are cited to show that its contents are incompatible with the monotheistic religions that superseded paganism. The preface and the partial destruction of the text by Gennadios Scholarios are discussed in Nicolet and Tardieu, "Pletho Arabicus," 38–43, 55–56; for Plethon, also see n. 64 below. The Turkish translation of the *History of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia* is listed in Ms. Török F. 59, p. 200; a Persian copy of the same text is mentioned on p. 201. An extant Greek manuscript of the *Diēgēsis peri tēs Hagias Sofias* [Narrative Concerning Hagia Sophia] was copied for the palace library in 1474: see Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 45–46n6; Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 17. The *Book of the Prophet Daniel*, mentioned in the inventory on p. 308, seems to be the extant Arabic translation of this text from Syriac (Ms. Ayasofya 3367, described in Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 19), which bears a dedication to Mehmed II and once belonged to the palace library. For the latter manuscript, also see Fleischer, "Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences," 233.

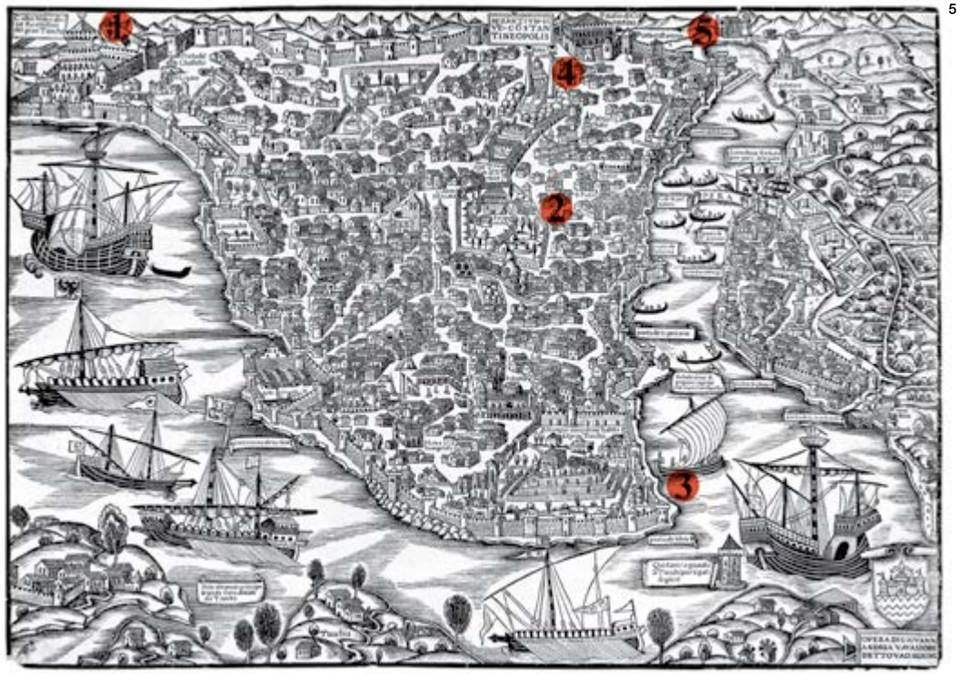
59 Ms. Török F. 59, p. 364. See Astérios Argyriou and Georges Lagarrigue, "Georges Amiroutzès et son 'Dialogue sur la foi au Christ tenu avec le Sultan des Turcs'," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 11 (1987): 157, 159, 161–68. See also Mehmed II's *Book of the Prophet Daniel*, mentioned in n. 58 above. Variants of the *Visions of Daniel*, written between the tenth and fifteenth centuries, which expand the prophetic sections of the seventh-century *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius, are analyzed in *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. Paul J. Alexander (Berkeley, 1985), 61–123; Agostino Pertusi, *Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo*, ed. Enrico Morini (Rome, 1988), 35–129.

60 Argyriou and Lagarrigue, "Georges Amiroutzès," 39, 65. Unfortunately, the concluding section of the *Dialogue*, which is preserved in a single Latin copy, is missing. According to Argyriou and Lagarrigue, this Latin text (ca. 1470) was intended for a Latin European audience (p. 50). For the argument that it addressed a Greek audience, see *Jorge Ameruzes de Trebisonda: El diálogo de la fe con el Sultán de los Turcos*, ed. Oscar de la Cruz Palma (Madrid, 2000), xxv.

The well-connected Amiroutzes, a cousin of the sultan's influential grand vizier Mahmud Pasha Angelović, had written an important work against the union of the Churches after attending the Council of Ferrara-Florence. He shared this anti-Unionist position with Gennadios Scholarios, whom Mehmed II had appointed in 1454 as the first patriarch of the reestablished Greek Orthodox patriarchate of Istanbul (a post Gennadios held three times, the last in 1465).[61] His initial appointment came after the Hagia Sophia, the millennial seat of the patriarchate, was converted into an imperial mosque. The patriarchate was then transferred to the Church of the Holy Apostles before being moved to the Convent of Pammakaristos. The sultan deeply admired the Hagia Sophia when he visited it upon entering the newly conquered city. Ruminating on ruins and the transitoriness of worldly power, he ordered its renovation as an imperial mosque, and left its mosaics unscathed, including that of the Virgin and Child above the apse, as he did in the Parthenon later on (fig. 4). The preservation of the mosaics, like Mehmed's revered collection of Byzantine relics, underscored the common denominators between Christianity and Islam while at the same time articulating the latter's divinely willed triumph. The minimal physical transformation of Hagia Sophia, which even retained its name (*Ayaṣofya*), was not simply an expression of aesthetic appreciation. It also bore visual testimony to the dialectical thread of continuity and change between past and present, affirming Mehmed's providential destiny as Muslim heir to the Eastern Roman Empire (figs. 5 and 6). The church was believed to have been endowed with a special holiness, and its conversion through the sultan's agency fulfilled the Prophet Muhammad's prophecy that it was predestined to become a mosque upon the future conquest of Constantinople by the Muslims, an event predicted in eschatological hadith.[62]

61 On the familial relationship between Amiroutzes and Mahmud Pasha, see Stavrides, *Sultan of Vezirs*, 86–90. The biography and works of Amiroutzes, formerly the *protovestiarios* (official who presided over the imperial wardrobe) of the Komnenian emperor of Trebizond, are discussed in Argyriou and Lagarrigue, "Georges Amiroutzès," 29–221; Michel Balivet, *Pour une concorde islamo-chrétienne: Démarches byzantines et latines à la fin du Moyen-Âge (de Nicolas de Cues à Georges de Trébizonde)* (Rome, 1997), 3–17; Cruz Palma, *Jorge Ameruzes*, xiii–xxix. For Gennadios Scholarios, see Speros Vryonis, Jr., "The Byzantine Patriarchate and Turkish Islam," *Byzantinoslavica* 57 (1996): 69–111.

62 On Mehmed II's relic collection and a Madonna and Child image he commissioned from Gentile Bellini, see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 94–106; Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 135–36. Hadith predicting the Muslim conquest of Constantinople are cited in n. 3 above. Belief in the predestination of Hagia Sophia as a mosque and its religio-cultural associations are discussed in Gülru Necipoğlu, "Life of an Imperial Monument: Hagia Sophia after Byzantium," in *Hagia Sophia: From the Age of Justinian to the Present*, ed. Robert Mark and Ahmet Çakmak (Cambridge, 1992), 195–225. Regarding the Prophet's foresight that Hagia Sophia would eventually serve as a mosque, see Ahmed Bīcān (d. ca. 1466), *Dürr-i Meknūn*, ed. A. Demirtaş (Istanbul, 2009), fols. 84v–87v.



5. Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, view of Istanbul (ca. 1479–81), labeled "Byzantium.sive.Constantineopolis." Woodcut printed in Venice, ca. 1520–30. Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek, Sign. IV C44: (1) Yedikule Fortress, (2) Old Palace, (3) New Palace (now Topkapı Palace), (4) New Mosque of Mehmed II. (Photo: courtesy of the Staatsbibliothek)

This official act of conversion also annulled the ecclesiastical union of the Latin and Greek Churches, which had been celebrated at Hagia Sophia in 1452, and thereby brought the Orthodox Church under Ottoman protection for centuries to come. The union had been opposed by some Byzantine dignitaries who were said to have preferred that the "Turkish turban" rather than the "Latin miter" reign triumphant over the city. The cardinal sent from Rome to preside over the Union ceremony was succeeded in 1463 by Bessarion as the titular "Latin patriarch of Constantinople" on the eve of a planned crusade that was never realized because Pope Pius II died the following year. Attempts to retake the Hagia Sophia for a united Christendom constituted a leitmotif of successive crusade plans. In 1466, the Venetians, who were supported by papal forces, circulated letters throughout the Levant boasting that their priests would sing the Catholic Mass there by the end of the year. The chronicle of Benedetto Dei, a merchant and political informant from Florence who intercepted a

6. Cristoforo Buondelmonti, view of "Constantinopolis," from the *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*, early 1480s. Ink drawing. Düsseldorf, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Ms. G 13, fol. 54r. (Photo: courtesy of the Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek)

copy of this letter, reports that it was presented to the sultan by the Florentine consul of Pera, in the company of numerous merchants, to incite him against the Venetians.[63]

Like the Greek patriarch, Mehmed II's court philosopher George Amiroutzes was anti-Unionist. They were both staunch defenders of Aristotelian philosophy, in opposition to the Platonist stance promoted in Rome by the circle of their former friend Bessarion, the admiring pupil of the neo-Platonist scholar Plethon. Gennadios and Amiroutzes engaged in theological discussions with the sultan, the official protector of the Greek Orthodox Church, from whom the patriarch of Jerusalem requested a firman in 1458 to ratify tax exemptions formerly granted by the Byzantine emperors.[64] The ruler's openness to interconfessional dialogues, the exegeses he commissioned from the patriarchs of Istanbul on the Greek Orthodox Creed, and his veneration of Byzantine relics, which were enshrined in his palace's inner treasury-cum-library, even raised vain hopes in the Latin West that he might convert to Christianity.[65] According to Angiolello, he was accused by his successor, Bayezid II, of "not believing in Muhammad," while the majority of his subjects held that he "did not believe in any one faith." None of the sources written in Islamic languages, however, corroborates such a perception of Mehmed's irreligiosity.[66] Nevertheless, the sultan's exploration of affinities among the multiple worlds that converged in his new capital raised apprehension among traditionalist circles, particularly the ghazis (Muslim warriors) and dervishes, who felt marginalized and were critical of his centralizing imperial project. Anonymous chronicles expressing the grievances of this disaffected milieu, which preferred that the capital return to Edirne (the "abode of ghazis"), portrayed Istanbul as an accursed imperial city that should be left in ruins until the day of the Apocalypse. The cosmopolitan ethos of the new capital and the sultan's court provoked resentment, much as Alexander the Great's "policy of fusion" had been criticized by the Macedonians. Comparable criticism was voiced in a Turkish poem presented to Mehmed II by one of his courtiers, a certain Çatladı, quoted later on by the poet Lamiʿi (d. 1531), who was affiliated with the Naqshbandi order of dervishes in Bursa: "If you wish to stand in high honor on the sultan's threshold / You must be a Jew or a Persian or a Fireng!"[67]

63 The Byzantine grand duke Loukas Notaras's preference for the "Turkish turban" over the "Latin miter" is quoted in Doukas's chronicle: see Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas*, 210. On the pro-Latin and pro-Ottoman factions in late Byzantium, see Nevra Necipoğlu, *Byzantium Between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire* (Cambridge, 2009). The two ecclesiastical unions of 1439 and 1452 are discussed in Vryonis, "Byzantine Patriarchate," 88–89. For the Unionist mass said at the Hagia Sophia in 1452, the Greek Cardinal Isidor of Kiev was sent from Rome: see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 79–80. The intercepted Venetian letter is mentioned in Dei, *La cronica*, 164.

64 The debate between the Platonists and the Aristotelians in Italy revolved around Bessarion's circle; it was largely a "Roman affair," conducted almost entirely among expatriate Greeks: see C. M. Woodhouse, *George Gemistos Plethon: The Last of the Hellenes* (Oxford, 1986), 41, 144–50; Brunello Lotti, "Cultura filosofica di Bessarione: La tradizione platonica," in Fiaccadori, *Bessarione e l'Umanesimo*, 79–102. The firman granted to the patriarch of Jerusalem is published in Mirmiroğlu, *Fatih Sultan Mehmet*, 86–88.

65 Gennadios's two treatises on Christianity, written (in Greek) at the sultan's behest, were translated into Arabic, as was the exegesis of the Greek Orthodox Creed that Mehmed II requested from Patriarch Maximos III (r. 1476–82): see Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 23; for the Bible translated by Amiroutzes's son, see p. 23. The Latin translation of Amiroutzes's *Dialogue* with the sultan on the Christian faith is mentioned above in n. 60. For Pius II's attempts to convert the sultan (through baptism), and Emperor Frederick III's efforts to do the same (through marriage to his daughter Kunigunde), see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 198–201, 417; Franz Babinger, "Zwei diplomatische Zwischenspiele im deutsch-osmanischen Staatsverkehr unter Bajezid II. (1497 und 1504)," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 1:264–65.

66 Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia turchesca*, 121: "et disse il ditto Baiasit che suo padre era padrone, et che non credeva in Maccometto, et in effetto era cosi per quello dicono tutti questo Mehemet non credeva in fede alcuna." According to Spandugino, who spent part of his boyhood under the care of his great-aunt, Mara (Mehmed II's stepmother), and whose informants included relatives occupying prominent posts at the Ottoman court, the sultan was neither Christian nor Muslim: he had been baptized as a Christian by his mother (a convert to Islam) and brought up as a Muslim, but he did not subscribe to either faith. See the French version of Spandugino's book, translated in 1519: Théodore Spandouyn Cantacassin (Teodoro Spandugino [Spandounes]), *Petit traicté de l'origine des Turcz*, ed. Charles Schefer (Paris, 1896), 299–303. In a revised version rewritten in 1538, the author claimed that Mehmed II, "who was gifted with a singular and wide-ranging intellectual ability," adhered "more to the Christian faith than any other, especially in the years before his death.": see Theodore Spandounes (Spandugino), *On the Origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, trans. and ed. Donald M. Nicol (Cambridge, 1997), 52–53. Yet in an imperial decree dated 1476, the sultan reprimands his subjects in east-central Anatolia who neglected congregational prayers and orders them to abide by the rules of Islam: see Necati Lugal and Adnan Erzi, eds., *Fatih Devrine ait Münşeât Mecmuası* (Istanbul, 1956), 94–95.

67 For groups opposed to Mehmed II's imperial project, the contested status of his new capital, and criticisms directed against injustices perpetrated during the construction of his grandiose mosque complex, see Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, 1995), 97, 100, 146–54; Yerasimos, *Fondation de Constantinople*, 33–34, 85, 200–239; Çiğdem Kafescioğlu,"Heavenly and Unblessed, Splendid and Artless: Mehmed II's Mosque Complex in Istanbul in the Eyes of Its Contemporaries," in *Essays in Honor of Aptullah Kuran*, ed. Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Lucienne Thys-Şenocak (Istanbul, 1999), 211–22. The resentment provoked by Alexander's policies is mentioned in Arrian, *Campaigns of Alexander*, 31, 356–57, 397. The verse quoted by Lamiʿi is cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 508; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 391n16. This Naqshbandi poet was the grandson of the painter ʿAli b. İlyas of Bursa, who had been carried off by Timur to Samarqand and trained there in the arts of the book in 1424. The painter signed the painted decorations of the Green Mosque in Bursa: see Julian Raby and Zeren Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding in the 15th Century: The Foundation of an Ottoman Court Style* (London, 1993), 22–25.

Early interactions with Italian humanistic and artistic culture in the sultan's court

Until he passed away around 1475, Amiroutzes mediated his royal patron's contacts with his humanist friends in Italy. One of them was Bessarion's archrival, the Aristotelian philosopher George of Trebizond, who envisioned an apocalyptic universal empire ruled by the sultan and hailed Mehmed II as the legitimate Roman emperor: "Whoever holds by right the center of the Empire is emperor, and the center of the Roman Empire is Constantinople." After briefly visiting Istanbul, he wrote religious treatises, which he dedicated in 1466 to the "Emperor (*basileus*) of Emperors and Supreme Autocrat (*autokrator*)," who daily "philosophizes" about the greatest matters. These works use Aristotelian philosophical reasoning to convince Mehmed II of the equivalence of Islam and Christianity, which he was destined to unite as future apocalyptic world emperor. They include a comparison in Latin of the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato (to be translated into Greek for the sultan by Gennadios Scholarios) and the introduction to Ptolemy's *Almagest* (written in Greek upon the suggestion of Amiroutzes).[68]

Another of Amiroutzes's humanist correspondents, Francesco Filelfo, wrote a letter of recommendation for the Florentine architect-sculptor Filarete (who had fashioned the bronze doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, which commemorate the union of the Latin and Greek Churches envisioned at the Council of Ferrara-Florence [fig. 1]). In this letter, the humanist mentioned that Filarete was about to set out from Milan for a visit to Istanbul in 1465, but we do not know whether the artist reached his destination.[69] The following year, Filelfo congratulated George of Trebizond on his safe return from the Ottoman capital in a letter in which he inquired as to whether the city has been "barbarized by the rule of the barbarian." Such ambivalence, however, would not hinder ongoing dialogues and negotiations with the "Grand Turk," who during the 1460s developed particularly close ties with the Florentine merchant community of Pera.[70]

The chronicle of Benedetto Dei, who resided in Pera between 1460 and 1467, provides a vivid eyewitness account of this rapprochement, through which his Florentine compatriots usurped the trading privileges of their Venetian and Genoese rivals. Among the gifts presented by prominent Florentine merchants to the sultan, Dei mentions the commentary by the humanist Leonardo Bruni (Aretino, d. 1444) on the first book of Polybius's *History of the Punic Wars*—covering ancient wars between the Romans and Carthaginians—which the ruler had ordered translated. One of the manuscripts listed in the palace library inventory, *Risāla fī bayān madīnat Filorindin* (Treatise on the City of Florence), was perhaps the translation of another work by Bruni, *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis* (Praise of the City of Florence). After the *Laudatio* (ca. 1403–4), Bruni had written a short treatise in Greek titled "Constitution of the Florentines" (ca. 1439), around the time of the Council of Ferrara-Florence. Listed on the same folio of the library inventory is the *Kitāb fī madīnat al-banāṭiqat wa riyāsatuhā min qabl al-tawārīkh* (Book on the City of the Venetians and Its Mode of Government). This manuscript might have been based on a short book on the origins and deeds of the Venetians (*De Origine et Gestis Venetorum*), written in 1454 by the humanist Flavio Biondo (d. 1463), who had attended the Council of Ferrara-Florence as papal secretary. (The book aimed to induce the Venetians to support the crusade of Pope Nicholas V [r. 1447–55] against the Turks). These three translated works, no longer extant, point to an interest at the Ottoman court in both ancient and contemporary histories of Italy.[71]

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68 The Cretan Catholic humanist George of Trebizond was sent to Istanbul in 1465 by his former pupil, Pope Paul II, to convert the sultan to Christianity. Having returned to Rome, he was put in prison in 1466 because of his letters to the sultan. In a Latin treatise titled "On the Truth of the Faith of Christians" (1453), he had referred to the ruler as the future apocalyptic last Roman world emperor, on condition that he unify Islam and Christianity under the true religion of Christ. Two subsequent short versions of this treatise are filled with apocalyptic fervor: "On the Eternal Glory of the Autocrat" (1466) and "On the Divinity of Manuel" (1467). For letters and treatises addressed by George of Trebizond to the sultan, see Pertusi, *La caduta di Costantinopoli*, 2:68–79; Angelo Mercati, "Le due lettere di Giorgio da Trebisonda a Maometto II," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 9 (1943): 85–99; John Monfasani, *Collectanea Trapezuntiana: Texts, Documents and Bibliographies of George of Trebizond* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1984); Balivet, *Pour une concorde Islamo-Chrétienne*, 17–67.

69 Filelfo's letter of July 30, 1465, which stressed the excellence of Antonio Averlino Filarete as an architect, was written two weeks before the artist's dismissal from the Ospedale Maggiore project in Milan: see Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 189–90. Before moving to Milan, Filarete had been commissioned by Pope Eugenius IV to execute bronze doors for the basilica of St. Peter's; the artist's three-dimensional bronze portrait bust of the Byzantine emperor John VIII Palaiologos (ca. 1439) was probably an extension of this project (see fig. 1). In 1467, the Florentine architect Michelozzo Michelozzi and his son went to Istanbul from Chios, where they boarded a ship sailing to Ancona: see Nicolai Rubinstein, "Michelozzo and Niccolò Michelozzi in Chios 1466–67," in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Paul Oskar Kriseller*, ed. Cecil H. Clough (New York, 1976), 216–28.

70 E. Legrand, *Cent-dix lettres grecques de François Filelfe* (Paris, 1892), 127–28, cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 250; Raby, "El Gran Turco," 28. The ambassador of Milan, who returned from Venice in 1465, informed Francesco Sforza that the sultan's Italian advisers included Florentines, Genoese, and Ragusans: see Franz Babinger, "Mehmed II., der Eroberer, und Italien," *Byzantion* 21 (1951): 127–70; Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 3:172–200, cited on p. 191. On Ottoman–Florentine amity in the 1460s, see Halil İnalcık, "Bursa and the Commerce of the Levant," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 3 (1960): 131–47.

71 Dei, *La cronica*, 127–29, 158–63; Paolo Orvieto, "Un esperto orientalista del '400: Benedetto Dei," *Rinascimento,* 2nd ser., 9 (1969): 205–75. The commentary of Leonardo

Dei admits that in 1460 the Florentines (who unlike their rivals lacked colonies in the East) had shown the sultan how to "make himself the ruler of the Morea and of the Venetian territorial possessions in the Levant." It was just around that time that Pope Pius II envisioned his aforementioned crusade against the Ottomans. Planned at the Conference of Mantua (1459–60) but postponed until 1464 because of the war that broke out in southern Italy, this crusade aimed to reconquer the Morea as a step in the recovery of the Byzantine throne of Constantinople. Rule of Byzantium had been earmarked for Bessarion's protégé, Thomas Palaiologos (d. 1465), the last Despot of Morea, who escaped to Italy in 1460, unlike his brother, who preferred to become a fiefholder of the sultan. Joining the papal forces with those of Hungary in 1463, the Venetian Signoria hoped to recover its colonies in the Morea from the Ottomans. Dei's chronicle records two speeches (given in 1463 and 1468) in which the sultan declared his intention to chase the Venetians out of all the Levantine lands and islands once ruled by the "Empire of Constantinople" (*l'onperio di Ghostantinopoli*), which he claimed as his patrimony.[72] The chronicler points out that between 1460 and 1472 the Florentines "always exchanged intelligence" with both the "Grand Turk" and Mahmud Pasha, regularly accompanying the Ottoman army on its campaigns and publicly celebrating its victories in Pera as the sultan's "friends and well-wishers" (*amici e benvolenti*). During one of these victory celebrations in 1465, the sultan even visited the house of two Florentine merchant-bankers, where he was regally feasted and presented with confections (*chonfetti*).[73]

The following year, Mehmed II consulted four leaders of the Florentine community in Pera regarding the fortification of the "castle of Vitupero," on the straits of the Dardanelles, against an impending Venetian attack. This castle has tentatively been identified as Kilid al-Bahr, whose inner keep, with its three-leafed clover plan, displays a rigorous geometry akin to that of the innovative seven-towered, star-shaped Yedikule Fortress (ca. 1458) in Istanbul.[74] Importing the latest Western technologies of warfare propelled the sultan to the forefront of Renaissance developments in military architecture and firearms. Kritovoulos's description of the ruler's own inventive contributions to the design of fortifications and cannon confirm European reports about his passion for the arts of war.[75]

To share his enthusiasm in this field with the sultan, in 1461 Sigismondo Malatesta (the lord of Rimini, against whom Pius II fought in southern Italy between 1460 and 1463), sent to Istanbul an illuminated manuscript of *De Re Militari* written by his humanist secretary, Roberto Valturio. The gift was prompted by the sultan's first documented invitation to an Italian artist, Matteo de' Pasti, who seems to have been a workshop assistant of Pisanello in Naples in the 1450s (like the Ottoman court painter Sinan Beg's teacher, Paolo da Ragusa). The invitation was made through the mediation of a Pera resident, Girolamo Michiel, the sultan's influential Venetian tax farmer and lessee of the lucrative

Bruni (Aretino), written in 1422, was presented to the sultan sometime before 1463 by the merchant Niccolò Ardinghelli, a friend of Lorenzo de' Medici: see Emil Jacobs, "Büchergeschenke für Sultan Mehemmed II," in *Festschrift für Georg Leyh* (Leipzig, 1937), 24–26. For a fifteenth-century Greek manuscript of Polybius's history (Books 1–5), preserved at the Topkapı Palace Library, see Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 67–68n25. The treatise on Florence and Venice is mentioned in Ms. Török F. 59, p. 201. For Flavio Biondo's short treatise on Venice, see Patricia H. Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani: A Venetian of the Quattrocento* (Rome, 1969), 254. If the translated book on Venice was the "History on the Origins of Venice" (*De origine urbis Venetiarum rebusque eius ab ipsa ad quadringentesimum usque annum gestis Historia*) of Bernardo Giustiniani (d. 1489), written in 1477–81 and published in Venice in 1493, one wonders whether an early manuscript version of this work might have reached the sultan's court. See Labalme, *Bernardo Giustiniani*, 247–304, for this posthumously published work on the origins and constitutional structure of Venice.

72 Dei, *La cronica*, 190; the sultan's two speeches are recorded on pp. 128–29, 165. Pius II (d. 1464) established a papal fortress and colony on the southern coast of Greece, taking Monemvasia under direct rule in response to an appeal from its inhabitants after their ruler, Thomas, fled in 1460; he appointed a military governor for the colony early in 1461. The pope's planned crusade and the war in southern Italy are discussed in D. S. Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals & War: The Military Church in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe* (London, 2006), 56–70. The unrealized crusade of Pius II was built entirely around the figure of Thomas, who would reclaim the throne of Morea and then Constantinople. On the last Byzantine Despots of Morea, namely, the brothers Thomas and Demetrios, see Donald M. Nicol, *The Immortal Emperor: The Life and Legend of Constantine Palaiologos, Last Emperor of the Romans* (Cambridge, 1992), 114–16. Demetrios fell out of the sultan's favor around 1467: see n. 100 below.

73 Dei, *La Cronica*, 115, 158–63. The house visited by the sultan belonged to his two Florentine friends, the merchant-banker Carlo Martelli and Vermiglio Capponi. In 1463, Mehmed II told Benedetto Dei that his personal informants on Italy included Girolamo Michiel (the Venetian tax farmer of the alum mines in New Phocea); his Jewish physician, Jacopo of Gaeta, the Jewish "Salomone Cifutti" (from Turkish "Çıfıt," meaning Jew), formerly an inhabitant of Cremona and Milan; the Florentine consul of Pera (Mainardo Ubaldini); and two leading Florentine citizens: Dei, *La Cronica*, 128. The Jewish informant was probably the same person who acted as the sultan's envoy to Venice in 1480, Simone Judeo (mentioned in n. 137 below).

74 The sultan's four consultants were the Florentine consul Mainardo Ubaldini, Niccolò Ardinghelli, Carlo Martelli, and Jacopo Tedaldi; they advised him to fortify "il chastello del Vitupero," and to equip it with thirty cannons, which they showed him where to position: see Dei, *La Cronica*, 164. For the hypothetical identification of this castle with Kilid al-Bahr, see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 255. The Italian influence on the plans of the castles of Yedikule and Kilid al-Bahr is discussed in Raby, "El Gran Turco," 283–90; Marcell Restle, "Bauplanung und Baugesinnung unter Mehmed II. Fâtih," *Pantheon* 39 (1981): 361–67. The inscription of the Kilid al-Bahr castle gives an earlier foundation date, in 866–67 (1461–62); according to Kritovoulos, it was completed in 1464: see Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mî mârîsinde Fâtih Devri 855–886 (1451–1481)*, 4 vols. (Istanbul, 1973–74), 3:172–88.

75 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 19–20, 42–47, 51–53. Military engineers trained in the sultan's armies transmitted Ottoman technological advances to the Latin West. For a Turkish engineer called Maestro Calasa who was employed in 1480 by the Duke of Calabria, the future Alfonso II of Naples, see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 290.

alum mines in New Phocaea (Yeni Foça) along the Aegean coast, seized from the Genoese in 1455. The response of the lord of Rimini to this invitation, which survives in a well-known letter in Latin drafted by Valturio and sent to the Porte in 1461, sheds light on Mehmed's attraction to mimetic portraiture as a visual means for immortalizing his fame. Malatesta says that he shares the sultan's admiration for the medallic portraits of ancient rulers, which provide "immortality" by communicating a silent history to those present now and in the future. He regards the delight they both derived from medals as a reflection of a refined humanist pursuit, "the mark of a talented and generous spirit." The lord of Rimini compares the sultan in his desire to be both painted and sculpted in a "lifelike" naturalistic manner by Matteo de' Pasti to Alexander the Great, who decreed that only Apelles and Lysippus could paint and sculpt him.[76]

Malatesta agrees to share with Mehmed his precious court artist, an "intimate" whom he had previously refused to loan to the rulers of Italy and France. However, Matteo de' Pasti and an unidentified engineer who accompanied him never reached Istanbul, since they were arrested as spies in Venetian Crete. The treatise on military engineering that they had with them, along with a map (or maps) of Italy and the Adriatic, contributed to the suspicion that the lord of Rimini was encouraging the sultan to invade Italy.[77]

76 Malatesta's letter is reproduced and discussed in Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 175–76, 187; Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 44–54, 314–18. For the presence of Paolo da Ragusa and Matteo de' Pasti as workshop assistants of Pisanello in Naples, see Syson and Gordon, *Pisanello*, 223–32. In 1461, Girolamo Michiel, who employed the Florentine Benedetto Dei as his treasurer, was imprisoned with other Venetians at a castle in Istanbul. In 1464, he was transferred to another prison in Edirne, where he died; his huge debt to the sultan was paid by the Venetian Signoria after the peace treaty of 1479: see Dei, *La cronica*, 128, 160, 163; 165, 174; Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 183, 251, 256. In a conversation with Dei in 1463, the sultan listed his informants on Italy and referred to Girolamo Michiel as *mio amaltaro* (from ʿameldār, meaning tax collector: Dei, *La cronica*, 128). Dei's letter dated 1467 refers to the late Girolamo Michiel as the sultan's *magnifico appaltiere e amaltaro* (contractor and tax collector) and to himself as Girolamo's *camarlingo et tesoriero* (camerlingo and treasurer); an earlier letter from Pera, dated 1462, indicates that Girolamo was then under arrest but free to follow up his business deals: see Orvieto, "Un esperto orientalista," 228–32, 242. A notebook at the Topkapı Palace Library containing drawings of Mehmed's monogram (*tughra*) as well as figural sketches, including Europeanate bust portraits, is thought to have been the sketchbook of Mehmed II as a young prince. This attribution, believed to indicate that the sultan's interest in naturalistic depiction went back to his childhood, is rightly questioned in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 32–33. It is on the basis of watermarks (datable from the 1430s to the 1470s) and the *tughra* exercises that this manuscript has been identified as the sketchbook of the young Mehmed; however, *tughra*s were affixed on imperial documents not by the sultans themselves but by their chief chancellors (sing. *nişancı*). The notebook also contains floral and vegetal "arabesques," the letters of the Arabic and Greek alphabets, and lines of Persian poetry. I think it may have belonged to one of the youths being trained in the royal palace as a multilingual chancellery scribe-cum-illuminator.

77 A letter to the Duke of Milan in 1461 reports the capture of Matteo de' Pasti, along with an engineer (*inzignero*); the painter was to exhort "the Turk" to invade Italy and to draw his portrait from life (*retracto ditto Turcho dal naturale*): see appendix in Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 319. A letter written from Istanbul in 1461 by the Riminese humanist Angelo Vadio to the author of *De re militari* describes the warships built for the sultan's forthcoming naval campaign to Rhodes or Albania: Giovanni Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese, 1446–1488* (Venice, 1915),148–89. A second envoy of Sigismondo Malatesta was sent to Mehmed II in 1462: his household steward Enrico Aquadelli, called Ser Rigo, who was also carrying a copy of Valturio's *De re militari*; however, it is not known whether he reached his destination. An incunable of this work, published in Verona in 1472, is in the Topkapı Palace Library (Ms. H. 2699), but its date and mode of acquisition are unknown: see Jacobs, "Büchergeschenke für Sultan Mehemmed II," 23–24.

In fact, shortly before the artist and engineer left Rimini in 1461, Malatesta had warned Pope Pius II that if King Ferrante of Naples (his sworn enemy and an ally of the pope) called on the ruler of Albania for help, he would himself invite "the Turk" to Italy. In 1462, the pope declared Malatesta a heretic for diverting attention away from the planned anti-Ottoman crusade, and after defeating his rebellious vassal the following year, he acknowledged no essential differences between the papacy's main enemies: "We fought for Christ when we defended Ferrante. We were attacking the Turks when we battered the land of Sigismondo [Malatesta]." Later, in 1464, the notorious condottieri saved himself from excommunication by commanding the Christian land forces of the ill-fated anti-Ottoman Venetian campaign in the Morea.[78]

This brings us to the Veneto-Ottoman war, fought on two fronts—Europe and Asia—between 1463 and 1479. During this protracted conflict, various European powers supported the combined efforts of Venice and the papacy to crush the Ottomans from both sides by forming an alliance with the Aqqoyunlu ruler of Iran, Uzun Hasan. The latter, like Timur before him, aimed to reinstate under his own protection the Anatolian principalities that had been swallowed by the Ottomans. Among these vanquished entities, the most powerful ones were the Komnenian dynasty of Trebizond, which had been allied with Uzun Hasan through his marriage to the Christian princess Theodora, and the Turkmen Karamanid dynasty of Konya (Iconium), whose descendants sought refuge at the Aqqoyunlu court.[79]

78 Malatesta's threat to the pope is cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 201–2, 504–5. The pope declared war on the pro-Angevin Malatesta in November 1460, and the military operations between 1461 and 1463 ended with a papal victory. On this war over the Angevin succession claim in Naples and Sicily, where Pius II supported the rule of King Ferrante (Ferdinand) of Aragon, see Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals & War* (the pope's statement equating Malatesta and the Turks is cited on pp. 58–69). The Venetians intervened on Malatesta's behalf and, having professed the Creed, he fought for the Christians in the Morea campaign of 1464: Soranzo, *Cronaca di Anonimo Veronese*, 190–204. According to Dei, Malatesta returned to Rimini in 1465 on a Florentine ship, because the Venetians had abandoned him to perish in the Morea so that they could seize his city-state: see Dei, *La cronica*, 164.

79 For the war on two fronts, see the references cited in n. 21 above.

In Rome, grandiose global projects were conceived during the early 1470s to reconstitute the ancient Roman Empire by reclaiming the throne of Constantinople. Cardinal Bessarion's candidate for this position was Andreas Palaiologos (the older son of the last Despot of Morea, and nephew of the last emperor of Byzantium), whom Bessarion regarded as the lawful heir to the Byzantine throne. Raised under the cardinal's tutelage as a Catholic in Rome, Andreas was invested by the pope with the rank of "Despot of Morea." He himself adopted the title of *Imperator Constantinopolitanus*, but his importance diminished considerably after Bessarion's demise in 1472.[80] Meanwhile, his sister, Sophia (Zoe) Palaiologina, who also grew up under the watchful eye of Bessarion, was married by proxy in Rome to the Grand Duke of Moscow, Ivan III, in the misguided hope of converting him to Roman Catholicism and winning his allegiance in the war against the Ottoman sultan. The wedding, which was officiated by Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471–84) at St. Peter's Basilica, took place in 1472, just as the papal fleet departed to fight the "Grand Turk." Both events were regarded as auspicious signs of the imminent renewal of Christian unity. The marital union between the Palaiologan princess and the "New Constantine," Ivan III, would subsequently lend substance to the fantasy of Orthodox Moscow as the Third Rome.[81]

Thus, in 1473, when the star of "Caesar Uzun Hasan" appeared to be at its zenith, it seemed more than possible that the Eastern Roman Empire could be restored with his help. That year, the dream of resuscitating the Roman Imperium, previously entertained at the Council of Ferrara-Florence and the Conference of Mantua, was rehearsed again in Rome at an extraordinary banquet hosted by the nephew of Pope Sixtus IV, Cardinal Pietro Riario. This carnivalesque banquet took place at the palace of the late Cardinal Bessarion (d. 1472), which Riario, as the new titular "Latin Patriarch of Constantinople," had inherited.[82] According to an Italian humanist, the banquet included a theatrical staging of the investiture ceremony of the Aqqoyunlu ruler as "Emperor and Duke of the Christians."[83] The actors included actual Turkish prisoners, captured from Ottoman ports that had been sacked by the papal fleet's commander, Cardinal Oliviero Carafa of Naples, and brought to Rome by him in a triumphal procession. During the banquet scene, they converted to Christianity in a "tableau vivant," chanting: "*Viva la fede de Jesu Christo / cum papa et el cardinal San Sisto*!"[84]

On a raised platform of the banquet hall, richly adorned with tapestries, the actor playing Uzun Hasan was enthroned as the "king of Macedonia," wearing a bejeweled "hat in the Greek manner," a precious necklace, and a "gold brocade robe (*turcha*)." Personifying Alexander the Great, he distributed commemorative gold coins (*moneta*) struck for the occasion, which identified him with an "inscription" and perhaps a portrait. The honorable spectators included cardinals, prelates, and ambassadors (of Aragon, Ferrara, France, Mantua, Milan, and Naples), as well as the two sons of the late Despot of Morea, Andreas and Emanuel Palaiologos. Accompanied by exotic Moorish dances (*morescha*), the banquet was interrupted by an actor playing the role of an Ottoman ambassador, who complained that Cardinal Riario had given away the sultan's empire to the "king of Macedonia." On behalf of his patron, he challenged the usurper to combat, should he refuse to give up his regal insignia. Cardinal Riario replied that the king had been crowned "legally," and the challenge was accepted. The tournament, held the next day at the piazza fronting the palace, featured two *all'antica* chariots for the rival Eastern emperors. Mehmed II was defeated in this mock battle and dragged in chains to a prison in Rome.[85] Ironically, Uzun Hasan himself would be vanquished by his Ottoman rival in a real battle just a few months later in 1473. The following year, Mehmed annexed the remaining territories

80 The title "Emperor of Constantinople" was not used by the Byzantine rulers, who called themselves "Emperor of the Romans." Andreas was the firstborn son of Thomas Palaiologos (d. 1465), the Despot of Morea, who in 1460 fled to the Venetian-ruled island of Corfu and was introduced to the pope in Rome by Bessarion in 1461 (see n. 72 above). By 1475, Andreas, whose seal bore the Palaiologan double-headed eagle and the title "*Despotes Romeorum*," was offering to sell his rights to the thrones of Constantinople and Trebizond to the King of Naples and the Duke of Burgundy. In 1476, his younger brother, Manuel, left Rome for Istanbul, where he was generously provided for by Mehmed II; he remained in the Ottoman capital for the rest of his life: see Nicol, *Immortal Emperor*, 114–16; Jonathan P. Harris, "A Worthless Prince? Andreas Palaiologos in Rome, 1464–1502," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 61 (1995): 537–54.

81 Sophia reconverted to Greek Orthodoxy in Russia and adopted the imperial Byzantine double-headed eagle as her emblem: see Nicol, *Immortal Emperor*, 115.

82 Angelo Michele Piemontese, "La représentation du Uzun Hasan sur scène à Rome (2 mars 1473)," *Turcica* 21–23 (1991): 191–203. Plans and elevations of the palace adjacent to the Basilica of the Twelve Apostles in Rome, known as the "Academy of Bessarion," are provided in Lorenzo Finocchi Ghersi, "Bessarione e la basilica romana dei Santi XII Apostoli," in Fiaccadori, *Bessarione e l'Umanesimo*, 129–36.

83 Cardinal Riario's Latin eulogy by the humanist Hilarion of Verona (Niccolò Fontanelli) is cited in Piemontese, "La représentation," 196.

84 Before the banquet on March 2, 1473, a triumphal procession was staged in Rome by Cardinal Carafa, the commander of the papal fleet (reinforced by ships from Naples, Rhodes and Venice), which attacked the Ottoman ports of Izmir and Antalya in 1472. During this procession in January 1473, the victorious cardinal paraded through Rome with his booty of twenty-five Turkish captives and twelve exotic camels, together with a section of the harbor chains of Antalya, which he used to adorn his tomb in Naples: see Piemontese, "La représentation," 193, 198; Chambers, *Popes, Cardinals & War*, 77. The Turkish prisoners are depicted in a fresco at the Church of S. Spirito in Saxia that features Sixtus IV's victories: P. de Angelis, *L'architettura e gli affreschi di S. Spirito in Saxia* (Rome, 1961): 249–52, fig. 94; cited in Angelo Michele Piemontese, "L'ambasciatore di Persia presso Federico da Montefeltro, Ludovico Bononiense O.F.M. e il cardinale Bessarione," *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* 11 (2004): 554.

85 Piemontese, "La représentation," 198–203. A sample of the gold coins was sent to the Marquise of Mantua, Barbara Gonzaga, together with a letter describing the banquet.

7a

held by the Aqqoyunlu monarch's Karamanid protégés. Subsequent attempts made by European rulers to join forces with Uzun Hasan against the Ottomans proved futile. The battle would be represented in Ottoman chronicles as a confrontation between the "Roman [Ottoman] Caesar-cum-Alexander" (*Ḳayṣer-i Rūm/İskender*) and the "Persian [Aqqoyunlu] Chosroes-cum-Darius" (*Kisrā-yı Acem/Dārā*), spurred on by competing claims for "global dominion" (*cihāngīrlik*).[86]

The banquet in Rome brings to mind the early Florentine engraving *El Gran Turco*, datable to around 1470, which depicts Mehmed II with a distinctive headgear that comes close to the one with which the Aqqoyunlu ruler was "crowned" and acclaimed as Alexander the Great (fig. 7 [a and b]). This contested emblem of sovereignty, which the Ottoman sultan claimed as his own at the banquet, was a "hat in the Greek manner (*cappello alla grechescha*), replete with pearls of great value."[87] The enigmatic engraving cer-

86 For attempts to form alliances and the various embassies exchanged between the Aqqoyunlu and European courts, which came to an end with Uzun Hasan's death in 1478, see n. 21 above. In 1474, it was believed that the Grand Duke of Moscow would fight against "the Turk," since the "Empire of Romania" (*l'Imperio de Romania*) rightfully belonged to him as the son-in-law of the late Despot of Morea, Thomas Palaiologos (d. 1465), whose two sons (Andreas and Manuel) lacked offspring. Uzun Hasan, on the other hand, would reclaim the "Empire of Trebizond" (*Imperio de Trebizonda*): see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 106. In 1475, "Caesar Uzun Hasan" (*Caesar Hussen kaschen*) offered his daughter, born of the Christian Princess Theodora of Trebizond, in marriage to the Polish king Casimir, in the hope of reconstituting the Eastern Roman Empire in its entirety (*Graecorum Imperium*): see Piemontese, "La représentation," 192–93. For the battle between Mehmed II and Uzun Hasan, see the Turkish chronicle commissioned in 1501–2 by Bayezid II: İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman VII. Defter*, ed. Şerafettin Turan (Ankara, 1991), 316. The same chronicle, completed in 1510–11, mentions several times Mehmed II's aspiration for global rule, referring to him as an Alexander and "heir of the dominion of Caesar (*ḳayṣer*)": İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman VII. Defter*, 160, 180, 222, 540–44.

87 Uzun Hasan's headgear is described in letters reproduced in Piemontese, "La représentation," 199, 201. For the *El Gran Turco* engraving and selected bibliography, see Chong and Campbell, *Bellini and the East*, 66–67; also see n. 89 below.

7b

7a–b. (a) Master of the Vienna Passion (attr.), El Gran Turco, Florentine engraving, ca. 1470. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 140-1879. (Photo: courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin); (b) Master of the Vienna Passion (attr.), El Gran Turco. Florentine colored engraving, ca. 1470. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Album H. 2153, fol. 144r. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library)

tainly intends to represent the sultan, despite its often-noted similarity to Pisanello's medal of John VIII Palaiologos wearing his characteristic imperial *cappello* (fig. 1).[88] Closely mimicking the corkscrew curls and physiognomy of the Palaiologan emperor, this fictitious profile portrait of the "Grand Turk" is less than flattering. The sultan's modified hat, often misinterpreted as a helmet, is comparable to the less ornamental peaked caps of Oriental personages in the Passion scenes of the Florentine Master of the Vienna Passion, to whom the *El Gran Turco* engraving is generally attributed.[89] The winged dragon perched on top has been interpreted as a reference to the "Turkish menace," or to "chivalric triumph." In my view, these alternative readings are triggered by the inherent ambivalence of the print.[90] The sultan's headgear evokes his identity as the new *basileus* in the guise of an Oriental neo-Alexander, an ambiguous evocation that could be read negatively or positively, depending on the viewer's subjectivity.[91]

88 During the Council of Ferrara-Florence in 1438–39, the Byzantine emperor's headgear was described as "a hat in the Greek manner" (*uno cappelletto alla greca*); later on, Paolo Giovio referred to the headgear on Pisanello's medal as "that bizarre hat in the Greek manner that the emperors used to wear" (*quel bizarro cappello alla grecanica che solevano portar gl'imperatori*): cited in Weiss, *Pisanello's Medallion*, 16. The annotations on a drawing of the Byzantine emperor by Pisanello also refer to his hat as "*Lo chapello*": see James A. Fasanelli, "Some Notes on Pisanello and the Council of Florence," *Master Drawings* 3 (1965): 38.

89 Dating *El Gran Turco* around 1460, Hind interprets the sultan's headgear as a "fantastic helmet," noting that "the same dragon and a similar hat occur in a Florentine niello....which was also probably intended for the 'Grand Turk' " and came "from the same goldsmith's workshop as the engraving": see Arthur Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, 2 vols. (London, 1938–48), vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 195. In his discussion of the *El Gran Turco* engraving, which he dates to ca. 1460–70, Zucker has noted that "comparably fantastic, though less ornamental, peaked caps are found here and there throughout the Master's authentic work": see Mark J. Zucker, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 24, *Early Italian Masters, Commentary*, pt. 1 (New York, 1993), 68; he adds that "the engraver certainly intended to represent Sultan Mohamed, whom Florentines always called *El Gran Turco*" (p. 70).

90 Different interpretations of the sultan's "dragon helmet" are discussed in Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 66–67. A recent publication, which came to my attention long after I submitted this article in 2007 (the lecture version of which has been accessible on the internet as a podcast since 2006), similarly compares the *El Gran Turco* print to Uzun Hasan's headgear in the Roman banquet. It interprets the engraving as a negative image, depicting a tyrant behind a magnificent façade, thereby demasking the sovereign's claim for power as haughtiness and exposing his magnificent appearance as delusion: Alberto Saviello, "*El Gran Turco* als 'maskierter' Tyrann; ein Topos druckgraphischer Darstellungen osmanischer Sultane im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert," in *Islamic Artefacts in the Mediterranean World: Trade, Gift Exchange and Artistic Transfer*, ed. Catarina Arcangeli and Gerhard Wolf (Venice, 2011), 217–30. The two sixteenth-century prints to which Saviello compares the *El Gran Turco* belong to entirely different contexts; in my view, the nuances of each of these three prints need to be interpreted separately, rather than seen as instances of a topos.

91 Like the Byzantine emperor's *cappello*, the sultan's comparable hat is not a helmet. The Pisanello medal created an exotic type for "both ancient and Eastern potentate"; similar hats appear in Renaissance images of Greeks, Albanians, antique personages, and Oriental rulers, as well as in a generic portrait of Mehmed II as the "Turkish Emperor" (*Mahumet turchorum imperator*), in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum* (1493): see Weiss, *Pisanello's Medallion*. F. R. Martin thought that the *El Gran Turco* engraving represented the Albanian prince Scanderbeg (d. 1467), an unconvincing identification at odds with the inscription: Zucker, *Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 24, pt. 1, p. 70. In some publications the print continues to be misidentified as a portrait of John VIII Palaiologos: see, for example, Nicol, *Immortal Emperor*, pl. 5 between pp. 82 and 83.

Later Florentine images depict Alexander the Great with a dragon helmet instead of an Orientalizing imperial *cappello* decorated with pearls. Examples include copies of Andrea del Verrocchio's lost bronze relief of Alexander, sent by Lorenzo de' Medici around 1477 as a diplomatic gift to the Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus. This implies that in the context of Florentine visual typologies the *El Gran Turco* engraving was not necessarily a negative image.[92] After all, throughout the 1460s and early 1470s, the Florentines were closely allied with Mehmed II against their Venetian rivals, who supported Uzun Hasan, and they consistently evaded papal calls for a crusade.[93] It is noteworthy that a colored impression of *El Gran Turco* did come into Mehmed's possession, along with other engravings from Florence and Ferrara, perhaps belonging to Florentine merchants (fig. 7b).[94] The Pera mer-

92 According to his biographer, Antonio Bonfini, King Matthias, too, took Alexander the Great as his role model. The lost twin bronze reliefs of Alexander and Darius by Andrea del Verrocchio (ca. 1477), which are mentioned by Giorgio Vasari, alluded to Matthias's role as defender of the West against the East; for these, and illustrations of their copies, see *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance*, 314–17; Białostocki, *Art of the Renaissance*, 7–8. The marble-relief copy of Verrocchio's lost Alexander relief, identified by an inscription as "P. Scipioni," exemplifies its flexible iconography (Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Sculptures, RF 1437, illustrated in *Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance*, 315, cat. 264a). A similar marble relief of Alexander the Great, created around 1480 at Verrocchio's workshop (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), is reproduced in Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (New Haven and London, 1997), fig. 205. In all of these examples, Alexander's dragon-topped headgear is a helmet.

93 The only time the Florentines were allied with Venice was between 1474 and 1480. Under pressure of public opinion in Italy, the traffic of goods between Florence and Istanbul was temporarily halted between 1467 and 1472, but many Florentine commercial agents were still active in 1469 in Pera, Constantinople, Edirne, Bursa, Gallipoli, and Phocaea: see Müller, *Documenti sulle relazioni*, 492–96.

94 For the hypothesis that the source for these prints may have been Benedetto Dei, see Julian Raby, "Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981): 42–49. This hypothesis is accepted in David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550* (New Haven, 1994), 94–95, and Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 128–29. Landau and Parshall observe that ten of the fifteen prints are Florentine and five Ferrarese; the Florentine prints may have all come from the same workshop to which the Master of the Vienna Passion belonged, while the Ferrarese prints probably "also come from the Florentine connection." Rogers unconvincingly proposes that the prints could have come to Istanbul via Tabriz, given "the overwhelmingly Aqqoyunlu contents" of the album into which they are pasted: see Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror," 93. Rogers assumes that fifteenth-century Tabriz was as cosmopolitan as Istanbul. However, unlike the presence of settled Italian merchant communities

chants were required by treaty to "visit the sultan's palace with substantial gifts" each time a Florentine ship arrived at the Ottoman capital. Rare engravings, for which an international export market was nonexistent at that time, would have been particularly welcome as a gift by the sultan, who avidly kept up with Italian artistic and technological innovations. The incorporation of the colored version of *El Gran Turco*, together with other engravings and two Europeanizing painted portraits of Mehmed II (figs. 19 and 20), into an album—probably compiled at the Ottoman court during the last years of Selim I's reign (1512–20)—suggests that in this particular instance it was not perceived as a negative representation. One of the Florentine prints in the same album, depicting a victory chariot inscribed *Trionfo della Fama* (Triumph of Fame), includes equestrian figures of the ancient heroes Caesar, Achilles, and Hector wearing headgear with winged dragons that were certainly meant to be seen in a positive light (fig. 8).[95]

Even if the ambivalent *El Gran Turco* engraving could be viewed as a favorable representation, the ethnicizing nickname "Grand Turk" hardly conformed to the sultan's official titles. This physiognomically unflattering image was ultimately an exoticizing and depersonalized "likeness" of Mehmed II, who, according to Sigismondo Malatesta's letter of 1461 (which was mentioned above), preferred to be portrayed in a "lifelike" manner. The sultan's two earliest portrait medals, which attempt to represent him naturalistically with Ottoman costume and titulature, seem to respond to this personal preference rather than to the demands of an emerging market of European collectors. Although Mehmed's agency in the creation of these anonymous, undated bronze medals of uncertain provenance remains unproven, they were likely created for him in Italy, perhaps on the basis of sketches prepared at the Ottoman court.[96]

8

8. Trionfo della fama, Florentine engraving, ca. 1460–65. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Album H. 2153, fol. 159r. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library)

in Ilkhanid and Jalayirid Tabriz, this city no longer had a bustling international settlement comparable to Pera in the second half of the fifteenth century. Moreover, after the fall of Trebizond to the Ottomans in 1461, the trade route connecting Tabriz to the Black Sea was blocked. There is no evidence of Florentine–Aqqoyunlu relations during the period when these prints were created. They all date from ca. 1460–80, a period coinciding with the Ottoman–Venetian war, when the ambassadors sent by the Venetian allies of Uzun Hasan experienced difficulties reaching Tabriz, and thus could not provide him with military aid.

95 It has been assumed that these prints, some of which have Christian subjects, would not have been appropriate gifts for the sultan, but we have seen that he was concerned with understanding religious differences. In 1488, Bayezid II renewed the privileges granted to Florentine merchants by Mehmed II: see Müller, *Documenti sulle relazioni*, xlii, 238–39, 313. A clause in the 1527 treaty of Süleyman I, which confirmed the capitulations of Bayezid II and Selim I, stipulates that "Every time a Florentine ship arrives, the merchants shall visit the sultan's palace with substantial gifts": cited in Halil İnalcık, "Ottoman Galata (1453–1553)," in *Première rencontre internationale sur l'empire ottoman et la Turquie moderne*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Varia Turcica 13 (Istanbul, 1991), 63. I agree with Raby that the album (TKS, H. 2153) was compiled at the Ottoman court, rather than with the alternative view that it was put together in Aqqoyunlu Tabriz: Raby, "Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album," 46–48. On reasons for dating this album to the reign of Selim I, see my forthcoming essay in the facsimile publication of that album [ADDENDUM: Meantime see my preliminary essay on this subject: "Persianate Images between Europe and China: The 'Frankish Manner'" in the Diez and Topkapı Albums, c. 1350-1450," in *The Diez Albums: Contexts and Contents*, ed. Julia Gonella, Friederike Weis, Christoph Rauch (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 531-91.] The *Trionfo della fama* print depicts a lawgiver and king on the platform with a globe (Africa, Europe, and Asia) and three nude figures (Hercules, Spendius, and Mathos). The latter two captives have been identified as the leaders of a rebellion against Carthage, as related in Book I of Polybius's *Punic War*: Hind, *Early Italian Engraving*, 1:35; Zucker, *Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 24, pt. 1, pp. 37–43. See n. 71 above for the Latin commentary on this work by Leonardo Bruni, which was presented as a gift to Mehmed II, and a Greek manuscript of Polybius's *Punic Wars* at the palace library.

96 For the view that the medals may attest to the sultan's contact with Western artists, see Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 175.

One of the medals features a youthful, beardless portrait of the sultan (fig. 9). On the *all'antica* reverse side, a naked, "Pisanellesque" Roman river god is depicted reclining in a rocky landscape and holding a warlike victory torch in front of a fortress. This small medal, attributed to a follower of Pisanello working in Venice, appears to have been created early in the sultan's reign, prior to the Ottoman-Venetian war initiated in 1463.97 It seemingly represents the mustachioed ruler in his twenties, during the first decade of his second reign (1451–61), and the inscriptions closely approximate the titles used in Malatesta's letter: "Great Amir and Sultan Mehmed Beg."[98] The image on the reverse can be read as an allusion to the ruler's naval ambitions, expressed in 1454 in his claim to be the "Lord of All Islands in the Aegean Sea." This claim precipitated his conquest of the Genoese port of Enos in 1456, along with nearby Aegean islands (subsequently reconquered by Pope Calixtus III's fleet in 1457), and culminated in the subjugation of numerous fortresses in the Morea campaign of 1458. Kritovoulos regards the campaign in Morea, after which the Ottoman capital was officially transferred from Edirne to Istanbul, as a preparation for the "naval war against the Italians," planned for "the near future." The sultan, who made this strategic move in 1459 in order to control both land and sea from his new capital, was inspired by the histories of ancient kings to whom naval operations "brought the most fame."[99] His second Morea campaign, in 1460, brought the entire region under his control with the capture of "strong cities and well-guarded fortresses and little towns, nearly two hundred and fifty in all."[100] The small medal can be tentatively dated to the

9a–b

9a–b. Italian follower of Pisanello, bronze medal of Mehmed II, 1450s. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, HCR 177. (Photo: courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum)

97 Dating the medal to the 1440s or 1450s, Julian Raby suggests it may have been produced in Italy as a gift from the sultan's "many Italian contacts"; he draws attention to the "implausible headgear" and the error in the inscription (discussed below in n. 98): see his entry in *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman* (exhibition catalogue, Topkapı Palace Museum) (Istanbul, 2000), 86. Although one cannot rule out the possibility that the medal was created in the 1440s, in this portrait Mehmed, mustachioed but beardless, seems to be depicted not as a teenager but as a young man in his twenties (as he was in the 1450s). For selected bibliography and the view that the medal was not commissioned by the sultan but created independently in Italy by a "follower of Pisanello, perhaps Marco Guidizani, who was active in the 1460s and 1470s in Venice," see Spinale's catalogue entry in Chong and Campbell, *Bellini and the East*, 70. Unlike Hill and Raby, Spinale argues that the medal was not based on an *ad vivum* drawing: see Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 90–99. She compares the nude male figure with the one on Pisanello's medal of Leonello d'Este (ca. 1441), believed to reinterpret a Roman statue of a river god then thought to represent Bacchus (who was associated with Alexander the Great): see Syson and Gordon, *Pisanello*, 90–93. However, at least one Roman humanist in the 1480s recognized it as a statue of a classical river god, probably on the basis of similar river gods depicted on the reverses of Trajanic and Hadrianic coins: see Ruth Rubinstein, "The Renaissance Discovery of Antique River-God Personifications," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Roberto Salvini*, ed. Roberto Salvini (Florence, 1984), 258, figs. 1 and 2. The nude on Mehmed's medal substitutes a warlike torch for the customary cornucopia held by river-god personifications. Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler*, 13–14, unconvincingly interpreted the fortress tower as a minaret.

98 The Latin inscription on the obverse reads: MAGNUS 7[=ET] ADMIRATUS SOLDANUS MACOMET BEI. Interpreting "*Admiratus*" as a naïve misunderstanding of "*Amir*," Spinale translates the inscription as "Great and Admired Sultan Mehmed Bey": see her entry in Chong and Campbell, *Bellini and the East*, 70. I think the "7 [=ET]" is misplaced and should be moved after "Admiratus": MAGNUS ADMIRATUS 7[=ET] SOLDANUS MACOMET BEI (Great Amir and Sultan Mehmed Beg). With this correction, the inscription comes very close to the titles used in Sigismondo Malatesta's letter of 1461, "Machomet Bei magnum admiratum et Sultanum Turchorum." In the first treaty composed in Greek that Mehmed II had with Venice (1446), he is identified as "Great Prince and Great Amir, Sultan Mehmed Beg": see Franz Babinger, "Mehmed's II. Frühester Staatsvertrag (1446)," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 3:35–68. The same titles are repeated in Serbian documents dating between 1458 and 1471 in the Dubrovnik (Ragusa) archives: Ciro Truhelka, "Dubrovnik Arşivinde Türk-İslâv Vesikaları," İstanbul Enstitüsü Dergisi 1 (1955): 42–57; in the Dubrovnik documents, Mehmed's titulature becomes more elaborate between 1472 and 1479: "Great Prince and Emperor of Emperors (*Tsar of Tsars*) of All Eastern and Western Lands, Great Amir, Sultan Mehmed [or Sultan Mehmed Beg]" (pp. 58–65).

99 In 1454, the sultan demanded tribute from Rhodes as the "Lord of All the Islands in the Aegean Sea," a demand followed that year by unsuccessful raids on Rhodes and Chios, and the conquest of Old and New Phocaea in 1455: see Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas*, 245–54. In 1456 Mehmed II conquered Enos, as well as the dependent islands of Thasos, Samothrace, Imbros, and Lemnos, ruled by the tribute-paying Genoese ruler Dorino II Gattilusio; the islands were subsequently held by papal forces between 1457 and 1459: see Magoulias, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks by Doukas*, 254–56; Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 105–11, 126, 139–40, 142.

100 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 140, 149–58, 185–87. With the exception of a few Italian fortresses, the Ottoman annexation of the Morea, begun in 1458, was completed by 1460, when Mehmed II regained control of the Aegean islands lost in 1457. He gave these islands, together with Enos, as fiefs to his vassal Demetrios Palaiologos, the former Byzantine Despot of Morea, who would be stripped of his holdings around 1467 and sent in disgrace to Didymoteichon: see Nicol, *Immortal Emperor*, 114.

1450s, before Matteo de' Pasti was invited to paint and sculpt even more naturalistic likenesses of the sultan.

A recently discovered uniface bronze medal (fig. 10) appears to have been created in the 1460s.[101] The portrait on it of the sultan—older, bearded, and seemingly in his thirties—is accompanied by relatively more elaborate titulature: "Great Prince and Great Amir, Sultan Lord Mehmed."[102] This bigger medal could have been produced in the course of the gift-bearing embassies that the sultan, at the urging of his Florentine advisers, exchanged in the mid-1460s with the rulers of Naples and Milan, in order to incite them against the Venetians.[103] Mehmed's alliance with King Ferrante of Aragon during two anti-Venetian campaigns in Albania (in 1465 and 1467) suggests that the uniface medal may have been cast for him around that time by an artist residing at the Neapolitan court.[104] If so, it was probably created prior to the Christian league, proclaimed by the Venetian pope Paul II in the spring of 1468, when the sultan turned his attention to the Karaman campaign in central Anatolia.[105]

10

10. Italian artist, uniface bronze medal of Mehmed II, 1460s. Private collection. (Photo: courtesy of Susan Spinale)

Mehmed II's two earliest portraits in the new "currency of fame" feature Latin inscriptions, the *lingua franca* of the Latin West, rather than Greek inscriptions, as seen on Pisanello's medal of the penultimate Byzantine emperor. They identify the turbaned Muslim ruler by his then-current official titulature, unlike later portrait medals, which exalt him with the more ambitious title of "*imperator*." The sultan's Western artistic horizons, expanding along with the aggrandization of his imperial claims and the growth of his European territories, culminated in the celebrated visits of Costanzo da Ferrara (di Moysis) and Gentile Bellini during the final years of his reign. By knighting these two artists, Mehmed claimed for himself an authority exclusively shared by kings and emperors in the Latin West.[106]

101 Spinale tentatively attributes the bronze uniface medal to Pietro da Milano, or perhaps Francesco Laurana, around 1460. Both were active in Naples and France, but neither was known to have traveled to Istanbul. The uniface medal lacks the reverse with three eagles' heads depicted on the four known examples of the Tricaudet medal, which was signed in Gothic letters by Jean Tricaudet of Selongey. According to Spinale, these medals, deriving from the uniface original, were made after Mehmed's death: see Susan Spinale, "Reassessing the So-called 'Tricaudet Medal' of Mehmed II," *The Medal* 42 (2003): 3–22; Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 72–79, 278–80. She ascribes these later medals to a different Jean Tricaudet, whose name was recorded in Selogney in 1460. For earlier dates proposed in former studies, see Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini*, 13n1 (ca. 1460–63); Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler*, 7–8 (ca. 1453–55); Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 175 (1450s or post-1461).

102 The title "*Beg*," used in the beardless portrait medal, is dropped in the uniface medal: MAGNUS PRINCEPS ET MAGNUS AMIRAS SULTANUS DNS [Dominus] MEHOMET.

103 Between 1464 and 1467, Mehmed II sent at least two embassies to King Ferdinand (Ferrante) of Naples, offering him "a marriage alliance between their children," or, if that was objectionable on religious grounds, with the Palaiologan daughter of his "First *Subaşı*, *primi subassidis*": see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 58. An embassy with lavish gifts sent by the sultan to the courts of Naples and Milan in 1464 upon the recommendation of certain Christians (probably his Florentine advisers), is described in Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 36. In 1467, the sultan sought advice from the Florentines for his anti-Venetian campaign in Albania: see Dei, *La cronica*, 165. According to Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 242, in 1467 he sent an embassy with gifts from Valona in Albania to King Ferrante of Naples. In a letter dated April 5, 1467, Ferrante instructs his ambassador to thank the sultan for the envoy he sent with gifts and urges him to find out what kinds of presents would be appropriate for the sultan and the Pasha of Albania: cited in Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 120–22. In 1468, ambassadors from the rulers of Milan, Naples, and Florence, who opposed the peace mission of the Venetian ambassador, were present at the sultan's court: recorded in Nicolae Iorga, ed., *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle*, 4th ser. (1453–1476) (Bucharest, 1915), 214. King Ferrante sent another ambassador with gifts from Valona to the sultan's court in 1469, shortly before the Ottoman conquest of Negroponte in 1470: see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 46. Ferrante subsequently joined the papal forces with Venice in 1471 as part of the alliance with Uzun Hasan.

104 Letters from the king of Naples, intercepted by the Venetians in 1467, exhorted the sultan to send his men to Albania because he could easily conquer Kroya and Durazzo: see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 42. For the alliance in 1464 between Florence, Milan, and Naples against the Venetians (an aversion shared by France), and for the sultan's two campaigns in Albania, see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 251–65, as well as his "Le vicende veneziane nella lotto contro i Turchi durante il secolo XV," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 1:251. Spinale suggests that the uniface medal may have been created on the basis of an intermediary drawing in France or Naples around 1460, either commissioned by a French patron as a gift to the sultan or created in Naples by Pietro da Milano (or Francesco Laurana) as "an enterprising response" to an overture by Mehmed II for an Italian artist: see Spinale, "Reassessing the So-called 'Tricaudet Medal'," 12. Since no French embassies are recorded in those years, it seems more likely that the medal was cast in the second half of the 1460s in Naples.

105 In May 1468, Pope Paul II's league of all Italian rulers was celebrated, followed by the visit of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III to Italy. The rulers of Naples, Milan, and Florence initially opposed the league, as did the king of France, who shared their enmity towards Venice, but the pope threatened to excommunicate those rejecting his call for peace: see Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 251–59. The Karaman campaign of 1468 is discussed in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 265–69.

106 According to Angiolello, the title *imperator* corresponds to the Ottoman Turkish title *khunkār*: Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 45. Throughout the Persian chronicle of Maʿālī, written ca. 1474 and titled *Khunkārnāma*, Mehmed II is referred to as "Shah of the Shahs of the World and Emperor" (*shāhanshāh-i jahān va khunkār-khān*): see Balata, "Hunkarnāma." The few artists knighted during Mehmed II's reign by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III and the kings of Naples and Hungary are listed in Martin Warnke, *The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist*, trans. D. McLintock (Cambridge and New York, 1993), 156–58, 168. For Mehmed II's knighting of Gentile and Costanzo, see Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 114–17. Mehmed II also knighted the Venetian ambassador Giovanni Dario *cavaliero* in 1479: see Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 346. Because he was knighted by Mehmed II, Bellini received a pension of 200 gold ducats, paid until his death, according to Vasari: see Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini*, 57. The practice of knighting continued under Bayezid II: see n. 187 below.

Written shortly before two coordinated naval campaigns in 1480, one against Rhodes (the "key to Italy") and the other against Otranto, the chronicle in Arabic by Grand Vizier Karamani Mehmed Pasha provides a glimpse of the sultan's inflated self-image at a time when his invitations to Italian artists reached their peak. This semi-official chronicle regards the signing of the 1479 peace treaty that reduced Venice to a tribute-paying vassal as the crowning glory of Mehmed's reign. Unlike the Perso-Achaemenid lineage preferred in Kritovoulos's chronicle, that of the pasha constructs for the Ottoman dynasty a noble Turkic-Oghuz genealogy, which became normative in history writing under Bayezid II.[107] The author, the only Muslim-born grand vizier of Mehmed II, was educated as a scholar in Konya and married to a Seljuk princess. He presents the House of Osman as the legitimate heir to the Rum (Anatolian) Seljuk sultanate and attributes the unrivaled growth of the Ottoman-Oghuz family tree in "the gardens of glory and felicity" to the dynasty's foremost ruler, Mehmed II, the "qibla of scholars" in his learning and justice, whose procreation was the greatest of his father's deeds. It ends with the following exclamation: "If so many conquests have been achieved during the thirty years of his reign… just imagine what will be accomplished in the next thirty!" The author ascribes the sultan's victories to the auspiciousness of his divinely bestowed power, the source of extraordinary deeds. He confidently declares: "It is not at all difficult for God to unite the whole world under a single person!"[108]

Constructions of imperial identity in architecture and portraiture

During Karamani Mehmed Pasha's grand vizierate (1476–81), the sultan issued a dynastic law code that redefined his public image in court ceremonies, laying a new emphasis on majestic royal seclusion.[109] The refashioning of imperial identity at the zenith of Mehmed's power coincided with the completion of the Topkapı Palace, marked by the erection of its outer fortress. The Arabic inscription on the Imperial Gate of that fortress, dated 883 (1478), glorifies the divinely sanctioned ruler as "the Sultan of the Two Continents and the Two Seas, the Shadow of God in this World and the Next, the Favorite of God on the Eastern and Western Horizons, the Conqueror of Constantinople, the Father of Conquest, Sultan Mehmed Khan."[110] The sultan's augmented prestige was also expressed by the unprecedented minting of gold coins known as sulṭānīs in 882 (1477–78). The boastful Arabic inscriptions on these coins refer to the Ottoman ruler as the "Issuer of Gold Coins, the Lord of Power and Victory on the Lands and the Seas." Mehmed's claims to universal sovereignty were further advertised by his upgraded titulature in diplomatic correspondence and by the Latin inscriptions on his Italianate portraits, created toward the end of his reign.[111]

The centrality of Constantinople in sultanic architectural patronage

Before turning to those portraits, I will briefly consider the sultan's two principal architectural commissions in his new capital, both completed around 1478, which shed light on the evolution of his imperial imagination: his mosque complex and the Topkapı Palace (figs. 5[3, 4] and 6). According to Kritovoulos, these grand edifices, meant "to vie with the greatest and best of the past," were simultaneously initiated in 1459, the year the sultan ordered his grandees to construct their own public and private buildings "to adorn and embellish the city." Conceived as complementary complexes constituting the religious and secular foci of Mehmed's centralized administration, these two ambitious monuments brought about the symbolic refounding of Constantinople, whose conquest by the sultan is a leitmotif of their foundation inscriptions. Tursun Beg's chronicle highlights the heavenly architectural iconography of both complexes,

107 For the reference to Rhodes as the "key to Italy," see Spandounes (Spandugino), *Origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, 66; Karamani, "Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi," 321–65. For the submission of the Venetians in 1479, see Karamani, "Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi," 359–60. The Turkic-Oghuz lineage of the Ottomans, already promoted under Murad II, is also underlined in a Persian chronicle written between 1456 and 1459 and dedicated to Mehmed II's grand vizier Mahmud Pasha: see Şükrullah, *Behcetüttevârîh*, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri I*, ed. N. Atsız (Istanbul, 1947), 37–76. Another chronicle ending with Mehmed II's reign, Enveri's Turkish *Düstūrnâme*, was dedicated in 1464 to the same pasha: Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 206. For the Ottoman campaigns against Otranto and Rhodes in the summer of 1480, and raids on Hungary in 1479 and 1480, see İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 473–521; these campaigns on three fronts are also mentioned in Dei, *La cronica*, 180–81.

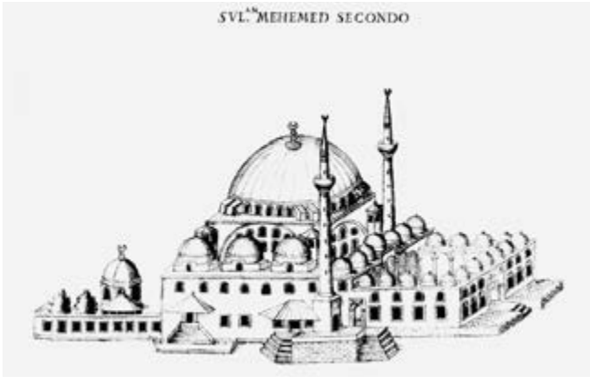
108 Karamani, "Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi," 343–52, 360–61. The author dedicates a separate book to Mehmed II's reign, preceded by a shorter book on the early Ottomans.

109 See Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 15–22.

110 Fully translated in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 34–37. Contemporary sources never refer to Mehmed II as "Fatih" (the Conqueror), a popular nickname not coined until the seventeenth century. Instead, they refer to him as "Father of Conquest" (*Ebü'l-Feṭḥ / Abü'l-Fatḥ*).

111 On the other side, the gold coins bore the Arabic inscription "Sultan Mehmed Khan, son of Murad Khan, Glorious be his victory!" The new gold coinage, which replaced Ottoman gold ducats "coined in the Venetian mold" (*in istampa veneziana*), was reissued in 883 (1478–79) and in 885 (1480–81): see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 367–68, 457–58; Nuri Pere, *Osmanlılarda Madenî Paralar* (Istanbul, 1968), 90, nos. 79–81. Mehmed II's diplomatic correspondence with Ragusa (Dubrovnik) shows the steady increase in the amount of annual tribute he demanded, parallelling his adoption of more grandiose imperial titles: payments rose from 1,500 florins in 1458 to 5,000 in 1468 and 10,000 in 1472, culminating with 12,500 florins in 1478. See n. 98 above for his adoption of the title "Tsar of Tsars" from 1472 onwards, recorded in Serbian documents in the Dubrovnik archives.

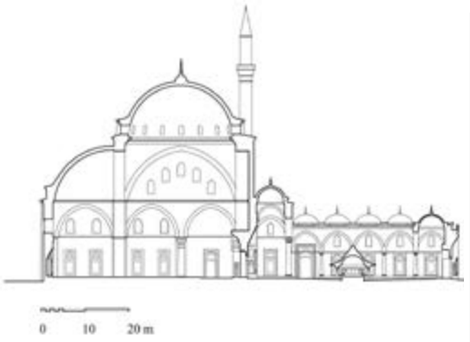
11



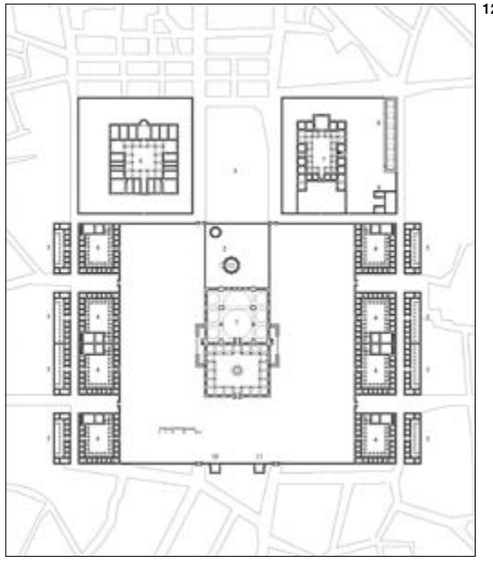
11. Francesco Scarella, funerary mosque of Mehmed II in Istanbul, 1686. Ink drawing on paper. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 8627. (Photo: courtesy of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek)

which turned the new capital into an earthly paradise, each of them featuring flourishing gardens supplied with water from the renovated Roman Valens Aqueduct. By engaging in a pointed dialogue with the antiquities of the city, the two complexes echoed the uses of the past in Renaissance Italy, but from an Ottoman cultural perspective that lacked the literary revival of Antiquity. Just as Italian Renaissance architecture interacted primarily with the classical remains of Rome, the buildings commissioned by Mehmed II responded to the early monuments of Constantinople, with a particular focus on the city's Late Antique heritage.[112] The sultan's two complexes incorporated his new capital's Eastern Roman imperial past into an Ottoman present that superseded but still laid claim to it. Hence, these monuments implicitly affirmed Mehmed's right to the title "Emperor of Constantinople," which was being contested not only in the West but also in his own empire during the course of their construction. Both complexes positioned the present within the context of global history

112 Mehmed II's mosque was completed in 1470, but commercial structures added as dependencies to the complex were endowed with a deed dating from 883 (1478–79): see Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 94; Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 140–41, 148–49; Tulum, *Tursun Bey*, 70–76. For Mehmed II's uses of the past and Italian Renaissance parallels, see Gülru Necipoğlu, "Challenging the Past: Sinan and the Competitive Discourse of Early Modern Islamic Architecture," *Muqarnas* 10 (1993): 169–80; Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London, 2005; 2nd ed., 2011), 77–103; Robert Ousterhout, "The East, the West, and the Appropriation of the Past in Early Ottoman Architecture," *Gesta* 43, 2 (2004): 165–76; Hubertus Günther, "Die osmanische Renaissance der Antike im Vergleich mit der italienischen Renaissance," in *Sultan Mehmet II.: Eroberer Konstantinopels-Patron der Künste*, ed. Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger and Ulrich Rehm (Cologne, 2009), 93–138.



12



12. Reconstruction plan of the mosque complex of Mehmed II in Istanbul, with a hypothetical cross-section of the mosque: (1) mosque, (2) mausolea of Mehmed II and Gülbahar Hatun, (3) formal garden, (4) madrasas, (5) preparatory schools, (6) hospital, (7) guesthouse, (8) caravansaray, (9) hospice, (10) elementary school, (11) library. (Drawing by Zeynep Yürekli, after Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* [London, 2005; 2nd ed., 2011], figs. 59 and 60, p. 85)

through topographic and architectural references to the glorious past of Constantinople, embracing the imperial idea embodied in the city itself, rather than in the person of the defeated Palaiologan monarch.

The central edifice of the socio-religious complex came to be known as the "New Mosque," in contrast to the old one that the sultan had ordered built outside the land walls of Istanbul (figs. 11–13). The latter complex, constructed on the site of the miraculously rediscovered tomb of the martyr-saint Abu Ayyub al-Ansari (a companion of the Prophet who participated in the first Arab siege of Constantinople), had reconsecrated the recently vanquished Christian city with the memories of a distant Islamic past.[113] The new complex replaced the dilapidated Church of the Holy Apostles, founded by Constantine the Great and rebuilt by Justinian I, which had served as the model for St. Mark's in Venice and was the second most important church in Constantinople after the Hagia Sophia. Surmounted by five domes, the cruciform church rebuilt by Justinian had a more centralized plan than the Hagia Sophia. Nevertheless, the contemporary historian Procopius (ca. 500–565) praised its monumental domed central core as resembling that of the Church of Hagia

113 For the mosque complex of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, completed ca. 1458–59, and its mythology, see Necipoğlu, "Life of an Imperial Monument," 200. The new mosque was dubbed the "Fatih Mosque" in the modern secondary literature, after the sultan's post-seventeenth-century sobriquet, which I prefer not to use: see n. 110 above. It is called the "New Mosque" (*al-jāmiʿ al-jadīd / yeni cāmiʿ*) in the various versions of Mehmed II's *waqfiyya*: see, for example, Öz, *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden*, 12, 14.

13

13. Istanbul: aerial view of Mehmed II's mosque complex. http://www.skyscrapercity.com/showthread.php?t=758628 (accessed March 27, 2012)

Sophia, though on a smaller scale. Mehmed's mosque complex attempted to bridge the city's Late Antique building tradition with the Ottoman dynastic architectural heritage through a fusion of ancient and contemporary features that evoked a powerful sense of place (*genius loci*). The sultanic mosque was intended, in the words of Kritovoulos, to "vie with the largest and finest temples" of the city. The palace library inventory records a now-lost panegyrical treatise in Turkish verse, combining an encomium of Mehmed II with that of his mosque complex, which may have echoed the sixth-century ekphraseis of Justinian's Hagia Sophia composed by Procopius and Paul the Silentiary, as well as the ninth-century *Diēgēsis* copied for the sultan in 1474 and subsequently translated into Persian and Turkish.[114]

That the blending of past and present architectural features was intentional becomes evident in Tursun Beg's chronicle of Mehmed's reign. He states

114 For the fourth-century Church of the Holy Apostles, probably consecrated by Constantine's son and successor, Constantius II, and entirely rebuilt by Justinian I in the sixth century, see Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls: Byzantion, Konstantinupolis, Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 1977), 405–11; Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger and Arne Effenberger, *Die Porphyrsarkophage der oströmischen Kaiser* (Wiesbaden, 2006); Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 140, 217. The inventory refers to the no-longer extant panegyrical treatise as *Risāla fī madḥ Meḥemmed Khān ṭāb tharāhu wa madḥ al-jāmiż al-jadīd bi'l-turkīyya al-manẓūma* (Ms. Török F. 59, p. 266). For a Greek copy of the *Diēgēsis* and the translations of it kept at the palace library, see n. 124 below.

that the sultan built a "Great Mosque based on the plan of the Hagia Sophia, which besides encompassing all the arts of the Hagia Sophia, attained, in accordance with the practices of the Moderns, a fresh new idiom and an immeasurable beauty, and whose luminosity is manifest like the miracle of the white hand [of Moses]" (*Ayaṣofya kārnāmesi resminde bir ulu cāmiż bünyād itdi ki, cemīż-i ṣanāyiż-i Ayaṣofyaya cāmiż olduġından ġayrı, taṣarrūfāt-ı müte'aḫḫirīn üzre nevż-i şīve-i tāze ve ḥüsn-i bī-endāze bulup, nūrāniyetde mużcize-i yed-i beyżāsı ẓāhirdür*). Much like Italian Renaissance attempts to correct and update ancient models, the mosque is perceived as a response to its celebrated Late Antique prototype, modified by contemporary improvements. Its aesthetic superiority is attributed to an innovative synthesis, subsuming the artistic legacies of the city's old and new orders. The deliberate cross-reference to the Hagia Sophia, now functioning as the premier imperial mosque of the Ottoman capital, articulated a diachronic architectural evolution that was conflated into the synchronic present, embodying a divinely ordained sense of historical destiny. The unprecedented symmetrical layout of the grand complex, reverberating with Italian Renaissance notions of ideal planning, has been interpreted as trumpeting the "modernism" of Mehmed's "New Rome." The selective translation of ancient Roman-Byzantine and contemporary Italian design concepts into predominantly Ottoman architectural forms, decorated in a regional variant of the international Timurid-Turkmen mode, underscored the heterogeneous affiliations of the new "Constantinopolitan" aesthetic.[115]

The mosque's foundation inscription, providing the dates 867 (1463) and 875 (1470), proclaims the prestige of the sultan's conquest of Constantinople, an "unrivalled" city that former Muslim rulers attempted in vain to conquer.

115 The white hand of Moses refers to a divine miracle, Exodus 4:6, "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Now put your hand inside your cloak.' So Moses put his hand inside his cloak, and when he took it out again, his hand was white as snow with a severe skin disease." The infliction and removal of this disease were demonstrations of the sovereign power of God. Tulum, *Tursun Bey*, 70–72. On the mosque, which was rebuilt after an earthquake in 1766, praises and critiques of it in Ottoman written sources, and the complex in general, see Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mizmârîsinde Fatih Devri*, 3:356–406; Gülru Necipoğlu, "Anatolia and the Ottoman Legacy," in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, ed. Martin Frischman and Hasan-Uddin Khan (New York, 1994), 153–54; Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, 82–88; and Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 66–96. For the observation that "nothing so early in the Western Renaissance has this grandeur," as well as for the "modernism" of Mehmed's "New Rome," see Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (New York, Oxford, 1985), 459. The ideal plan of the complex has been compared to the layout of the Ospedale Maggiore in Milan, included in Filarete's treatise: see Restle, "Bauplanung und Baugesinnung," 362–66; Raby, "El Gran Turco," 261–63. Although the complex was designed before Filarete's planned visit to Istanbul, the sultan's informants in Pera and his "contacts with Rimini and Milan could have given him access to Filarete's and Alberti's theories": see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 17–29, 285.

14

15

14. Detail of fig. 6, Cristoforo Buondelmonti, view of "Constantinopolis," early 1480s, showing the New Palace (now Topkapı Palace) adjacent to the ruins of the Byzantine Great Palace (labeled "palaciu(m) (imperatoris) ruptu(m)"), the Hagia Sophia, and the Hippodrome.)

15. Istanbul: aerial view of the Topkapı Palace with the Hagia Sophia Mosque in the background.

A separate inscription panel quotes the Prophet's hadith announcing the city's preordained Islamic destiny, fulfilled through the agency of Mehmed and his army: "They will certainly conquer Constantinople. Hail to the prince and the army to whom this is granted!" The rest of the foundation inscription fully delineates the sultan's dynastic genealogy, requests God's favors for both his ancestors and descendants, and identifies his charitable pious foundation as an educational center for the restoration of "knowledge and learning" (*ẕilm wa ẕirfān*). With its record number of eight madrasas (which came to be known as *Semāniyye* after the "eight paradises") and its endowed library, the sultanic mosque complex resurrected the memory of the former patriarchal university within the grounds of the Church of the Holy Apostles. Dedicated to the study of the Seven Liberal Arts (the *trivium* and *quadrivium*), this university had ceased to function by the fourteenth century. It is not a coincidence that the early sixteenth-century visitor Teodoro Spandugino (who claimed descent from the imperial Byzantine Kantakouzenos family) regarded the sultan's colleges for the Islamic sciences, which were complemented by preparatory schools, as institutions staffed with professors learned in the Seven Liberal Arts (*sept arts liberaulx*). The demolished church-cum-mausoleum, which enshrined the bodies of the city's Christian founder, Constantine the Great, and his illustrious descendants–including Justinian I and Empress Theodora–had served as the principal burial place for Byzantine emperors until the eleventh century. It gave way to the funerary mosque complex of the city's Muslim founder, the Ottoman "Emperor of Constantinople," whose mausoleum, already planned, was posthumously built by his son-and-successor, Bayezid II, along with the mausoleum of the new sultan's mother. Just as precious columns removed from the demolished funerary church (and other sites) were reused as spolia in Mehmed II's mosque, the prized porphyry sarcophagi of former emperors were transported to the grounds of the Topkapı Palace and its gardens, where they are currently on display. The reuse of no-longer quarried antique porphyry and colored granite columns as signifiers of imperial status in both the sultan's mosque and palace complex constituted yet another parallel with Renaissance Italy that Mehmed II's successors would perpetuate.[116]

The Topkapı Palace, adjacent to the Hagia Sophia and the evocative ruins of Constantine's Great Palace abutting the Hippodrome, was built over the site of the ancient acropolis of Byzantium shortly after Mehmed II returned from his tour of the acropolis in Athens, which seems to have made a lasting impression on him (figs. 5[3] and 6). According to Kritovoulos, the ruler gave orders in 1459 "for the erection of a palace on the point of old Byzantium which stretches out into the sea–a palace that should outshine all and be more marvelous than the preceding palaces in looks, size, cost, and gracefulness." It came to be known as the New Palace, supplanting the Old Palace at the center of the city, which no longer measured up to the sultan's standard of magnificence (fig. 5[2]). Completed sometime between 1465 and 1468, its inner core of three courtyards, crowning the uppermost terrace of the acropolis, was fronted by an *all'antica* hanging garden that provided expansive panoramic views for the imperial gaze of the "Sultan of the Two Continents and Two Seas." These extant royal structures, with their commanding vistas, punctuate the two corners of the residential third court. They were "built with a view to variety" in their juxtaposition or fusion of diverse styles and are unmistakably depicted on an updated version of Cristoforo Buondelmonti's city map, datable to the early 1480s (figs. 14 and 15). At one corner is the multi-domed Privy Chamber, whose typically Ottoman arcades fea-

116 The Arabic inscriptions are recorded in Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mizmârîsinde Fatih Devri*, 3:383 (figs. 596–97), 385–87 (figs. 601–3). The quoted hadith is attributed to Umm Haram: see Canard, "Les expéditions," 106. The Byzantine patriarchal university with its preparatory schools and colleges was described around 1200 by Nikolaos Mesarites: see Glanville Downey, ed., "Description of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 47 (1957): 865–67, 894–97. For Spandugino's description, see Spandouyn, *Petit traicté*, 206. On the Church of the Holy Apostles' mausolea–namely, that of Constantine the Great and the Heroon of Justinian I–and imperial sarcophagi now displayed within the grounds of the Topkapı Palace, in the atrium of Hagia Eirene and the Istanbul Archaeology Museums, see Asutay-Effenberger and Effenberger, *Die Porphyrsarkophage*. The reuse of monumental porphyry and Aswan granite columns in the central domed baldachins of the mosques built for Mehmed II, Bayezid II, and Süleyman I in Istanbul is discussed, along with Italian Renaissance parallels, in Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*. For the Topkapı Palace columns *in situ*, see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*.

16

16. Courtyard arcade and loggia with fountain at the Inner Treasury of the Topkapı Palace. (Photos: courtesy of Hadiye Cangökçe)

ture pointed arches raised on columns with muqarnas capitals. By contrast, the Inner Treasury at the opposite corner once displayed a hybrid combination of Ottoman, Byzantine, and Italian Renaissance elements. The remaining Italianate features of this royal treasury-cum-library include round arches and composite Ionic capitals, used on the arcades of its courtyard façade and its spectacular open loggia with a central fountain (figs. 15 and 16). The round arches are complemented by Ottoman arches (both pointed and "Bursa-type"), seen in the profiles of the portals and niches. The ceiling of the courtyard arcade, bordered by a muqarnas frieze, featured now-lost Byzantinizing figural mosaics. The diversity of styles fused into this edifice matched Mehmed's equally diverse "universal" treasury collection, which it housed, along with his cherished Byzantine relics and multilingual library.[117]

117 Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 140, 207–8. Edifices in the third court and its hanging garden are analyzed in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 89–95, 123–46, 184–89; the objects, books, and relics kept in the Inner Treasury are discussed on pp. 134–37. Also see the eyewitness palace description in Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 30–32. For the untenable view that the Italianate colonnades were added in the eighteenth century during the "Ottoman Baroque" period, see Tanyeli, "Batılılaşma öncesinin Türk Mimarlığında Batı Etkileri," 163; Uğur Tanyeli, "Topkapı Sarayı Üçüncü Avlusu'ndaki Fatih Köşkü (Hazine) ve Tarihsel Evrimi Üzerine Gözlemler," *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıllık* 4 (1990): 157–88. The composite Ionic capitals differ stylistically from their "Ottoman Baroque" counterparts; moreover, the marble blocks of the half capitals (used at the ends of the courtyard and loggia arcades) are clearly incorporated into the original wall fabric. The loggia was walled in throughout the eighteenth century and there was no incentive to add lavish colonnades to a building that was locked up as a treasury.

According to Angiolello, who provides our only eye-witness account of Gentile Bellini's visit, the sultan was particularly delighted by paintings and gardens (*si dillettava de' giardini et haveva piacere di pitture*). In the terraced outer garden of the Topkapı Palace, whose fortified enclosure was completed in 1478, Angiolello mentions mosaic-decorated Byzantine chapels (*chiesiole*) that were adapted to new functions.[118] No longer extant, these domed chapels are seen on the updated version of Buondelmonti's map of Contantinople, which identifies the site of the palace as "*Bizantion*" (fig. 14).[119] The Column of the Goths, still standing in the palace's outer garden, was complemented by such antiquities as imperial sarcophagi, transported from the funerary Church of the Holy Apostles, as well as baptismal fonts reused as fountain basins. The Latin inscription on the triumphal column,

118 Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 119. MacKay identifies Angiolello as the author of this page: see MacKay, "Content and Authorship of the *Historia Turchesca*," 220. For the chapels in the palace garden, see Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 32.

119 The legends of the updated Buondelmonti map in Düsseldorf identify the extant church of St. Irene (*S. elini*) in the first court of the palace and three no longer existing chapels (*S. demetrius*, *S. georgius*, and *S. maria*) in the outer garden; for these chapels, see Arne Effenberger, "Die Illustrationen–Topographischen Untersuchungen: Konstantinopel/Istanbul und ägäische Örtlichkeiten," in *Cristoforo Buondelmonti: Liber insularum archipelagi, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf Ms. G 13, Faksimile*, ed. Irmgard Siebert, Max Plassmann et al. (Wiesbaden, 2005), 23–28. This map was first published in Ian R. Manners, "Constructing the Image of a City: The Representation of Constantinople in Christopher Buondelmonti's *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 87, 1 (1997): 87–94. He tentatively dated it to the end of Mehmed II's reign, and on the basis of some legends in the Florentine dialect he suggested that it may have been created by an Italian visitor for a patron like Mahmud Pasha (d. 1474), whose mosque is identified on the map. The Düsseldorf city map, datable to ca. 1480, might have been made for an Ottoman grandee with Greek origins, according to Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 144–54. Dating it to the last years of Mehmed II's reign (1478–81), Barsanti hypothetically links it with the patronage of the Genoese Bocchiardi family, whose mansion is depicted on the Istanbul map. She also notes the prominent presence of the Genoese flag, depicting a cross, in the vassal Genoese colonies of Pera and Chios: see Claudia Barsanti, "Costantinopoli e l'Egeo nei primi decenni del XV secolo: La testimonianza di Cristoforo Buondelmonti," *Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte* 56 (2001): 89–253. The possible connection with the Bocchiardi family is further explored in Effenberger, "Die Illustrationen," 67–68, where the map is dated to the second half of the 1480s on the basis of its watermark from around 1484 (pp. 9–20). This supports my own conclusion that the map must have been created during Bayezid II's reign, as its legends identify Mehmed II's posthumously built mausoleum (*sepulcrum soltani Meometi*): see Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, 91–92n85. Effenberger proposes that the latest *terminus ad quem* for the map is 1501, because it omits Bayezid II's mosque, construction on which began that year. However, I prefer a date in the early 1480s and find it notable that the second minaret that Bayezid II added to Hagia Sophia (seen on a print in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum* of 1493) is missing in the Düsseldorf map. According to Kafescioğlu, the anachronistic representation of Justinian I's bronze equestrian statue on the column of the Augustaion, next to the Hagia Sophia, in the Düsseldorf map and in Schedel's prints of Constantinople reflects an ambivalence concerning the city's identity. In my view, the continuing representation of the no-longer-extant statue may also refer to its connection with the city's apocalyptic identity.

which was once surmounted by a statue of Byzas (the legendary founder of ancient Byzantium) according to a late Byzantine chronicle, commemorates an unidentified victory over the Goths. This trophy of the sultan's own triumph over the Byzantines must have served as a potent reminder that his palace was raised on the podium of the city's ancient acropolis. The connection of the site with Byzas is, in fact, recognized in a Persian adaptation of the Greek *History of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia* written for Mehmed II in 1480. This source states that the site of the sultan's New Palace was once occupied by a citadel built by Byzas, which had been forcefully conquered by the emperor Constantine—a reminder that the founder of Byzantium, too, was a conqueror.[120]

Another triumphal column, erected around 386 by Emperor Theodosius I (r. 379–92), graced the outer garden of Mehmed's Old Palace, which was completed in the mid-1450s (figs. 5[2] and 6). The classicizing spiral reliefs of this historiated column, modeled on that of Trajan in Rome, exalted the Byzantine emperor of New Rome as universal sovereign and commemorated his victories over the "barbarians," much as did the so-called Column of the Goths. Described by Angiolello as having "minute figures with triumphal chariots," its reliefs depicted an imperial victory procession in Constantinople, with bound captives and camels that may have reminded the sultan of the "injustices" that the Byzantines were perceived as having perpetrated against the Asiatic peoples they conquered.[121] Although the column is no longer extant, these reliefs are recorded on a series of mid-sixteenth-century drawings based on lost originals, attributed in a later inscription to Gentile Bellini. Whoever made the original drawings *in situ* must have been granted special permission to enter the outer garden of the Old Palace, which was then occupied by the imperial harem and thus inaccessible to outsiders.[122] The permission most likely came from Mehmed II rather than his successor, who dismantled the Theodosian column around 1500 to make room for a bathhouse adjoining his mosque complex, located in a space carved out from the gardens of the Old Palace. According to a late sixteenth-century court history, the site of Bayezid II's mosque complex was revealed to him in a divinely-inspired dream. Some of the column's broken fragments are incorporated into the foundation wall of this sultan's bathhouse, which was built circa 1505–8 rather than after his death, as is generally assumed.[123] I find it plausible that the initiative for recording the

120 For the Column of the Goths and other antiquities in the palace garden, see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace,* 198–99 (fig. 114a–b), 208–9; Hülya Tezcan, *Topkapı Sarayı ve Çevresinin Bizans Devri Arkeolojisi* (Istanbul, 1989); Asutay-Effenberger and Effenberger, *Die Porphyrsarkophage*. On the disputed date of the Goth's Column and the report of the chronicler Nikephoros Gregoras (ca. 1340) that it was once surmounted by the statue of Byzas, see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 53; Rudolf H. W. Stichel, "Fortuna Redux, Pompeius und die Goten, Bemerkungen zu einem wenig beachteten Säulenmonument Konstantinopels," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 49 (1999): 467–92. The reference to Byzas's citadel in Şemsüddin Harabati's Persian text is cited in Yerasimos, *La fondation de Constantinople*, 113–14.

121 For the Old Palace, see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 3–4. The iconography and reliefs of the column of Theodosius I are discussed in Giovanni Becatti, *La Colonna coclide istoriata: Problemi storici, iconografici, stilistici* (Rome, 1960), 83–150. The reliefs commemorated the emperor's recent victories over the Goths and Ostrogoths and other rebellious Asiatic "barbarians." Angiolello describes the column at the outer garden of the Old Palace as "tutta instoriata di figure minute, con cari trionfanti ed altre istorie antiche": see Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 33.

122 For the drawings (ca. 1550), preserved at the Louvre Museum in Paris and attributed to Battisto Franco (Venice, 1510–61), as well as photographs reproducing the complete series, see the catalogue entry by Catherine Monbeig Goguel in *Byzance retrouvée: Érudits et voyageurs français (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)*, ed. Marie-France Auzépy and Jean-Pierre Grélois (exhibition catalogue) (Paris, 2001), 66–70, pls. XII–XXXIII; a similar series of drawings is preserved in Princeton University (pp. 67–68). Becatti argues that Bellini could have obtained special permission from Mehmed II to record the reliefs *in situ*: see Becatti, *La Colonna*, 113–14. Goguel discusses alternative views (including the possibility that the designs were recorded from fragments on the ground after the column was dismantled), but she prefers Becatti's explanation and concludes that Bellini's authorship of the original drawings is not unreasonable: see Goguel in Auzépy and Grélois, *Byzance retrouvé*, 68.

123 Bayezid II's dream is mentioned in Lokman b. Seyyid Hüseyin, *Hünernāme*, ca. 1584–85: Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, Ms. H. 1523, fols. 193v–194r, 196r. According to the French antiquarian Pierre Gilles, who was in the Ottoman capital between 1544 and 1547, and in 1550, the Column of Theodosius I on the third hill was destroyed by Sultan Bayezid II, "more than forty years before I came to Byzantium" (i.e., before 1504), so that his bathhouse could be built more easily: see *Pierre Gilles's Constantinople*, trans. Kimberly Byrd (New York, 2008), 150–51. New-found fragments from Theodosius I's column, discovered in 1973 near the Istanbul University Library, support the theory that the Louvre drawings reproduce the lower relief bands of the column of Theodosius I rather than those of the Arcadius column: see Siri Sande, "Some New Fragments from the Column of Theodosius," *Acta ad Archaeologiam et Artium Historiam Pertinentia*, serie altera 9, 1 (1981): 1–78. The cyclone that destroyed the "column on which the bronze horse of Emperor Theodosius once stood" is mentioned in Alvise Mocenigo's letter dated 1517: cited in Claudia Barsanti, "Il Foro di Teodosio I a Costantinopoli," *Milion* 1 (1995): 9. It is my contention that this fallen column was not the one with which we are concerned. Instead, it was the column near Hagia Sophia, at the Augustaion, which once formed the base of the equestrian statue of Justinian I, whose bronze horse (removed by Mehmed II) bore an inscription referring to Theodosius I. Hence, the Augustaion column with Justinian I's statue is mislabeled as "*theodosius*" on the Buondelmonti maps of Constantinople and on a drawing attributed to Cyriac of Ancona. For the mislabeling, see Effenberger, "Die Illustrationen," 43–46n31; Barsanti, "Costantinopoli e l'Egeo," 217–19. Gilles says that after the horse was taken down, the Augustaion column remained bare and had toppled down thirty years prior (i.e., ca. 1517–20, close to the date mentioned by above Mocenigo): "Finally, thirty years ago the entire column was toppled down to the stylobate, which a year ago I saw cut out at its foundation.": Byrd, trans., *Pierre Gilles's Constantinople*, 88. A Turkish source states that the Augustaion column collapsed suddenly one night during Selim I's reign: see Julian Raby, "Mehmed the Conqueror and the Byzantine Rider of the Augustaion," *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıllık* 2 (1987): 146n14. The mosque of Bayezid II was built in 906–11 (1500–6) and its madrasa in 912–13 (1506–8). The bathhouse was endowed for the mosque complex of the sultan's wife, Gülbahar Hatun (d. 911 [1505–6]) in Trebizond: see Semavi Eyice, *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı*

classical reliefs of Theodosius's column may have come from Mehmed II himself, given his keen interest in the ancient history of his capital, as exemplified by the Greek and Latin texts on the antiquities of Constantinople that were copied and translated for his library.[124]

It has been argued that the so-called Vavassore map of Constantinople, published in Venice around 1520 or 1530, is based on a lost original datable to ca. 1479–81, which could only have been made on the basis of on-site sketches with the official sanction of the sultan. Given Mehmed's enthusiasm for cartography and newly emerging modes of representation, this conjecture is not unfounded. Thought to be a single-sheet derivative of a multi-sheet printed map that no longer survives, the Vavassore map is a "perspective plan," created at a time when such naturalistic "city portraits" were still a rarity (fig. 5). The label on it, "Byzantium or Constantinople," highlights the vanquished city's imperial identity, which made the empire of "Byzantium" synonymous with "Constantineopolis" (*Ḳosṭanṭiniyye*). The map projects a cosmopolitan image of the new Ottoman capital as a thriving hub of international trade and diplomacy, thronging with ships bearing banners that feature Ottoman crescents, the Genoese cross, the Holy Roman Emperor's double-headed eagle, and the lion of St. Mark—navigating under their own flag was a privilege granted to Venetian ships with the peace treaty of 1479. This previously unnoted detail suggests to me that the original map may have been designed towards the end of that year, when ambassadors of both the Venetian Signoria and Emperor Frederick III were present in Istanbul. The Italian legends on the single-sheet woodcut identify classical antiquities, city gates, churches, arsenals, janissary barracks, the cannon foundry, the covered bazaar, and all of Mehmed II's major architectural undertakings. The woodcut map thereby lays an unmistakable emphasis on royal interventions in the cityscape—the most ambitious "collective" creation of the sultan, to be further embellished by his successors. The city's skyline, which subsequently achieved iconic status, would be naturalistically "portrayed" in Melchior Lorichs's panoramic view (ca. 1559–60s), which is full of references to Vavassore's print. Also labeled "Byzantium or Constantinople," this panorama is a cumulative visual record of the *renovatio urbis* initiated under Mehmed II, which culminated in the city envisioned by the chief architect Sinan. It, too, populates the cosmopolitan bustling harbor of Istanbul with ships, including those of Sultan Süleyman and of the ambassadors to his court from the Venetian Republic, the Holy Roman Emperor, and the Safavid Shah.[125]

İslam Ansiklopedisi (Istanbul, 1992), s.v. "Beyazıt Hamamı." This double bath, mentioned in Bayezid II's endowment deed dated 913 (1507–8), must have been completed before that date. For the untenable view that it was erected after the death of Bayezid II, upon the column's presumed destruction in the cyclone of 1517, see Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon*, 388; Barsanti, "Il Foro di Teodosio," 9, 14; Goguel's entry in Auzépy and Grélois, *Byzance retrouvé*, 67; Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 113; and Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror," 92. I believe Bayezid may have destroyed the Theodosian column as a harmful talisman. Upon the advice of astrologers who warned Mehmed II that it was a malevolent talisman of the city, the equestrian statue of the Augustaion was removed from its column prior to the Belgrade campaign of 1455–56, when it was partly melted to cast cannons. Yet Mehmed preserved the Serpent Column in the Hippodrome as a benevolent talisman for averting snakes: see Raby, "Byzantine Rider of the Augustaion," 141–53.

124 Chong finds it likely that Mehmed II commissioned the recording of the reliefs that commemorated an ancient triumphal parade, and adds that Bellini, too, was interested in antiquities (since in his will he left drawings of Rome to his assistants): see Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 113. Anonymous chronicles report that Mehmed II questioned Byzantine and Latin literati on the history of Constantinople and Hagia Sophia. The palace library has a Greek manuscript of the *Diēgēsis* copied in 1474, and Persian and Turkish translations of the *Patria* and *Diēgēsis* were made in the last years of the sultan's reign: see n. 58 above. The dates of extant Turkish and Persian manuscripts are provided in Yerasimos, *La fondation de Constantinople*, 200. The palace library also preserves an unillustrated Greek translation of Cristoforo Buondelmonti's Latin text, *Liber Insularum Archipelagi*: see Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 67n24; Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 19, 23, 29.

125 The double-headed eagle is interpreted as an ambiguous reference to the Byzantine past in Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 163–64. Permission to use the banner of St. Mark on ships was one of the clauses of the Ottoman–Venetian peace treaty concluded on January 25, 1479 in Istanbul and confirmed in Venice on April 25th of that year. Shortly thereafter, on May 21, 1479, Benedetto Trevisano was designated Venetian ambassador to Istanbul to counter the presence there of ambassadors sent by the emperor, the king of Hungary, and the king of Naples. He was sent back by Mehmed II on October 7, 1479 with a letter that promised Venetian merchants safety in Ottoman territories and expressed the hope that Ottoman merchants would also be safe in Venetian territories. Trevisano's mission is summarized in Raby, "El Gran Turco," 322, 324, 326. On the interchangeable use of the synonymous terms "Constantinople" and "Byzantium," see n. 139 below. The Vavassore map's label is interpreted as a sign of the West's "ambiguity in terms of the city's identity," in Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 154–64. On the Vavassore city map, also see Albrecht Berger, "Zur sogenannten Stadtansicht des Vavassore," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 44 (1994): 329–55. I disagree with Berger's claim that this map was created during the reign of Bayezid II, a hypothesis based on some map legends that he misidentifies with monuments built by this sultan: the legend "*moschea*," which he links with Bayezid II's mosque, and the arsenal along the Golden Horn that he dates to 1513, although it was actually created by Mehmed II. Kafescioğlu convincingly disproves Berger's dating as well as Ian Manners's hypothesis that the Vavassore map derives from the Buondelmonti map in Düsseldorf (mentioned above in n. 119). Unlike Berger, who suggests that the Vavassore map was probably based on a lost original created by an Italian resident of Pera, independent of the sultan's court, Kafescioğlu argues that it was most likely Mehmed II himself who granted permission to freely study the city's topography, and who may have even commissioned a printed view of the city. Although it is difficult to prove the direct patronage of the sultan, I agree that the creation of such a city view would have required his official approval. According to Effenberger, "Die Illustrationen," 19, the Vavassore map represents Istanbul not earlier than 1478–79 (the date of the outer wall of the Topkapı Palace) and not later than 1490 (the date when the church of *S. Luca Evangelista* was destroyed). It is believed to have been based on a lost drawing (sometimes attributed to Gentile Bellini) or a printed view of Constantinople (like the one in six copper plates mentioned in an inventory of the cartographer Francesco Roselli's workshop in Florence): see Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 154–64; Rudolf H. W.

In the Vavassore map's representation of the "New Palace" (*seraglio nuovo*) one can identify three monumental pavilions (*palazzi*), described by Angiolello as having been grouped together within the palace's outer garden, "about a stone's throw distant from one another" and built in "diverse modes" (*diversi modi*) (fig. 5[3]). The first pavilion, in the "Persian manner" (*alla persiana*), was constructed in "the mode of the Karamanid lands" (*al modo del paese Caraman*), while the second one was in the "Turkish manner" (*alla turchesca*) and the third in the "Greek manner" (*alla greca*). The use of diverse modes is also specified in the chronicle of Tursun Beg, who only mentions two of the three pavilions in the outer garden, one of them built in "the manner of Persian kings" (*ṭavr-ı ekāsire*) and the other "in the Ottoman manner" (*ṭavr-ı ʿOsmānī*). He adds that the towers of the outer fortress surrounding this garden were constructed in the "Turkish" (*türkī*) and "European" (*firengī*) manners, a comment testifying to an acute stylistic self-consciousness.[126] Of this variegated trio of garden pavilions, expressing Mehmed's pluralistic vision of empire, only the Persianate Çinili Köşk (Tiled Kiosk), completed in 1472, survives. It embodies the international Timurid-Turkmen style embraced by the Karamanid principality of central Anatolia, whose subjugation was being challenged at that time by Uzun Hasan. The three pavilions can therefore be interpreted as assertive architectural representations of the major kingdoms united under Mehmed II's empire, namely, those of the Ottomans, the Byzantines, and the Karamanids.[127]

In the winter of 1480, Mehmed II asked Venice to send him a master builder, a bronze sculptor, and a painter called "Bernardo *depentor*." This request, which proved to be in vain, has nevertheless led to the suggestion that the sultan was perhaps planning to build a fourth pavilion, in the *alla franca* manner, on the eve of the twin naval campaigns directed against Rhodes and Otranto.[128] In March 1480, Mehmed's ambassador to Florence asked for the services of "masters of carving and wood and intarsia," in addition to "bronze sculptors," who were promptly dispatched to Istanbul.[129] As Julian Raby has proposed, the woodworkers may have been architectural decorators, like the Florentine intarsia masters invited to decorate Matthias Corvinus's palace at Buda in 1479.[130] Bellini, who was residing in Istanbul at that time (1479–81) along with his two unidentified Venetian assistants, is said to have decorated some halls of the Topkapı Palace. Besides portraits of the sultan and of many

Stichel, "Das *Coliseo de Spiriti*: ein Phantom. Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung der Stadtansicht vom Vavassore-Typus," *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 51 (2001): 445–59. A recently discovered early inventory of prints lists two multi-sheet views of Constantinople, one of them a woodcut in five colored sheets (the work of the Florentine Lucantonio degli Uberti, printed in Venice ca. 1510–20), and the other an anonymous print in eight sheets, the description of which suggests that it was "probably the prototype" for the map copied by Vavassore. The eight-sheet print "may have some relationship with or may even be the six-sheet printed view of Constantinople by Roselli with two sheets of decorative material added": see Mark P. McDonald, *The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539): A Renaissance Collector in Seville*, 2 vols. (London, 2004), 1:254–55; 2:569, no. 3159; 2:573, no. 3178. The eight-sheet print featured on its upper right side "a banderole that reads *Constantinopollen*," which implies that its legends were not identical with those of the Vavassore map. The latest facsimile dates Lorichs's "Constantinople Prospect," based on a preparatory drawing made in 1559, to ca. 1560–65: Erik Fischer, *Melchior Lorck*, 5 vols. (Copenhagen, 2009), vol. 4, "The Constantinople Prospect." See also Nigel Westbrook, Kenneth R. Dark, and Rene Van Meeuwen, "Constructing Melchior Lorichs's Panorama of Constantinople," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 69, 1 (March 2010): 62–87.

126 Cited and discussed in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 210–12. See Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 32; Tulum, *Tursun Bey*, 73–74. Both the Çinili Köşk and its Ottoman-style companion, which once occupied the site of the present Museum of Ancient Near Eastern Antiquities on the same vaulted terrace, are clearly visible on a late sixteenth-century panoramic view of the palace reproduced in Stichel, "Fortuna Redux, Pompeius und die Goten," 469, fig. 1. These twin pavilions, overlooking a now-lost water tank, are also seen in a painting in Lokman's *Hünernāme* (ca. 1584–85), illustrated in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 95, fig. 56. Tanyeli misidentifies the Ottoman-style pavilion as the royal Privy Chamber, located in the third court of the palace, ignoring Tursun Beg's unambiguous statement that this pavilion and its companion were both located in the palace's outer garden: see Tanyeli, "Batılılaşma öncesinin Türk Mimarlığında Batı Etkileri," 178n59.

127 For the Tiled Kiosk and the two non-extant pavilions, see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 210–17. In 1472, Uzun Hasan dispatched ambassadors to Europe and to Mehmed II, demanding the restitution of the lands of his Karamanid cousins, which had been usurped by the Ottomans in 1468: see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 78–80. His forces attacked the lands of Karaman in 1469 and 1472: see Turan, "Fâtih Mehmet," 95–97.

128 For the request from Venice and the hypothetical Italianate pavilion, see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 38, 50–54, 298, 333–35; Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 178–80. A document in the Dubrovnik archives records 840 Venetian ducats paid by Mehmed II on February 5, 1480 to "Majstora Pavla" for his expenses; if this is the same artist who had previously trained the sultan's court painter, Sinan Beg (see n. 18 above), he may have visited the sultan's court at that time: see Babinger, "Mehmed II., der Eroberer, und Italien," 198n1; Raby, "El Gran Turco," 131–33.

129 Raby, "El Gran Turco," 38, 49–51. According to Benedetto Dei, these craftsmen (*maestri d'intaglio e di legname e di tarsie…di maestri di scholture di bronzo*) were selected, organized, and conducted to Istanbul with a young member of the Martelli Bank, Benedetto d'Antonio di Leonardo: see Dei, *La cronica*, 176.

130 Raby, "El Gran Turco," 49–51. I believe the bronze sculptors may have been sought by the sultan to cast cannons for the campaigns in 1480 against Rhodes, Otranto, and Hungary (see n. 107 above), as well as for artistic projects such as medals and architectural decoration. In European courts, bronze sculptors were variously employed in making bombards, cannons, medals, sculptures, and architectural details (like the doors with classicizing triumphal reliefs cast for the Castel Nuovo of King Ferrante of Naples around 1474–77). One of the Florentine intarsia masters sent to Hungary in 1479, Chimenti Camicia, became Matthias Corvinus's chief architect in 1480, heading a royal workshop of Tuscan and Dalmatian craftsmen specializing in Renaissance *all'antica* architectural decoration at the court in Buda: see Péter Farbaky, "Late Gothic and Early Renaissance Architecture in Hungary ca. 1470–1540," in *The Architecture of Historic Hungary*, ed. Dora Wiebenson and József Sisa (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 45–51. During the late 1470s and early 1480s, the king of Hungary also rebuilt the summer palace in Visegrád, where a late Gothic royal workshop fused the newly imported Renaissance *all'antica* vocabulary with the indigenous medieval style.

17a–b–c–d. (a) Costanzo da Ferrara, bronze medal of Mehmed II, ca. 1478. Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1957.14.695a and 1957.14.695b. (Photo: courtesy of the National Gallery of Art); (b) Costanzo da Ferrara, bronze medal of Mehmed II, 1481. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, HCR. (Photo: courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum); (c) Bertoldo di Giovanni, bronze medal of Mehmed II, ca. 1480. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, HCR. (Photo: courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum); (d) Gentile Bellini, bronze medal of Mehmed II, ca. 1480. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, HCR. (Photo: courtesy of the Ashmolean Museum)

other persons, he was also asked to paint a devotional image of the Virgin and Child, a view of Venice, and "*cose di lussuria*," all of which, according to Angiolello, Mehmed II's disapproving successor ordered sold at the bazaar, where they were largely bought by Venetian merchants.[131] That is why only a scant few of the works commissioned from Italian artists during the last years of his reign have survived.

131 For the bronze sculptor Bartolomeo Bellano, who also came to Istanbul in 1479 with two assistants, and rumors about Bellini's activities at the Ottoman court, see Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 106–19. The bazaar sale is mentioned in Ursu, ed. (Angiolello) *Historia Turchesca*, 119–21: "Fu dal ditto Gentil fatto diversi belli quadri, et massime di cose di lussuria in alcune cose belle in modo che ne haveva nel serraglio gran quantità, et all'intrar che fece il figliuolo Baiasit Signor il fece vendere tutti in Bazzaro, et per nostri mercanti ne furono comprati assai." (These passages are attributed to Angiolello in MacKay, "Content and Authorship of the *Historia Turchesca*," 220). The disputed interpretation of "*cose di lussuria*" as erotic images or "things of luxury" is discussed by Chong, who accepts the latter version: Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 110.

The culmination of the sultan's patronage of Italianate portraiture

The extant medallic and oil-painted portraits of Mehmed II proclaim imperial status and territorial dominion, as does the Topkapı Palace (figs. 17[a–d] and 18). In fact, these portraits, which bring together the disparate elements of Mehmed's patronage profile discussed so far, can be read as carefully crafted examples of Renaissance self-fashioning resonating with specific contexts. Let us first consider the context of the undated portrait medal signed by Costanzo (da Ferrara), who was sent to Istanbul by King Ferrante of Naples in response to the sultan's request for a painter, probably in the mid-1470s (fig. 17a). The equestrian image of Mehmed II on the reverse of the medal is often compared with that of John VIII Palaiologos on the previously mentioned medal by Pisanello (fig. 2). Given the precedent of thirteenth-century coins with generic equestrian images of the Rum (Anatolia) Seljuk sultans, whose former capital, Konya (Iconium), had recently been added to the Ottoman domains—and of the seals of Sultan Alaüddin Keykubad (r. 1220–37), with

their classicizing bust "portraits" depicting him wearing a Roman toga—it is possible to imagine that Mehmed II regarded his own, more naturalistic portrait medal by Costanzo as not entirely foreign to the Islamic visual tradition of the "lands of Rum."[132] A threatening inscription surrounds the equestrian image of the sultan, who, like his bellicose great-grandfather, is referred to in some Ottoman sources as the "Thunderbolt": "This man, the thunderbolt of war, has laid low peoples and cities."[133] Generally dated to 1478, this unusually large bronze medal commemorates, in my opinion, the anti-Venetian Albania campaign personally commanded that year by the sultan, who was then allied with the king of Naples and his son-in-law, Matthias Corvinus. The campaign had been preceded in 1477 by the devastating raids of Ottoman provincial governors on Istria and Friuli in the vicinity of Venice, where thousands were captured, as well as on Venetian colonies in Albania and Greece. During Mehmed II's subsequent campaign in 1478, cities and peoples were subjugated, as mentioned in the inscription. Among the Venetian strongholds conquered in Albania was Kruja, previously besieged in 1467–68: Kritovoulos described this impregnable hilltop fortress as "an acropolis and guardhouse for the whole region," dotted with "fortifications in the hills." Scutari

132 Without specifying a date, Battista Bendidio explains in a letter that the king of Naples sent Costanzo to the sultan, who had asked for a painter. According to Raby, the artist was sent "either between 1464 and 1467 or, more probably, between 1475 and 1481" (see the entry by Raby in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 89). Since documents do not mention Costanzo (who was still living in 1524) before 1474, Chong suggests that he was sent to Istanbul between 1477 and 1478 and returned to Italy in 1479, when the peace treaty was signed with Venice; he is recorded as having been in Naples in 1483: see Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 126–27. For a silver coin featuring the Anatolian Seljuk Sultan Kılıç Arslan IV as a turbaned "royal hunter" with bow drawn and Arabic inscriptions, dated 646 (1248–49), see Evans, *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, 427, cat. no. 256a. A similar coin depicts Alaüddin Keykubad as an equestrian figure, while two seals with classicizing bust "portraits" depict him as a Roman emperor; for these and for the use of classical figural sculptures as spolia on the walls of his capital in Konya (Iconium), see Suzan Yalman, "Building the Sultanate of Rum: Memory, Urbanism and Mysticism in the Architectural Patronage of Sultan ʿAla al-Din Kayqubad (r. 1220–1237)" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2011), 323– 421, as well as her article in this volume, "'Ala al-Din Kayqubad Illuminated: A Rum Seljuq Sultan as Cosmic Ruler."

133 For the medal's Latin inscriptions and selected bibliography, see Spinale's catalogue entry in *Bellini and the East*, 71–72. A poem in an album (Istanbul University Library, Ms. F. 1423, fol. 12r) refers to Mehmed II as the "Thunderbolt Sultan" (*Yıldırım Sultan*): see A. Süheyl Ünver, *Fatih Devri Saray Nakışhanesi ve Baba Nakkaş Çalışmaları* (Istanbul, 1958), 10. The chronicle of Karamani Mehmed Pasha compares Mehmed II to a "thunderbolt" because of how swiftly he mobilized his troops to confront Uzun Hasan in the victorious campaign of 1473: see Karamani, "Osmanlı Sultanları Tarihi," 357. Mehmed II is likewise compared to a thunderbolt in Kritovoulos's *History*: during the Trebizond campaign of 1461, his swift incursion struck the terrified Uzun Hasan like a "bolt from the blue" (Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 172); and the sultan fell upon the Bosnian territories "like a thunderbolt, burning, ruining, and destroying everything" (p. 188). Spinale suggests that the sultan may have been familiar with Plutarch's and Pliny's references to Alexander the Great as the "Thunderbolt Bearer": Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 129–31.

18

18. Gentile Bellini, Portrait of Mehmed II, 1480. Oil on canvas. London, National Gallery, NG 3099. (Photo: courtesy of the National Gallery)

(Skhodër), too, was placed under siege (following an unsuccessful earlier attack in 1474), and the Venetians were forced to give up this "right eye" of the Adriatic Gulf as part of the peace treaty of 1479.[134] The medal shows the sultan riding through a rocky, "Pisanellesque" landscape with barren trees and a fortress atop a hill on the distant horizon. The domed hilltop garrison strikingly recalls the representation of Scutari—Ottoman İskenderiyye (Alexandria), believed to have been founded by Alexander—on an anonymous stone relief at the Scuola degli Albanesi in Venice, which depicts Mehmed II's siege of the city in 1478.[135] The bulky figure of the sultan on the reverse of the medal and his awesome profile portrait on the obverse—showing him with a rounded beard, an aquiline nose, and a thick neck—closely match the verbal description of Mehmed II provided by Angiolello, who attended the Albanian campaign as one of his courtiers.[136]

Costanzo's undated medal was reworked with new inscriptions, framed by a double border, in a second version that bears the date 1481 (fig. 17b). The less threatening inscription on the modified medal's reverse reads: "Equestrian image of Mehmed, Emperor of Asia and Greece, on campaign."

134 Scutari is referred to as "*l'occhio ritto del gholfo*" in Dei, *La cronica*, 175. For the earlier Albanian campaigns of 1465 and 1467, see Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 213–14, 218–21. The raids in 1477 and the sultan's personal expedition in 1478 are described in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 357–59, 361–65; Dei, *La cronica*, 101–2, 173–74; Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 327–41; Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 114–21; İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 420–22, 436–63. In 1477 and 1478, Ferrante and his son-in-law, Matthias Corvinus, used their entente with the sultan to fight their own enemies: forces of the king of Naples attacked Lucca, Siena, and Piombino, while the king of Hungary fought with Emperor Frederick III and the king of Bohemia: see Dei, *La cronica*, 101–2, 173–74. The Venetian ambassador, who met with the Ottoman grand vizier in 1478, was told that the sultan would not leave Albania before conquering Scutari, and that he would subsequently come in person to Italy: see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 119.

135 For the mythical foundation of Scutari (İskenderiyye/Alexandria) by Alexander, see György Hazai, "Ein 'Iskendernāme' als politische Zweckschrift aus der Zeit von Süleymān dem Prächtigen," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 14 (1995–96): 223–319; 15 (1997): 221–308; 16 (1998): 125–277; 18 (2000): 125–305. Karabacek dated the Costanzo medal to 1478 but identified the reverse as a depiction of winter preparations for the Albanian campaign on the barren plain of Davud Pasha outside the walls of Istanbul, where the sultan's army assembled before setting out. He misunderstood the "Pisanellesque" convention of leafless trees in a rocky landscape as a winter scene, and misinterpreted the hilltop castle as a mosque. See Karabacek, *Abendländische Künstler*, 23–24. The stone relief in Venice (ca. 1530) is illustrated in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 18, fig. 4.

136 In his detailed account of the campaign, Angiolello mentions his own presence among the sultan's courtiers (*noi della corte*): see Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 97–108. Angiolello describes Mehmed II at the end of his account of the sultan's reign: "era huomo di mezza taglia, era grasso et carnoso, haveva fronte larga, gli occhi grossi con le ciglie rilevate, haveva il naso aquiline, la bocca piccola con barba ritonda et rilevata che tirava al rosso; haveva il collo corto et grosso, era zalegno di faccia, le spalle un poco alte, haveva la voce intonate, et era gottoso degli piedi": Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 122–23. This description is derived almost verbatim from Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 23.

The equestrian portrait is thus transformed into a timeless representation of dominion over Asia and Greece, echoing Roman imperial iconography. The revised inscription conforms to the new titulature that appears in some of the sultan's official correspondence with Italian courts in 1480–81, now naming him "Emperor of All Asia and Greece."[137] In those years, Mehmed also first began to use a variant of the Byzantine imperial title *basileus* in his letters to the Doge of Venice.[138] The obverse of the 1481 medal identifies the sitter as "Sultan Mehmed, Descendant of Osman, Emperor of Byzantium (i.e., Constantinople)." This pointed reference to the ruler as *Bizantii Inperatoris* is missing from the earlier, undated medal of 1478, which describes him as the "Ottoman Sultan Mehmed, Emperor of the Turks" (*Turcorum Imperator*).[139]

137 From 1472 onwards, Mehmed II adopted the title "Emperor (*Tsar*) of Emperors of all Eastern and Western Lands" in his Serbian correspondence with Dubrovnik (see n. 98 above). Comparable titles only appear later in 1480–81, in his Greek and Latin correspondence with Italy. The standard formula "Grand Signor and Grand Amir, Sultan Mehmed" is used in the sultan's correspondence with the Doge of Venice between 1479 and 1481, but a letter dated April 24, 1480 (shortly before the fall of Otranto) refers to him as *Sultan Mahomet dei gratia totius Asie e Grecie Imperator*: see Alessio Bombaci, "Venezia e l'impresa Turca di Otranto," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 66, 2 (1954): 176. Addressed to the Doge on September 27, 1480, the sultan's letter of commendation on behalf of his Jewish envoy, Simone Judeo, uses similar titles (*Soltan Mohamet dei gratia totius asie & grecie victoriosissimus Imperator*), as does his letter of commendation for Gentile Bellini, dated January 15, 1481 (*Sultan Mahometh dei gratia totius asye & gretie victoriosissimus Imperator*): see Franz Babinger, "Ein vorgeblicher Gnadenbrief Mehmeds II. für Gentile Bellini (15. Jänner 1481)," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen,* 3:167, 169. For the identity of the Jewish envoy, see n. 73 above. The incunabulum of the Florentine scholar Francesco Berlinghieri's Italian translation of Ptolemy's *Geographia* at the Topkapı Palace library bears a posthumous dedication (ca. 1482) with comparable titulature, "*Mehmed Ottoman Ill*[*ustrissimo*] (*sic. Uguli*) *di tutta la Grecia et Asia Imperatore*": see Franz Babinger, "Lorenzo de' Medici e la corte ottomana," *Archivio Storico Italiana* 121 (1963): 326.

138 In a letter written in Greek dated July 10, 1480 (shortly before the Ottomans landed in Puglia on July 28th and conquered Otranto on August 11th), the sultan refers to the Doge of Venice as the dearest friend of "our most powerful empire (*basileia*)," and alludes to his universal dominion, "my world-dominating empire": see Bombaci, "Venezia e l'impresa Turca di Otranto," 174, 185–86. In another letter in Greek to the Doge, dated April 30, 1481 (written shortly before Mehmed's death on May 3rd), the sultan proudly refers to his empire as "il mio Impero (*basileia*)": Alessio Bombaci, "Nuovi Firmani Greci di Maometto II," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47, 2 (1954): 316–18. Byzantine imperial titles appear earlier in the 1460s, in the eulogies of Greek writers: e.g., Kritovoulos, Amiroutzes, and George of Trebizond.

139 For the Latin inscriptions of both medals, see Spinale's catalogue entries in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 71–72; Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 320–21. The obverse of Costanzo's second medal has the following inscription: SULTANI MOHAMMETH OCTHOMANI UGULI BIZANTII INPERATORIS, 1481. The obverse of the undated medal reads: SUITANUS MOHAMETH OTHOMANUS TURCORUM IMPERATOR. The penultimate Byzantine ruler is identified on Pisanello's medal as emperor of the "Romans." Likewise, Kritovoulos refers to the Byzantine ruler as "Emperor of the Romans" and uses the interchangeable terms "Constantinople" and "Byzantium," with reference to the Ottoman capital: Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 16, 139, 209, 215–17, 222. The Latin letter of commendation that Bellini received from the sultan on January 15, 1481

It may not be a coincidence that a public proclamation issued in Venice in 1479, when the Ottoman envoy came for the signing of the long-awaited peace treaty, announced that under pain of death he was not to be called "Ambassador of the Turk" (*Ambassador del Turco*) but "Ambassador of the Signor" (*Ambassador del Signor*).[140] This proclamation hints that the sultan was well aware of the pejorative connotations of his designation in the Latin West as "the Turk."

The second version of Costanzo's medal is thought to have been cast in Italy, after the death of Mehmed II on May 3, 1481.[141] Its proud declaration of the sultan's dominion over Greece and Asia as "Emperor of Byzantium (Constantinople)" seems, however, more likely an Ottoman rather than a Western intervention. The "updated" titles on this medal accord with the conquest of the formerly Byzantine colony of Otranto in Puglia (Apulia) during the summer of 1480 (shortly after the failed expedition against Rhodes). It was widely believed that the invasion of Otranto had been encouraged by the sultan's new Venetian and Florentine allies, who were opposed to King Ferrante of Naples. A later sixteenth-century source even reported that the Venetian *bailo* in Istanbul, Giovanni Battista Gritti, had affirmed Mehmed II's right as "Emperor of Constantinople" (*Imperatore di Costantinopoli*) to reclaim Otranto, Taranto, and Brindisi, urging him to wage war against Ferrante, the "King of Puglia."[142] Upon the fall of Otranto, King Ferrante demanded military help from the pope, declaring that otherwise he would "allow the passage of Turkish forces from the kingdom of Naples to Rome." A letter sent by the sultan on April 15, 1481 to his "most beloved son" Ferrante shows that they had in the meantime exchanged friendly embassies for peace negotiations. Costanzo, who probably left Istanbul after the Venetian treaty was signed, may have created the new medal for Mehmed II in Naples during these diplomatic exchanges. If so, the medal's reference to the sultan as "Emperor of Byzantium," at a time when an expansionist Ottoman garrison was stationed in Otranto, is particularly meaningful. Mehmed II died shortly thereafter on his way to a campaign against the Mamluk sultan, and during the ensuing war of succession among his sons (Cem and Bayezid), the garrison in Otranto peacefully capitulated to King Ferrante in return for safe conduct to Albania. In his *Commentario de le cose de' Turchi* (1532), Paolo Giovio wrote that he had been told how the generals of Italy learned to build more effective bastions by examining those "constructed with remarkable artifice by the Turks in Otranto." The historian adds that after having recaptured Otranto, the Duke of Calabria (Don Alfonso of Aragon, son of King Ferrante) enlisted "many of those Turks" in his army by offering them money. During Alfonso's subsequent, unsuccessful battle against the pope in 1482, his janissary footsoldiers died valiantly while defending him, and it was the Turkish cavalry soldiers who saved the Duke with "great virtue and art."[143]

The last two portrait medals of Mehmed II, one signed by Bertoldo di Giovanni and the other by Gentile Bellini, are datable to around 1480 (fig. 17[c–d]). The signatures, which identify the artists as "Florentine" and "Vene-

also equates the terms Byzantium and Constantinople: "Scripta in Constantinopoli in solio Celsitudinis nostre Bisantii": reproduced in Babinger, "Ein vorgeblicher Gnadenbrief Mehmeds II. für Gentile Bellini," 167.

140 Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 122: cited in Pedani Fabris, *In nome del Gran Signore*, 106.

141 See Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 176. Spinale's catalogue entry identifies the medal as "posthumously commemorative" and adds: "It remains a matter of conjecture whether Costanzo produced this medal after his return to Italy on commission or independently with an eye towards the Italian market for images of the 'Grand Turk.' ": see Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 72. She rejects the possibility that the 1481 medal was redesigned at the sultan's behest because of spelling errors: INPERATORIS (for *imperator*), OCHTOMANI (for *othomanus*), and MOHAMMETH (spelled as MOHAMETH on the same medal's reverse): Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 147. But the undated medal of 1478 also has a spelling error: SUITANUS (for *sultanus*), on which see n. 139 above.

142 The impulse behind the Ottoman attack on the kingdom of Naples was almost universally perceived to have come from Venice, acting as Florence's ally in the Tuscan war fought by Neapolitan and papal forces against Florence, Milan, and Venice. According to the French diplomat Commynes, the Venetians hated King Ferrante of Naples and his son Alfonso for the instrumental role they played in having "the Turk" come to Scutari in 1478 (the city was lost with the peace treaty of 1479): see Samuel Kinser, ed., *The Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes (1445–1509)*, trans. Isabelle Cazeaux, 2 vols. (Columbia, S.C., 1969–73), 2:451–52. The sixteenth-century source *Diarium Parmense* cites Andrea Navagero's report that the ambassador (actually, *bailo*) Giovanni Battista Gritti had informed Mehmed II of the Venetian Signoria's support of his right to reclaim Brindisi, Taranto, and Otranto. In the fall of 1479 or early 1480, Gritti tried to persuade the sultan to wage war against the "king of Puglia": cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 390, 417; Bombaci, "Venezia e l'impresa Turca," 172–74. Letters sent by the Venetian Senate to the *bailo* Gritti and to the ambassador Niccolò Cocco in May 1480, however, instruct them to emphasize the neutrality of Venice and to modify the previous impression that the Venetians were encouraging the sultan to invade Italy: see Bombaci, "Venezia e l'impresa Turca," 172–74, 180–203 (appendices IV and V). This may have been due to a change of politics in the meantime.

143 King Ferrante's demand for help from the pope in 1480 is mentioned in Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 130–31. Conquered on August 11, 1480, Otranto was retaken by Neapolitan, Hungarian, and papal forces on September 10, 1481, several months after Mehmed's death. For the letter that the sultan sent from Constantinople to his *amantissimo figlio ferdinando* (Ferrante), see Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, ed., *Otranto 1480*, 2 vols. (Otranto, 1986), 2:319–20, no. XXX. This letter mentions an ambassador, sent to King Ferrante by Mehmed II, who was received with great honor. He came back to Istanbul with the king's ambassador, who was then returning to Naples with Mehmed's assurance of firm intentions for peace. Where the second medal was produced remains uncertain, and Hill even questions whether it was reworked by Costanzo himself, but the artist's signature strongly implies his authorship. Paolo Giovio, *Commentario de le cose de' Turchi*, ed. Lara Michelacci (Bologna, 2005), 107–8. Giovio wrote this work to encourage Charles V to lead a crusade against his impressive and formidable enemy, Sultan Süleyman.

tian," respectively, refer to the formerly rival city-states, now jointly allied with the sultan. The similarity between the two bronze medals in terms of size, iconography, and physiognomy of the sitter has long been recognized.[144] The Bertoldo medal is believed to have been a diplomatic gift sent by Lorenzo de' Medici to thank the sultan for handing over in 1479 the leading rebel of the Pazzi conspiracy, who had sought refuge in Pera. It is either derived from Bellini's medal or based on an intermediary drawing prepared in Istanbul. The reverse is iconographically more elaborate: the three heraldic crowns on Bellini's medal are replaced with captive crowned maidens, exhibited on a triumphal chariot decorated with the Siege Perilous (a favorite device of the king of Naples), which is led by Mars. This representation of the sultan as victorious Roman Emperor presupposes his appreciation of and acquaintance with *all'antica* imagery. The two reclining exergue figures, personifying Sea and Land, acknowledge his self-image as ruler of the seas and continents.[145] The captured maidens—labeled Greece, Trebizond, and Asia—imply that the unidentified heraldic crowns on Bellini's medal represent the same three conquered kingdoms. The inscription on the obverse of Bertoldo's medal refers to the portrayed sultan—wearing an enigmatic chained medal with a crescent that seems to be his heraldic emblem—as "Mehmed, Emperor of Asia and Trebizond and Greater Greece."[146] Bellini's medal is less specific, referring to the ruler more briefly as "Great Sultan Mehmed, Emperor." The reference on Bertoldo's medal to "Greater Greece" has convincingly been interpreted as an endorsement of the sultan's claim to the former Byzantine colonies of southern Italy.[147]

Bellini's triple crowns, which also appear on his painted portrait of Mehmed II, may have been a heraldic device he invented in consultation with his patron (fig. 18). The analogy with the three pavilions at the Topkapı Palace is striking but, as we have seen, this architectural trio, completed in the early 1470s, represented the Ottoman, Byzantine, and Karamanid kingdoms unified under the sultan's rule.[148] Bellini's iconography responds to the new context of the Ottoman Empire after the signing of the peace treaty with Venice in 1479. The borders of the kingdom of Greece, which now included Venetian islands and territories in the Morea and Albania, were being further expanded to encompass southern Italy. Moreover, the other two kingdoms—Trebizond and Asia—were no longer contested by Uzun Hasan, who had died

144 For the medals, their Latin inscriptions, and selected bibliography, see Spinale's catalogue entries in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 74–77. In 1474, an alliance (*lega*) was formed between Florence, Venice, and Milan against the pope and the king of Naples: see Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 365–66; Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 306, 308; Dei, *La cronica*, 171. During this alliance, Florence refused help against the sultan, so as not to damage trade relations. On September 16, 1480, a new league was formed between the pope, Milan, Naples, Genoa, Florence, Ferrara, and Hungary, but Venice refused to join. Yet secret negotiations between Florence and Venice in 1480 raised hopes for a renewed alliance among these two parties in 1481: see Michael Mallet, "Lorenzo and Venice," in *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo*, ed. Gian Carlo Garfagnini (Florence, 1994), 109–21.

145 For the hypothesis that the sultan's envoy brought the Bellini medal to Florence as a present in March 1480 and left that May with Bertoldo's medal, sent as a gift by Lorenzo de' Medici, see Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 180–82. This envoy brought presents to Lorenzo and Antonio de' Medici (the former Florentine ambassador who came to Istanbul in mid-August 1479 and left at the end of November with the leading rebel of the Pazzi conspiracy), and relayed Mehmed's request to the Florentine Signoria for masters of intarsia and bronze sculpture: see Dei, *La cronica*, 176, cited above in n. 129. The alternative view, that Bertoldo's medal was created in the 1480s and may have been based on a portrait drawing carried by one of the Ottoman embassies to Florence, is proposed by Spinale in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 76.

146 For various interpretations of the crescent-medallion worn by the sultan as well as related bibliography, see Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 196–204. It is either a Florentine invention or based on an actual medallion that was worn by the sultan or sent to Florence as a gift. I think the crescent may have been the sultan's heraldic emblem, and medallions donated as diplomatic gifts may have featured this emblem. For the gold medallion with a chain that Mehmed II awarded to Bellini, see Chong "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 114–16. A *collana d'oro* (worth 550 ducats) was among the gifts that Bayezid II sent in 1493 to his ally, the Marquis of Mantua: see Hans Joachim Kissling, *Sultan Bâjezîd's II. Beziehungen zu Markgraf Francesco II. von Gonzaga* (Munich, 1965), 22. Bayezid's ambassador Kasım Bey, who brought the gifts to the Marquis of Mantua, also wore a medallion (*lo prefato ambasciatore era ornato cum quella colana*): see Molly Bourne, "The Turban'd Turk in Renaissance Mantua: Francesco II Gonzaga's Interest in Ottoman Fashion," in *Mantova e il Rinascimento italiano: Studi in onore di David S. Chambers*, ed. Philippa Jackson and Guido Rebecchini (Mantua, 2011), 57n15. The banner donated by Mehmed II to his Dulkadirid vassal featured a heraldic "golden crescent" (*māhçe-i zerrīn*): see İbn Kemal, *Tevârih-i Âl-i Osman*, 395. An illuminated, heraldic golden crescent on a blue ground decorates the dedicatory pages of the Florentine scholar Francesco Berlinghieri's *Geographia*, in Italian verse, printed copies of which were presented upon Mehmed II's death to his sons Bayezid II (ca. 1482) and Prince Cem (ca. 1484): see Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 105–11n84; Babinger, "Lorenzo de' Medici e la corte ottomana," 345–49, pl. 2.

147 Accepting a compelling theory proposed in 1927 by E. Jacobs, Raby concludes that the purpose of Bertoldo's medal (datable to the spring of 1480) "was not commemoration but prognostication": Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 182. Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 182–89, argues that the medal (created later in the 1480s) need not have surreptitiously communicated an invitation to attack Italy, but may have instead had a "congratulatory" or "posthumous commemorative function." Florence clearly benefited from the Ottoman attack on the kingdom of Naples, thanks to which King Ferrante's son Alfonso, the Duke of Calabria, was recalled from Tuscany, where the Neapolitan army still occupied Siena, despite the peace agreement reached between Florence and Naples in March 1480, after Lorenzo's trip to Naples. In my view, the Bertoldo medal was likely created in 1480, before or around the fall of Otranto on August 11th, prior to the formation of the papal league on September 16, 1480 (which both Florence and Naples joined, see n. 144 above).

148 Whether Bellini's three crowns followed or preceded the three heraldic eagles on the reverse of the so-called Tricaudet medal has not been confirmed: see n. 101 above. I pointed out the analogy with the three palace pavilions in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 210. The crowns on Bellini's medal were identified as cities (Constantinople, Trebizond, and Iconium/Konya) by Armand, Thuasne, and Hill; they have been interpreted as kingdoms (Greece, Trebizond, and Asia) by Karabacek, Raby, and myself: see the select bibliography in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 74.

in 1478. Hence, the triple crowns representing these three kingdoms implicitly commemorate the sultan's triumph over all allied Eastern and Western powers during the sixteen-year-long Veneto-Ottoman war.[149] As Susan Spinale has pointed out, Bellini's elaborate signature around these emblematic crowns presents him as yet another "royal attribute" or trophy of Mehmed II. The signature proudly advertises the artist's official titles, which were confirmed by a letter of commendation in Latin from the sultan, dated January 15, 1481.[150] Although Bellini could have designed the medal after his return to Venice, I am inclined to believe that he created it in Istanbul, in response to his patron's insistent demand for medals.[151]

Mehmed's formidable bust portrait on Costanzo's medal, consonant with the heroic image of the ruler riding on campaign, is transformed in the medals of Bellini and Bertoldo into a more benign, idealized portrayal befitting the iconography of universal rule. The latter two medals represent the sultan with a thinner, more refined face and elongate his squat neck, which had been described by Angiolello as "short and thick."[152] A similar aura of gentle refinement characterizes Bellini's oil painting on canvas, portraying Mehmed in near three-quarter (*occhio e mezzo*) view, venerably framed by an *all'antica* arch uncommon in the portraits of Venetian doges. The parapet of the arched opening is decorated with a jewel-embroidered cloth, which communicates the sitter's elevated status by its central crown.[153] The much-damaged Latin inscriptions on the parapet announce the knighted artist's title (*militis aurati*) as well as his skill in naturalistic depiction, and give the completion date of the painting as November 25, 1480, several months after the fall of Otranto and shortly before the sultan's letter of commendation. Bellini has portrayed the ceremonially aloof ruler as remarkably unthreatening in his contemplative gaze. This dignified portrait, created in a context of peace by the "official painter" of Venice (by then a tributary state), paid homage to the sultan as universal monarch, identified in the no-longer legible words of the inscription as "Victor over Land and Sea and Sovereign of the World."[154]

A pluralism of visual modes and the aesthetics of fusion in miniature painting

Portable copies of Mehmed II's naturalistic canvas and medallic portraits, unprecedented in the Islamic artistic tradition in terms of medium and verisimilitude, became a means of disseminating the Ottoman ruler's imperial image both during and after his lifetime.[155] These portraits were not only a sign of his openness to other cultural forms but also a medium of communication with Western Europe. Their Latin inscriptions suggest that Mehmed's Italianate portraits were intended primarily for a European audience abroad. The sultan seems to have targeted the same audience by securing the services of the hu-

149 Uzun Hasan claimed the kingdoms of Trebizond and Karaman (conquered by Mehmed II in 1461 and 1468 respectively) as his vassals. In 1464 and 1469, the allied forces of Uzun Hasan and the Karamanid principality fought against the Ottomans in Trebizond and Karaman: see Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 25, 33–34, 46–47. They attacked both kingdoms again in 1472, prior to Mehmed II's defeat of Uzun Hasan in 1473: Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 70–71, 78–79; Turan, "Fâtih Mehmet," 95–97. Venice and her Christian allies supported the claimants to the thrones of Trebizond and Karaman; in 1473, the Venetian fleet, reinforced by ships from the pope, Naples, and Rhodes, helped the Karamanid prince Kasım Beg conquer fortresses along the southern coast of Anatolia: see Turan, "Fâtih Mehmet," 109–13; Malipiero, "Annali veneti," 71–74. Also see n. 127 above.

150 Spinale, "Portrait Medals," 208. For the letter of commendation, see nn. 137 and 139 above.

151 Unlike Raby, who dates the Bellini medal to 1480 (see n. 145 above), Thuasne and Spinale believe that it was created after the artist returned to Venice in 1481: see Spinale's entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the Eas*t, 74.

152 This physiognomic difference is generally attributed to the sultan's growing illness: see Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini*, 50–51; Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 180; Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror," 88. The description of the sultan by Angiolello is cited in n. 136 above. The sultan suffered from chronic gout; Commynes writes: "And illness came upon him at an early age…for his legs began to swell, as I heard from those who had seen him; and this affliction used to start at the beginning of the summer…and eventually the swelling subsided": see Kinser, ed., *Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*, 2:432. However, there is no evidence that the sultan's physiognomy changed radically between 1478 and 1480.

153 The parapet cloth with a central heraldic emblem finds a parallel in Gentile Bellini's group portrait of Doge Andrea Vendramin, which is framed by a rectangular window: see Caroline Campbell's catalogue entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 78–79. I am not convinced that the crown on the embroidered cloth, together with the paired triple crowns flanking the arch, alludes to the sultan's position as seventh ruler of the Ottoman dynasty. For this symbolic reading, see Maria Pia Pedani Fabris, "Simbologia ottomana nell'opera di Gentile Bellini," *Atti dell'Istituto Veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti: Classe di scienze morali, lettere ed arti* 155, 1 (1996–97): 18–20, 22. The long, pointed beard in Bellini's painted portrait of the sultan is at odds with the rounded, short beard mentioned by Angiolello and seen in his medals.

154 For the fragmentary inscription, recorded before the restoration of the painting, see Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini*, 50n2: "Terrar. Marisq. Victor ac domator orbis … Sultan … inte … Mahometi resultat ars vera Gientilis militis aurati Belini naturae … qui cuncta reducit in propria simul.cre MCCCCLXXX Die XXV mensis Novembris."

155 Mehmed II's medals, which circulated posthumously, were seen in 1489 by Catanei (the Mantuan envoy in Rome) and by Matteo Bosso (abbot of Fiesole): see Raby, "Opening Gambits," in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 69; Spinale, "Reassessing the So-called 'Tricaudet Medal'," 17, 22n73. According to Vasari, "painting on canvas was invented so that paintings could be carried from country to country; canvas weighs little and can be easily transported in any size." Johannes Cuspinianus, the humanist diplomat of Ferdinand of Habsburg, mentions an exchange of portraits between Emperor Frederick III and Mehmed II, with a view to arranging a marriage between the sultan and the emperor's daughter. The practice of exchanging portraits between the European and Ottoman courts is documented in only a few instances; for naturalistic canvas portraits sent as diplomatic gifts to Mehmed II and his son Bayezid II, see Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Serial Portraits of Ottoman Sultans in Comparative Perspective," in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 29–30.

manist poet Giovanni Stefano Emiliano of Vicenza (Quintus Emilianus Cimbriacus), whom the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III had crowned poet laureate in 1469, the same year that he knighted Gentile Bellini. In 1481, Cimbriacus, who is identified in a source as an "intimate" of the sultan (*familiaris Regis Turcorum*), composed a Latin epitaph for the "Great Machumet, King of the Turks" (*magnum Machumetem, Turchorum Regem*), which alluded to Virgil's *Aeneid* and eulogized the deeds of the ruler whom "only death prevented from conquering Rhodes and Italy." Besides foreign courts in the West, the potential audiences for Mehmed's Italianate portraits may have included his own Latin subjects in southeastern Europe, his vassals and tributaries (Dubrovnik, Wallachia, Moldavia, Crimea/Caffa, Chios, and Venice), and his polyglot officials and intimates, as well as the Italian merchant-bankers of Pera and other Ottoman emporia (Edirne, Bursa, Gallipoli, and Foça). Reproduced in several posthumous casts, the sultan's portrait medals immortalized his fame, as foreseen in Sigismondo Malatesta's letter, helping to improve his negative image abroad and integrating him into the Western European circle of kingship. Isabella d'Este's studiolo, for example, grouped together four gold portrait medals of "the Pope, the Emperor, the King of France, and the Turk."[156] In his *Mémoires*, written around 1489, the French diplomat Philippe de Commynes, who had seen a painted portrait of Mehmed II at the age of twenty-three, commented that he seemed to be "a man of great intelligence," and ranked him together with Matthias Corvinus and Louis XI (r. 1461–83) as the "wisest and most valiant" sovereigns of the century: "He managed most of his affairs himself and according to his own judgment, as was also the practice of our king; and these were the three greatest men who had reigned for the past one hundred years." The author of a Hungarian chronicle published in 1488 similarly measured the eminence of his own king against that of the sultan, "who because of the greatness of his deeds deserved to be called Mehmed the Great." The chronicler proudly declares that the Ottoman ruler paired himself exclusively with King Matthias: "I and he, of all the princes in the world, are the ones who deserve to be called princes."[157]

156 It is unknown whether, and if so when, the humanist Cimbriacus, who mostly resided in the Veneto, visited the sultan's court: see Babinger, "Mehmed II., der Eroberer, und Italien," 195; Franz Babinger, "Eine lateinische Totenklage auf Mehmed II," in *Studi orientalistici in onore di Giorgio Levi della Vida* 1 (Rome, 1956): 15–32. For princes of defeated kingdoms who were among the sultan's "intimates," see Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 133–34. Isabella d'Este's medals are listed in Alessandro Luzio, "L'inventario della grotta d'Isabella d'Este," *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 9, 35 (1908): 418.

157 Kinser, ed., *Memoirs of Philippe de Commynes*, 2:429–31. This English translation, based on the French edition of Joseph Calmette (Paris, 1925), simply refers to a "portrait" of Mehmed seen by Commynes. An earlier French edition, based on a different manuscript, specifies that it was a painted portrait depicting the ruler at the time he conquered Constantinople: "Le Turc…print Constantinoble en l'aage de vingt trois ans…(je l'ay veu painct de ceste aage, et sembloit bien qu'il feust home de grand esperit)": see B. de Mandrot, ed., *Mémoires de Philippe de Commynes*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1901–3), 2:94. For King Matthias of Hungary, see János Thuróczy, *Chronicle of the Hungarians*, trans. Frank Mantello (Bloomington, Ind., 1991), 211. According to Spandugino, the Turks called the sultan "Mehmed the Great" (*Mehemed Boiuc*): see Spandouyn, *Petit traicté*, 314.

Like the sultan, King Matthias of Hungary nurtured alternative royal personae in pursuing his imperial project. Just as Alexander the Great would defeat Darius, so was he destined to vanquish the Ottoman sultan; yet he also identified himself with Attila the Hun to justify his Western wars. In a letter to the sultan in 1480, Matthias stressed the desirability of an alliance in order "to extend territories under our respective rule to the detriment of other princes." Acknowledging their Asiatic ties of kinship, the king said that he preferred friendly relations "because the same blood is flowing in our veins, and we are seeking to please your majesty our elder brother at any cost."[158] The comparable fostering of multiple imperial identities at Mehmed's court can be seen as a corollary of the polymorphic Ottoman body politic that was being forged by the juxtaposition rather than the coherent blending of disparate cultural traditions. This explains the coexistence of diverse dynastic genealogies (Trojan, Turkic, Perso-Achaemenid, and even Komnenian-Seljuk), which could provide alternative cultural affiliations for the House of Osman, mediating the sultan's relationship with different audiences at home and abroad.[159]

By positioning Mehmed II within the matrix of "Western civilization," his Latin-inscribed portraits in the firengī manner contested the presumption that artistic innovations associated with the humanist project of recovering Roman antiquity were the exclusive preserve of Christian Europe. As the true inheritor of Byzantium/Constantinople—where the Eastern Roman

158 Mehmed II broke the 1477–79 entente with King Matthias after signing the peace treaty with Venice; for Ottoman raids on Hungary in 1479 and 1480, see n. 107 above. Matthias's reference to kinship seems to have been an allusion to their "(constructed or presumed) common Scythian (*Szittya* in Hungarian) origin": see Pál Fodor, "The View of the Turk in Hungary: The Apocalyptic Tradition and the Legend of the Red Apple in Ottoman-Hungarian Context," in Lellouch and Yerasimos, *Les traditions apocalyptiques*, 111–14. King Matthias promoted the idea of the Hunno-Hungarian relationship as the "second Attila"; when he was informed by Russian merchants that descendants of ancient Hungarians who remained in the East were still living there, he dispatched envoys inviting them to resettle in southern Hungary: Fodor, "View of the Turk," 112.

159 For the report that Mehmed II entertained a Komnenian-Seljuk lineage through a Komnene prince who allegedly fled to Konya, converted to Islam, and married a Seljuk princess, see Spandouyn (Spandugino), *Petit traicté*, 11–13. The author, whose early sixteenth-century informants were the Palaiologan vizier Mesih Pasha and Hersekzade Ahmed Pasha (a descendant of the Duke of Herzegovina), adds that Mehmed II "did not want to accept that his house descended from shepherds coming from Tartary." Spandugino prefers to believe the lineage currently accepted by Turkish historians, who supported the "lowly descent of Osman from shepherds of Tartary belonging to the Oghuz nation."

imperial tradition remained relatively unbroken in comparison with Rome—the turbaned sultan in Ottoman costume could assert that he had an equal, if not greater, claim to the classical heritage shared by Christendom and Islamdom, which was being revived in the Latin West. His patronage of Italianate art crossed presumed cultural boundaries, opening a permeable space "in between" for the construction and negotiation of identity from a position of power. The sultan's mimesis of Italian Renaissance portraiture carried, then, the potential to subvert binaries of cultural difference reinforced by demonizing humanist discourses on "the Turk": human versus inhuman, civilized versus barbarian, Western versus Eastern, and European versus Asian. Perhaps Mehmed was once again emulating in reverse Alexander the Great, whose adoption of Eastern cultural practices had been interpreted by Arrian in the *Anabasis* as a policy of mediation, aimed to diminish the Macedonian conqueror's foreignness in the expanding Asian frontiers of his empire.[160]

The conversation with diverse artistic traditions at the court of Mehmed II resonates with the globalizing optics of his role model, Alexander, who envisioned an ethnically mixed world empire unified by cultural amalgamation. While the sultan's medallic and oil-painted portraits in the Italian manner are comparable to his palace pavilions in their appropriation of foreign visual modes, his painted portraits on paper, which fuse Italianate and Turco-Persianate elements, can be likened to the synthetic architecture of his mosque complex and Inner Treasury (figs. 19 and 20). These overlooked affinities across media that tend to be treated separately point to a deliberate cultivation of visual cosmopolitanism and hybridity. The pluralism of artistic styles parallels the multiplicity of languages in written texts and chancellery documents. The fusion of Eastern and Western modes of representation, on the other hand, exemplifies an attempt to create an Ottoman pictorial manner that is distinctively *Rūmī* (i.e., pertaining to the lands of [Eastern] Rome, comprising Anatolia and the Balkans).[161]

160 Arrian, *Campaigns of Alexander*, 30–31, 397.

161 In an alternative interpretation, the use of different styles as the "material expression of Mehmed's intellectual eclecticism" is seen as resulting in a failure to develop "a coherent intellectual or aesthetic programme": see Julian Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox: Mehmed the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts," *Oxford Art Journal* 5, 1 (1982): 7. Raby detects a strong dichotomy between Mehmed's "public" and "private" patronage, in which he indulged his idiosyncratic personal whims; he argues that the sultan's Western interests were confined to the private sphere. The boundaries between these two spheres were, in my view, relatively fluid and porous. The term *Rūmī* is used in written primary sources in reference to the Ottoman style in the visual and literary arts. For the evolution of a distinctively Ottoman, "*Rūmī*" cultural identity, see Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*; Cemal Kafadar, "A Rome of One's Own: Reflections on Cultural Geography and Identity in the Lands of Rum," *Muqarnas* 24 (2007): 7–26.

19

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19. Sinan Beg (attr.), Bust Portrait of Mehmed II, ca. 1478–81. Watercolor and gold on paper. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Album H. 2153, fol. 145v. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library)

20. Şiblizade Ahmed (attr.), Mehmed II Smelling a Rose, ca. 1480–81. Watercolor on paper. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, Album H. 2153, fol. 10r. (Photo: courtesy of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library)

Visual hybridity and the creation of a Rūmī idiom in miniature painting

The few surviving portraits of the sultan by his court painters translate the naturalistic models of the Italian masters into the indigenous medium of miniature painting on paper, thereby domesticating and naturalizing their foreignness. One such example of visual translation involving a transfer of medium is the *Bust Portrait of Mehmed II*, with its Byzantinizing gold background. Attributed to the sultan's aforementioned leading portrait painter, Sinan Beg, who was trained in the Italian manner by a foreign master, it is a close copy of either Costanzo's medal or of a lost painting by him (fig. 19).[162] The miniature portrait *Mehmed*

162 For Sinan Beg and his teacher Paolo da Ragusa, see n. 18 above. Formerly attributed to Costanzo himself, the portrait has been reattributed by Raby to Sinan Beg: see his entry in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 90. This attribution is generally accepted: see Bağcı et al, *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 36. There is an illuminated profile portrait (tempera on vellum) of John VIII Palaiologos pasted onto a page of a psalter now in the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai; it suggests that naturalistic miniature portraits were perhaps already becoming fashionable in the late Byzantine Empire. This miniature portrait, which Marcell Restle has attributed to Pisanello, is reproduced in Evans, *Byzantium: Faith and Power*, 533.

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21. Portrait of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, ascribed in an inscription to Bihzad, 1490s or ca. 1500. Watercolor and gold on paper. Harvard University Art Museums, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Gift of John Goelet, 1958.59. (Photo: courtesy of the Harvard University Art Museums).

22. Seated Scribe, ca. 1478–81. Pen and ink, with watercolor and gold, on paper. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, P15e8. (Photo: courtesy of Alan Chong)

II Smelling a Rose, ascribed to Sinan Beg's pupil Şiblizade Ahmed of Bursa, on the other hand, transforms Bellini's oil-painted bust portrait into a full-length seated royal image in the Timurid manner by appending to it a proportionally incongruous body (fig. 20).[163] This experimental image thus negotiates the sultan's identity as a culturally refined Turkic ruler gently smelling a rose. A comparison of this hybrid image with a seated portrait of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, the contemporary Turkic ruler of Herat, suggests that Ottoman artists were also responding to the newly emerging genre of individualized portraiture at the Timurid court (fig. 21). The seated portrait of Mehmed II, which mingles Eastern and Western painting techniques, adopts late Timurid iconographic

163 Formerly thought to be a work of Sinan Beg himself, the portrait has been reattributed to Şiblizade Ahmed by Julian Raby, *The Sultan's Portrait*, 82–85. This attribution (already made in Raby, "El Gran Turco") is accepted in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 36.

conventions of royal portraiture, reflecting a desire to develop an Ottoman pictorial manner that injects a new realism into the Turco-Persianate painting tradition shared by the court cultures of Istanbul, Tabriz, and Herat.[164]

Another hybrid image is the *Seated Scribe* (Boston, Gardner Museum), whose contemplative sitter is about to write or draw on a blank sheet over which his shadow is cast (fig. 22). Originally mounted in the same Safavid album as Husayn Bayqara's portrait, it is identified by a Persian label added in the 1540s as "the work of Ibn-i Mu'azzin [lit., son of the caller to prayer], who is among the well-known European masters" ("*'Amal-i ibn-i mu'aẕẓin ki az ustādān-i mashūr-i firangast*"). Various interpretations have been proposed for this puzzling label, on the basis of which the painting has been attributed to an artist from Europe.[165] The *Seated Scribe* and a closely related series of seven full-figure pen and ink drawings, based on sketches of

23

23. Gentile Bellini (attr.), Seated Janissary [Solak], 1479– 81. Pen and ink. London, British Museum, Pp. 1.19AN218655. (Photo: courtesy of the British Museum)

164 For a comparison of Mehmed II's portrait with Timurid prototypes and for the iconographic use of royal attributes, see Necipoğlu, "Serial Portraits," 22–30; a narrative painting with a seated portrait of Husayn Bayqara smelling a rose is illustrated on p. 27. The drawing of an Ottoman lady standing with a rose in her hand is reproduced in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 98, where it is attributed to Gentile Bellini.

165 See Emine Fetvacı's entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 122. The *Seated Scribe* was removed from the Bahram Mirza album, assembled in 1544–45, and is now at the Topkapı Palace Library (Ms. H. 2154), according to David Roxburgh, "Disorderly Conduct: F. R. Martin and the Bahram Mirza Album," *Muqarnas* 15 (1998): 39–40. Andaloro and Raby interpreted "*ibn-i mu'aẕẓin*" as a patronymic or nickname corresponding to "de Moysis," and attributed the painting to Costanzo. According to Roxburgh, the annotation may either have been derived from an attached Ottoman note identifying the painter or was intended as a humorous pun. I think the missing upper-left corner of the painting could have featured such a note.

Ottoman personages drawn from life, are generally attributed to Gentile Bellini, although Costanzo da Ferrara has also been suggested as the artist.[166] The sitter in *Seated Scribe* wears a typically Ottoman bulbous turban resembling that of Mehmed II in various portraits (figs. 17[a–b], 19, and 20). His buttoned, gold-brocaded robe of Bursa velvet, with its Ottoman-style wide collar and hanging, slit sleeves exposing an inner garment with rolled sleeves, is almost identical to the less lavish costume worn by the sitter in the drawing *Seated Solak*, which depicts a royal guard belonging to the janissary corps (fig. 23). The elaborate sash around the waist of the scribe closely matches that shown in another drawing, Standing Turk, whose subject wears a similarly bulbous turban.[167]

The *Seated Scribe* is perhaps a portrait of one of the sultan's salaried household members, probably a courtier enrolled in the elite corps (*müteferriḳa*) or an intimate (*muṣāḥib, muḳarreb*). The handsome, lavishly dressed youth may simply have been practicing calligraphy or painting as a courtly pursuit, but it is not unlikely that he was one of the painter-scribes with whom the artist of the Gardner portrait interacted at the sultan's palace.[168] According to Angiolello, the *müteferriḳa* corps, to which some of the sultan's intimates belonged, included painters (*dependori*) among its ranks, and we know that scribes were often painters as well. Thanks to their privileged access to the person of the sultan, Ottoman court painters were sometimes ranked as intimates. The artist Baba Nakkaş, for instance, is identified as the sultan's "intimate" (*muḳarreb*) in the royal title deed of a village that Mehmed II granted him in 870 (1465) and which he turned into a waqf in 880 (1475). The letter of commendation, written in Latin, that the sultan awarded to the departing Gentile Bellini in 1481, referred to the artist as the "golden knight and palace companion" (*miles auratus ac comes palatinus*), and described the royal gift to him of a gold medallion with a chain. On this basis, it has convincingly been argued that Bellini, too, belonged to the *müteferriḳa* corps. I would like to suggest that the first half of the title he was given can be seen as the equivalent of *müteferriḳa*, while the second half corresponds to the rank of intimate (*muṣāḥib*, *muḳarreb*). Forresti's account of 1490 specifies that Mehmed II made Bellini "a member of his retinue (*familiarem*) and a palace companion as well as a golden knight with his own insignia and chain." Indeed, the letter of commendation refers to the painter as "one of the most select and intimate members of the household," and Angiolello reports that the sultan urged Bellini to speak freely with him. Since the artist had already been knighted as "*eques auratus*" and "*comes palatinus*" by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick III during a visit to Venice in 1469, the sultan's granting of knighthood and honorary titles to Gentile Bellini (and to Costanzo da Ferrara) once again publicized his "Western manners" in Christendom.[169]

The contested authorship of the *Seated Scribe*, attributed to Gentile and to Costanzo, seems to me less important than the fact that an artist identified as European was asked to paint a naturalistic miniature portrait in close dialogue with the Turco-Persianate painting tradition. The broader implications of this cross-cultural visual conversation have been overshadowed by

166 The *Seated Scribe* and seven drawings, attributed by Andaloro and Raby to Costanzo da Ferrara, are assigned to Gentile Bellini and his workshop by Campbell and Chong in their essay "Bellini in Istanbul," in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 98–105, 122. The controversy regarding the attribution of the *Seated Scribe* and these drawings is summarized in Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul." In a recent article, the attribution to Gentile Bellini is reasserted for the *Seated Scribe* and the seven drawings: see Jürg Meyer zur Capellen, "Gentile Bellini als Bildnismaler am Hofe Mehmets II.," in Asutay-Effenberger and Rehm, *Sultan Mehmet II. Eroberer Konstantinopels–Patron der Künste*, 139–60.

167 The fabric of the scribe's robe is compared to the fragment of a late fifteenth-century brocaded Bursa textile, combining Ottoman and Italianate elements, in Nurhan Atasoy et al., İpek: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets (London, 2001), 228–29, figs. 130 and 133. Mehmed II wears a comparable costume with hanging, slit sleeves in the equestrian portrait on Costanzo's medal. A similar, late fifteenth-century, Ottoman-style kaftan with wide collar and hanging, slit sleeves, associated with Prince Korkud (d. 1513), is illustrated in David J. Roxburgh, ed., *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600–1600* (exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy of Arts) (London, 2005), 304, 443. Not seen in contemporary examples of Persian painting, such kaftans are often depicted in Ottoman manuscripts from the 1490s: see Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 44, fig. 17; 49, fig. 20. The ink drawing *Standing Man* is reproduced in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 104; also see *Seated Woman* (on p. 103), whose hands and arms with rolled-up sleeves closely parallel those of the Gardner *Seated Scribe*.

168 The sitter of the *Seated Scribe* was first identified as "A Turkish Prince" in F. R. Martin, "A Portrait by Gentile Bellini Found in Constantinople," *The Burlington Magazine* 9, 39 (1906): 148–49. He was then described as a "page or other member of the Sultan's court" in Friedrich Sarre, "The Miniature by Gentile Bellini Found in Constantinople Not a Portrait of Sultan Djem," *The Burlington Magazine* 15 (1909): 237–38. Julian Raby suggested that the sitter may have been one of the sultan's page boys, who were described by Jacopo de Promontorio (ca. 1475) as being between fifteen and twenty-two years old and dressed in silk and brocade robes "with massive gold caps and gold rings and other gallantries" (*cum schufie d'oro massizo in capo et anella d'oro et altre magnificentie*): see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 140. Since pages generally wore caps, rather than turbans, the sitter of the *Seated Scribe* may have belonged to the elite corps that included some of the sultan's intimates.

169 According to Angiolello, the members of the elite corps (including the sons of defeated rulers, physicians, philosophers, scholars, engineers, craftsmen, painters, and residents of the royal palace) had to accompany the ruler on campaigns, and some of them were his intimates: see Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 133–34; Angiolello, *Viaggio di Negroponte*, 48. For a painter-scribe with the pen name Suzi, who dedicated a manuscript to Bayezid II, see Ayşin Yoltar-Yıldırım, "A 1498–99 *Khusraw va Shīrīn*: Turning the Pages of an Ottoman Illustrated Manuscript," *Muqarnas* 22 (2005): 95–97. Another painter-scribe from Iran employed at the Ottoman court workshop was Derviş Mahmud b. Abdullah Nakkaş, who wrote and illustrated the Şehnāme-i Melik-i Ümmi *[sic. Ahi]* (ca. 1495): see Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 48–49. The Arabic title deed awarded to Baba Nakkaş is cited in Ünver, *Fatih Devri Saray Nakışhanesi*, 8. For the letter of commendation, and the knighting of Bellini and Costanzo, see Chong, "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul," 114–15.

the fixation of scholarship on questions of attribution and on whether the so-called "influence" traveled from East to West, or vice-versa.[170] Such a paradigm of unidirectional influence misses the point of this intentionally hybrid image, in which Eastern and Western conventions are seamlessly fused and creatively transformed. The Gardner Museum's portrait and its modified, identically sized copy at the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., are instead the products of intercultural translation working in a number of directions.

The *Seated Painter* in Washington (fig. 24[a–b]), generally attributed to one of Mehmed II's court artists, has been ascribed to Sinan Beg by Raby and other specialists of Ottoman painting. Some recent publications, however, continue to uphold F. R. Martin's early-twentieth-century attribution of this painting to the glorious Bihzad, who flourished in Herat around the mid-1480s, after the demise of Mehmed II. I find it difficult to support this attribution, which is rooted more in an ardent desire to link the two great masters of Italian and Persian painting, Bellini and Bihzad, than in convincing evidence. The attribution is based on a questionable Bihzad signature: another "signature" of Bihzad, bearing the date 894 (1488–89), appears on a reversed late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century reinterpretation of the Freer portrait located in the Kuwait National Museum.[171] The Freer Museum's *Seated Painter* differs from known examples of late Timurid and Safavid portraiture in its subtle assimilation of Western techniques of modeling and shading, techniques that are much more pronounced in the Gardner Museum's portrait. This suggests the hand of an Ottoman court painter trained in the European manner, and Sinan Beg seems to have been the most likely candidate.[172]

24a 24b

24a–b. (a) Sinan Beg (attr.), Seated Painter, ca. 1478–81. Watercolor and gold on paper. Washington, D.C., Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, F1932.28; (b) detail. (Photos: courtesy of Massumeh Farhad)

170 For bibliography, see Fetvacı's catalogue entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 122. The debate on the direction of influence is summarized in Raby, "El Gran Turco," 75, 136–41.

171 The Freer *Seated Painter* was first published in 1910 as a work of Bihzad by the dealer-connoisseur F. R. Martin. He interpreted it as a copy of the Gardner *Seated Scribe,* which he had identified as a "Turkish prince" and attributed to Bellini in 1906 (see n. 168 above). Martin speculated that this painting by Bellini was sent to the ruler of Herat, where Bihzad copied it: see F. R. Martin, "New Originals and Oriental Copies of Gentile Bellini Found in the East," *The Burlington Magazine* 17, 85 (1910): 5–7. Also attributing the Freer painting to Bihzad, Rice denied that it was the copy of a work by Bellini: see David Talbot Rice, *Islamic Art* (1965; rev. ed., London, 1975), 225–26. Following Atıl's reattribution of the Freer portrait to an Ottoman painter, Raby ascribed it in his 1980 dissertation to Sinan Beg. See Esin Atıl, "Ottoman Miniature Painting under Sultan Mehmed II," *Ars Orientalis* 9 (1973): 115–17. For recent attributions of the Freer portrait to Bihzad, without convincing evidence, see Ebadullah Bahari, *Bihzad: Master of Persian Painting* (London and New York, 1997), 174–75 (where the date of the painting is given as ca. 1487); Michael Barry, *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam* (Paris, 2004), 42–44 (here dated to the 1480s or 1490s). Michael Rogers accepts both of the Bihzad signatures as reliable; he furthermore argues that the three portraits (Gardner, Freer, and Kuwait) derive from a lost "ur-picture" from Aqqoyunlu Tabriz. Ironically, he sees the latest portrait in Kuwait as the closest copy of the presumed lost original. This theory, which fails to take into account the closely related ink drawings created in Mehmed II's court, was presented in his lecture at the London conference related to the "Bellini and the East" exhibition. For an unsubstantiated attribution of the Freer portrait to a late sixteenth-century Safavid painter, see Fetvacı's catalogue entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 123, 125; her Safavid attribution is cited in Meyer zur Capellen,"Gentile Bellini als Bildnismaler am Hofe Mehmets II," 150, fig. 10. The Kuwait painting is ascribed to a Mughal or a Safavid artist (ca. 1600) in Fetvacı's catalogue entry in Campbell and Chong, *Bellini and the East*, 123–25. The painting in Kuwait is regarded as a reversed Safavid copy of the Freer *Seated Painter* in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 38.

172 The *Seated Painter* has been identified as the work of an Ottoman painter in Robert Irwin, *Islamic Art in Context* (New York, New Jersey, 1997), 245, as well as in an exhibition on portraiture at the Freer and Sackler Galleries (Washington D.C., 2006), curated by Massumeh Farhad (Chief Curator and Curator of Islamic Art at the Freer and Sackler Galleries), who questions the validity of the inscription, attributing it to Bihzad. The Freer portrait is identified as a likely work of Sinan Beg and a copy of the Gardner portrait in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 38. I would like to thank Massumeh Farhad and David Roxburgh for sharing their views on this painting with me.

25

25. Detail of a seated scribe in a narrative painting depicting a school scene, pasted in an album. Herat school, watercolor on paper, mid 1480s. St. Petersburg Public Library, Ms. 489, fol. 27. (After Olympiade Galerkina, "On Some Miniatures Attributed to Bihzad from Leningrad Collections," *Ars Orientalis* 8 [1970]: pl. 6, fig. 12)

A comparable later image of a seated scribe in a Herati narrative painting (mid-1480s), pasted on a page of an album in the Saint Petersburg Public Library (fig. 25), has been interpreted as another Bihzad copy of the Gardner Museum's *Seated Scribe*. However, it makes more sense to regard this image as a late Timurid archetype, because the scribe's differently wrapped turban, his costume details, and his pose (with a raised knee supporting a tilted pad scribbled with writing), differ considerably from those of its presumed model. The portrait in Boston, evidently drawn from life, appears to have been a response to this kind of late Timurid image, just as the experimental portrait of *Mehmed II Smelling a Rose* responds to contemporary Timurid models of royal portraiture.[173]

The Freer Museum's *Seated Painter* is a close copy that modifies the *Seated Scribe* by entering into an extended dialogue with the late Timurid painting tradition. It transforms its model, gazing at a blank sheet, into a painter, adding a white handkerchief to his belt and a painted sheet to his thinner slate, which the subject now rests on a slightly raised knee, coming closer to the traditional pose of painter-scribes (like the scribe in the Saint Petersburg album painting, whose knee is raised even higher). The generic, cross-legged, "Oriental" way in which the Gardner scribe is seated closely echoes the poses of the subjects in *Seated Solak* and *Seated Woman*. This implies to me that its European painter had the sitter pose as a model, rather than drawing him actually at work. The attempt by the Ottoman painter of the Freer image to "correct" the incongruous posture points to its derivation from the Gardner portrait. It is possible to imagine that the two artists knew each other and worked around the same time. That live models did in fact pose for Gentile Bellini finds support in Angiolello's eyewitness account, according to which Mehmed II had the Venetian artist "portray/depict many persons, which pleased the Signor," and "when the Signor wanted to see someone famed for being a handsome man, he had him portrayed/depicted by the said Gentile Bellini." This suggests that the *Seated Scribe* and the seven surviving full-figure studies commonly attributed to Bellini (on two of which are written the names of colors) were portraits of particularly attractive individuals whom the sultan asked the artist to "portray/depict" (*retrahere*).[174]

The wide-collared Ottoman costume of the Freer Museum's *Seated Painter* has been modified with short sleeves, an added cloud-collar design, and a repeating diaper pattern.[175] The subject is painting a standing figure (shown rotated in fig. 24b) wearing a collarless, short-sleeved robe and a non-bulbous turban wrapped in the Timurid manner. Astonishingly, this

173 Galerkina interprets the narrative painting with a scribe as a copy of the Gardner *Seated Scribe* (attributed by her to Bellini), which Mehmed II probably sent to Herat: see Olympiade Galerkina, "On Some Miniatures Attributed to Bihzad from Leningrad Collections," *Ars Orientalis* 8 (1970): 128–29, figs. 11–12. Noting the similarity of the figure in the Freer *Seated Painter* to the scribe in the St. Petersburg (formerly Leningrad) album painting, which she dates to ca. 1484, Galerkina concludes that both are attributable to Bihzad, who was acquainted with the Bellini painting. I agree with Atıl, who observed that the scribe in the St. Petersburg album painting derives from the scribes shown in Persian paintings of school scenes: see Atıl, "Ottoman Miniature Painting," 117.

174 The Freer *Seated Painter*'s derivateness is also betrayed by its "reductionism" in comparison to the Gardner portrait, which is characterized by "a greater naturalism of details" and "a greater emphasis on corporeality" that are "difficult to credit in a copy": see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 136–40. The raised knee of the Kuwait *Seated Painter*, which derives from the Freer *Seated Painter*, has a clumsily attached foot and a tilted pad (like the scribe in the St. Petersburg album painting). According to Atıl, the Ottoman painter of the Freer portrait reinterpreted the Gardner portrait, by a European artist, combining it with elements from the Persianate painting tradition, including "the element of one knee bent up," as in the St. Petersburg album painting: see Atıl, "Ottoman Miniature Painting," 117. For Angiolello's eyewitness account, see Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 119–21: "Volse gli facesse Venetia in disegno et retraesse molte persone, si ch'era grato al Signore. Quando il Signore voleva veder qualch'uno che haveva fama die esser bell'huomo, lo faceva retrahere dal ditto Gentile Bellin, et poi lo vedeva." For the suggestion that the "many portraits" mentioned by Angiolello were not elaborate canvas paintings but ink drawings on paper, replicas of which the artist brought back to Venice for his own use, see Meyer zur Capellen, "Gentile Bellini als Bildnismaler am Hofe Mehmets II." While some of the ink drawings generally attributed to Bellini and his workshop may have been intended for translation into colored Ottoman miniature paintings on paper, like the *Seated Scribe*, we know that copies of the original drawings that Bellini brought back with him to Venice served as models for Pinturicchio's frescoes in the Borgia apartments at the Vatican (1490s) and the Piccolomini Library in the Siena Cathedral (ca. 1503).

175 In the Kuwait portrait, the cloud-collar pattern is transformed into a separate cape awkwardly jutting out from under the Ottoman-style broad collar. According to Rogers, this cape is similar to the costume depicted in a painting he attributes to Aqqoyunlu Tabriz (ca. 1470) (the painting is illustrated in Rogers, "Mehmed the Conqueror," 84, fig. 30). Rogers regards the bulging robe of the Freer portrait as a "misinterpretation" of the Aqqoyunlu cape (this argument was presented in his London conference lecture).

image depicts a scribe or a painter-scribe, from whose belt hang two prominent pens and a handkerchief. A golden pen case and a large blue purse are also tucked into the belt.[176] With a subtly treated, sparse beard, this Timurid personage has remarkably individualized facial features, as does the seated Ottoman painter by whom he is being painted. The Freer image can therefore be read as "a portrait within a portrait." The style used to represent the seated Ottoman painter fuses Eastern and Western conventions, whereas the painting he is producing mimics the late Timurid manner of Herat. This extraordinary juxtaposition of two distinct styles, attesting to a fluency in diverse visual traditions and a taste for hybridity, once again points to the experimental milieu of Mehmed's court artists.

The artistic conversation between Herat and Istanbul is implied by the arrival at the Ottoman court between 1472 and 1474 of "visitors from the land of Turan" who had "painters" (*naḳḳāşlar*) draw a picture of the Topkapı Palace to show back home.[177] Mehmed II is known to have exchanged embassies and letters in those years with the Timurid ruler of Herat, Sultan Husayn Bayqara, especially in an attempt to form an alliance against their common enemy, Uzun Hasan.[178] The Ottoman sultan's Eastern artistic horizons, complementing his Western gaze, expanded particularly after he subjugated Karaman in 1468 and had scholars and artisans transported from there to Istanbul. This was followed by military confrontations with the allied Aqqoyunlu-Karamanid forces in the early 1470s. The ransom of "blood money" for four Aqqoyunlu princes, captured in the contested territory of Karaman in 1472, was to be accompanied by cultural currency that would especially please the sultan, namely, "wondrous manuscripts and gifts of novelties such as albums" (*kutub-i ġarība va tabarrukāt-i badī ʿiyya mithl-i muraqqaʿāt*). The defeat of Uzun Hasan in 1473 brought an influx of scholars, artisans, and artistic booty, including the ruler's personal "armory, treasury, and other belongings" (*cebeḫānesi ve ḫazīnesi ve bāḳī esbābı*), along with his chief secretary (*munshī*) Sayyid Muhammad of Shiraz. Shortly thereafter, the Aqqoyunlu prince Ughurlu Muhammad Mirza (d. 1477) sought political asylum at the Ottoman court and the sultan gave him his daughter in marriage.[179]

As the legislator of a new imperial order with global pretensions and claims to the heritages of great empires of the past, Mehmed II sought to cultivate a courtly high culture commensurate with his fertile geopolitical imagination. In an age when collecting and cultural patronage had become essential means of aristocratic self-definition and prestige, he actively engaged with the trendsetting aesthetic innovations of Eastern and Western courts alike. Sixteenth-century Ottoman writers unanimously emphasize his enthusiastic patronage of artists, poets, and especially scholars; wherever in the world there was a man of "outstanding talent," he tried to lure him to his capital with generous gifts. Originating from Iran or Central Asia, the sultan's court painter Baba Nakkaş (a royal "intimate" who had joined the Naqshbandi order of dervishes in his homeland), together with the Ottoman pupils he trained, indigenized the international Timurid-Turkmen style that would permeate architectural ornament, the decorative arts, and the arts of the book well into the early sixteenth century. A biographical dictionary reports that at the sultan's own initiative several young slave-servant (ġulām) trainees were donated to Baba Nakkaş in order to "acclimatize the elegant mode of design of greater Iran (*ṭarz-ı nāzik-i ḳalem-i ʿAcem*) within the clime of *Rūm* (Ottoman lands)." It is revealing to note that this initiative parallels

176 I am grateful to Massumeh Farhad for her assistance in confirming my identification of the objects attached to the belt of the standing figure, whom Michael Barry fancifully describes as "a young page boy about to pour from a flagon of wine—as if to mirror his own largesse as a generous donor of a flow of life": see Barry, *Figurative Art*, 43.

177 The visitors are mentioned in a late sixteenth-century source: "One day some of the visitors coming from the land of Turan had painters draw its noble picture [i.e., Topkapı Palace] and took it back to their country (*bir gün Tūrān-zemīnden gelen misāfīrīnüñ baʿżıları resm-i şerīfin naḳḳāşlara çekdirüp diyārlarına iletdükde…*)": see Lokman b. Seyyid Hüseyin, *Hünernāme*, ca. 1584–85, Topkapı Palace Library, Ms. H. 1523, fols. 14b–15a, cited in Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 214. A scholar from Turan who was performing the ḥajj soon thereafter came to Istanbul to discuss the architectural symbolism of the painting with the Timurid scholar Ali Kuşcı (ca. 1472–74), who was then employed at the sultan's court. The text does not specify whether the "painters" were Ottoman court artists or Timurid artists accompanying the "visitors." The Timurid prince Baysunghur sent an embassy to the Ming court at Peking in 1420, accompanied by a painter known as Ghiyathuddin Nakkash: Wheeler M. Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents on the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden, 2001), 53–68.

178 Letters were exchanged between Mehmed II and Sultan Husayn Bayqara, and between their prime ministers (Mahmud Pasha and ʿAli-Sher Navaʾi, who were prominent patrons of scholars and the arts). For an Ottoman embassy to the Timurid court in Herat in 1474, see Mohammad Mokri, "Un farmân de Sultân Husayn Bâyqarâ recommandant la protection d'une ambassade ottomane en Khorâsân en 879/1474," *Turcica* 5 (1975): 68–79. A letter addressed by Mehmed II to Sultan Husayn Bayqara (ca. 1474), proposing an alliance in order to attack Uzun Hasan from both sides, is reproduced in Feridun Ahmed Beg, *Münşeātü's-selāṭīn*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1264–65 [1847–49]), 1:276–78.

179 The captured princes were Yusuf Beg (Yusufche Mirza), Zaynal Beg, ʿOmar Beg, and Muzaffar Beg; the money determined for each prince was to be accompanied by pleasing gifts. The ransom was still being negotiated in a letter dated Shawwal 880 (February 1476); for the letters of negotiation, see Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeātü's-selāṭīn*, 1:274–82. A letter addressed by Mehmed II to his son Prince Cem in 1473, in which he announced the capture of Uzun Hasan's personal belongings, is reproduced in Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeātü's-selāṭīn*, 1:276. Regarding the wars between the Ottomans and Aqqoyunlu–Karamanid forces; the captive prince Yusuf Beg; and the asylum of Ughurlu Muhammad, see John E. Woods, *The Aqquyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Minneapolis, 1976), 127–37.

the schooling of Sinan Beg in Italianate portraiture and figural painting by a Western master.[180]

Mehmed II attracted famous scholars and literati from the East to his court, where bilingual poets composing Persian and Turkish poetry strove to develop an indigenous *Rūmī* idiom by "creative translation" and "dressing the Persian mode of poetry with Turkish garments (*Türkī libās*)." In 1472, the sultan recruited from the rival Aqqoyunlu court the celebrated Timurid astronomer-mathematician Ali Kuşcı. However, Mehmed was unsuccessful in his attempt to lure the Naqshbandi poet-scholar ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami to his court when the latter was returning to Herat in 1474 after performing the hajj. Shortly before his death, the Ottoman ruler sent an envoy with precious gifts to Jami in Herat, asking him to write a work on the respective positions of theologians, philosophers, and Sufis on an itemized list of metaphysical questions that had been debated for centuries. *The Precious Pearl*, which Jami wrote in response to the sultan's request, reached Istanbul only after his distant patron's death in 1481.[181] It is tempting to speculate that the closely related Gardner and Freer paintings, once mounted in Persian albums, were among the gifts sent with the same envoy to the court of Herat (figs. 22 and 24[a]). If so, these paired images would have expressed Mehmed II's pride in the inauguration of an innovative *Rūmī* mode of portraiture far more naturalistic than the Timurid exemplars to which both images were responding.[182]

180 Ottoman sources highlighting the sultan's invitations to men of talent and learning are analyzed in Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 162–63. According to a hitherto unnoted biographical entry, when Baba Nakkaş (Mehmed b. al-Shaykh Bayezid) came to the Ottoman court from Greater Iran (ʿAcem), where he had previously joined the Naqshbandi order, Mehmed II gave him slave-servant apprentices to train (*ṭaraf-ı şehriyārīden birḳaç ġulām inẓām olınup ṭarz-ı nāzik-i ḳalem-i ẓAcem iḳlīm-i Rūmda şāyiʿ olmaġiçün taʿlīm olınmaların murād eyledüklerinde...*); one of his pupils was Kasım Beg (Kasım b. Abdullah Nakkaş, who signed his *waqfiyya* as a witness): see Atâî, Şakaik-i Nu'maniye Zeyilleri, 2:71. Baba Nakkaş is discussed in Ünver, *Fatih Devri Saray Nakışhanesi*; Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 53, 59–60.

181 Literary contacts with the Timurid court, the "creative translation" of Persian poetry reclothed with "Turkish garments," and invitations to Ali Kuşcı and Jami are discussed in Tekin, "Fatih Devri," 161–221. Biographical dictionaries of Ottoman poets written later in the sixteenth century criticized the imitative "translation" of Persian models by Mehmed II's court poets and stressed the invention of a new *Rūmī* style that was clearly distinguished from the ʿAcemī tradition: see Necipoğlu, "L'idée de décor," 10–23. For an English translation of the work commissioned from Jami by Mehmed II, see Jami, *The Precious Pearl* (*al-Durrah al-fākhirah*)*, Together with His Glosses and the Commentary of ʿAbd al-Ghafūr al-Lārī*, trans. Nicholas Heer (Albany, N.Y., 1979). The careers and works of Ottoman scholars from Mehmed II's reign, who were trained in Iran and Central Asia (as well as in Mamluk Syria and Egypt), are recorded in the biographical dictionary of Taşköprülüzāde (d. 1561): see Atâî, Şakaik-i Nu'maniye Zeyilleri, 1:134–288.

182 The Freer portrait bears the seal of a Zand prince (r. 1785–89): see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 138. The Gardner *Seated Scribe* reached the Safavid court sometime before the Bahram Mirza Album was created in 1544–45, perhaps via Herat. It subsequently found its way back to the Ottoman court with the album, which may have been a Safavid diplomatic gift. I had suggested earlier that the Freer *Seated Painter* was probably sent by Mehmed II to the ruler of Tabriz, Uzun Hasan: see Necipoğlu, "Serial Portraits," 30n32. However, this seems unlikely, since friendly diplomatic relations with Tabriz were interrupted after Uzun Hasan's defeat by the Ottomans in 1473. Upon Uzun Hasan's death, his successor, Sultan-Khalil, sent ambassadors to Mehmed II in 1478; and the next Aqqoyunlu ruler, Yaʿqub, resumed cordial diplomatic relations with Bayezid II: see Woods, *The Aqquyunlu*, 140, 149–50, 275n4, 280n45. Although the Gardner and Freer portraits could have reached the East during Bayezid II's reign, I find it more likely that soon after they were painted, Mehmed II sent them to Herat as artistic novelties.

Although lamentably few works attributable to Sinan Beg and his pupils have survived, several anonymous portraits mounted in albums in the Topkapı Palace Library provide further evidence of Mehmed's attempt to launch a Europeanizing mode of Ottoman miniature painting intended to complement works he commissioned in the Italian and Timurid manners. Examples include the three-quarter bust portraits of a bearded Greek or Levantine and a young janissary, the full-face depiction of a Madonna, and another, gold-ground profile bust of the sultan, deriving from that of Costanzo da Ferrara.[183] The inventive experiments of Ottoman court painters were probably not limited to the genre of portraiture. This conjecture is supported by two Europeanizing narrative paintings added later to an incomplete manuscript of the *Khamsa* of Nizami, created in Timurid Herat in 1445–46 (figs. 26 and 27[a-c]). Zeren Tanındı has attributed these paintings to the court workshop of Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), based on the horsemen's distinctive janissary headgear, architectural details (a castle with conical-capped *firengī* towers like those of the Topkapı Palace), and the manuscript binding made for this sultan. Once again, these images display the selective interweaving of the Turco-Persianate painting tradition with such Europeanate naturalistic conventions as sketching technique, shading, modeling, foreshortening, and perspectival effects. Although the attribution to Bayezid II is not implausible, judging by the less refined Europeanizing conventions seen in painted manuscripts dedicated to him, these unique narrative images may well date from the last years of Mehmed II's reign. (The binding could have been added by his son, when he had the royal library collection inventoried.) The paintings, one of them left unfinished, can be ascribed to a court artist trained in the *firengī* manner, perhaps working in collaboration with one of the Western painters invited by Mehmed II. If so, a probable candidate is Sinan Beg, whose gravestone identifying him as the "painter (*naḳḳāş*) of Sultan Mehmed" implies that he was no longer employed in Bayezid II's court.

183 See Raby, "Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album," 42–43, figs. 27–28, as well as his entry in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 91.

26

26. Ottoman painter, Bahram Gur Fighting Two Lions and Winning His Throne and Crown. From a Khamsa of Nizami, ca. 1478–81. Watercolor and gold on paper. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 781, fol. 160r. (Photo: courtesy of David Roxburgh)

The striking resemblance of the Ottoman-style wide collared, blue-and-red costume with gold buttons worn by Alexander the Great in the painting *Alexander Searching for the Water of Life*, to that of his counterpart riding to Jerusalem in the Marciana İskendernāme hints that both were intended to represent the sultan himself (figs. 27a and 3).[184]

Epilogue: Longevity of Mehmed II's legacy

The aesthetics of fusion fostered in the Ottoman court scriptorium can be seen as a visual metaphor for the self-avowed cultural in-betweenness and liminality of the lands of Rūm at the intersection between worlds, histories, and continents. Despite their foreignness to the Turco-Persianate painting tradition, bust-length and half-length miniature painted portraits were subsequently assimilated into the sixteenth-century Ottoman artistic repertoire, in which individualized portraiture (a genre initiated under Mehmed II's patronage) continued to occupy a privileged position. Moreover, in the perspectival effects of their landscapes and architectural representations, the narrative paintings of some manuscripts produced in the court workshop of Bayezid II carry the recognizable echoes of earlier experiments. In parallel with painting, the synthetic idiom inaugurated by Mehmed II's pioneering mosque complex would also leave a lasting imprint on the dynastic architectural style elaborated under his successors. Unlike the synthetic idioms in painting and

184 See also sixteenth-century illustrated Ottoman Turkish translations of the *Shāhnāma*, where representations of Alexander the Great can be recognized as portraits of Mehmed II: Serpil Bağcı, "From Iskender to Mehmed II: Change in Royal Imagery," in *Art Turc / Turkish Art, 10th International Congress of Turkish Art* (Geneva, 1999), 111–25. Zeren Tanındı, "Additions to Illustrated Manuscripts in Ottoman Workshops," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000): 150–54. Also note the Ottoman-style flask (*matara*) of one of the janissaries on horseback (fig. 27b). The two paintings are attributed to a Western artist or to an Ottoman artist trained in the European manner, who worked in the late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century court workshop of Bayezid II, in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 51–53. The inscription of Sinan Beg's gravestone in Bursa is cited in n. 19 above. Prior to the publication of Tanındı's article, I. Stchoukine and E. Grube identified both paintings, which differ from the rest of the manuscript's Timurid miniatures, as late-sixteenth-century Ottoman additions. Not noticing the diagnostic details observed by Tanındı, Robinson disagreed with Stchoukine and Grube and ascribed the same paintings to Timurid Herat in the 1440s. He describes these two images as "contemporary Persian work—a bold experiment by a highly gifted artist," which "represent the earliest attempts of a Persian artist to imitate European style": B. W. Robinson, *Fifteenth-Century Persian Painting: Problems and Issues* (New York and London, 1991), 8–9. Rogers misidentified the Ottoman costumes of figures as "European dress" and stated that the two paintings recall the Gozzoli frescoes of the 1450s in the Palazzo Medici-Ricardi in Florence; he hypothesized that these images were probably added around 1480 in Aqqoyunlu Tabriz, to which Italians "flocked" during the time of the anti-Ottoman coalition: Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, *The Topkapı Saray Museum: The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts*, trans. and ed. J. M. Rogers (Boston, 1986), 90, nos. 59–60.

27a

27b

27c

27a–b–c. (a) Ottoman painter, Alexander Searching for the Water of Life in the Land of Darkness. From a Khamsa of Nizami, ca. 1478–81. Watercolor and gold on paper. Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 781, fol. 279v; (b and c) details. (Photos: courtesy of Hadiye Cangökçe)

architecture, however, the purely Italianate manner of portraiture so enthusiastically embraced by the sultan enjoyed only a short life. Although Mehmed II attempted to acculturate both Eastern (*'Acemī*) and Western (*Firengī*) modes of portraiture in his court, along with a hybrid Ottoman (*Rūmī*) manner, he clearly seems to have favored naturalistic Italian Renaissance models for self-representation. This preference resonates with the westward thrust of his ecumenical vision of empire, which reversed Alexander's eastward orientation. Bayezid II, who rose to power with the support of traditionalist factions opposed to his father's imperial project, was no doubt making a public statement by selling Mehmed's collection of Western art upon his accession to the throne, and by not commissioning any painted or medallic portraits of himself from Italian artists.[185] Nevertheless, the new sultan perpetuated in many respects

185 For the sixteenth-century portraitist Nigari's bust-length portraits of Ottoman sultans holding royal attributes, which were copied for Paolo Giovio, see Necipoğlu, "Serial Portraits," 37. On narrative paintings from Bayezid II's reign, see Yoltar-Yıldırım, "A 1498–99 *Khusraw va Shīrīn*," 154–55; Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 41–53. Bayezid II's repudiation of Italianate figural art and his sale of his father's collection are mentioned in Ursu, ed. (Angiolello), *Historia Turchesca*, 121, cited in n. 131 above. For Bayezid's

his father's cosmopolitan artistic legacy, a legacy that was not an idiosyncratic, short-lived diversion, as is often assumed.

In fact, Bayezid II's viziers could still admire the naturalistic canvas portrait of Francesco II Gonzaga, the Marquis of Mantua, which was presented as a diplomatic gift to this sultan in 1492. The Mantuan ambassador's unpublished letter to the Marquis describes his reception at the royal palace in Edirne. In it he explains how he informed the pashas that the painted portrait (*retracto*) of his master was sent as a token of love and loyalty toward the sultan; being unable to come in person to express his reverence, the Marquis had opted to be brought to the Gran Signor's presence in painting so as to be known to his majesty by sight (*lo Excellentia mio signore per dimostrar con qualche effetto lo amor, fede, et servità sue verso la Maestà del Gran signor non havendo in persona potuto venir a far reverentia alla sua Maestà ha voluto essergli in pictura portato, accio che sua Maestà lo vegia et conosca*). When the pashas enthusiastically asked the ambassador to show the painting, it was displayed to them at the palace's public council hall before being paraded in front of a ceremonial window of the sultan's private audience chamber. Holding the painted surrogate in their hands, the pashas greatly praised the sitter's face (*lo feci pigliar et portar in conspetto loro, quali lo tolsero ne le loro mani laudando grandamente la faccia de la Excellentia vostra*). Francesco Gonzaga's friendship with the Ottoman sultan was proudly publicized in a panegyric poem by the humanist poet Bassano Mantovano, and the Marquis even encouraged his troops to utter the battlecry "Turco! Turco!" while proclaiming allegiance to the house of Gonzaga. A year later, in 1493, Francesco II presented two other portraits to Kasım Beg, Bayezid II's ambassador to the Gonzaga court: one depicting Prince Cem (the sultan's rival brother held hostage in Rome by the pope in return for an annual fee), and the other representing the ambassador of the Mamluk sultan (a supporter of Cem's candidacy to the Ottoman throne). It has recently been argued that these two portraits were probably related to the likeness made by the Gonzaga court artist Andrea Mantegna while he was on loan to the Papal Court in Rome between 1488 and 1490. After Kasım Beg's gift-bearing embassy, Francesco Gonzaga not only made an effort to learn Turkish, but also, as Molly Bourne has shown, commissioned frescoes in his three residences whose subjects celebrated fruitful interactions with the Ottoman world.[186]

dislike of figural images, see a letter that Tommaso di Zolfo (or Tolfo) sent to Michelangelo in 1519: discussed in Friedrich Sarre,"Michelangelo und der türkische Hof," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 32 (1909): 61–66; Raby, "Opening Gambits," 72–73.

186 I discovered the letter of the Mantuan ambassador Alexis Becagut while conducting doctoral research in London (British Museum, Ms. Harley 3462, fols. 14r–18r); it is mentioned in Necipoğlu, "Serial Portraits," 30; and Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 89, 97–98. The portraits

It seems likely to me that the Marquis of Mantua presented the paired portraits to the Ottoman sultan's ambassador so as to keep his anxious ally informed about the hostage prince's condition, as well as about a related Mamluk embassy to Rome. This suggests that Bayezid II was not averse to receiving naturalistic Italianate portraits as gifts for Western diplomatic negotiations (even if primarily for their documentary information value). Nor was he opposed to continuing his father's custom of knighting favored European visitors to his court. In 1481, he conferred the status of *cavaliero* on the Venetian ambassador Antonio Vitturi, just as an ambassador of Bayezid II was knighted (*fato cavalier*) in 1496 at Vigevano (near Milan) by the newly elected Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (son of Frederick III) (r. 1486–1519). The latter event surprised the Venetian chronicler Marino Sanuto because the sultan's ambassador was an "infidel."[187]

The 1505 inventory of the Topkapı Palace's Inner Treasury indicates that Bayezid II tolerated figural images. Among the silver artifacts listed are "six pieces of infidel images" (*gebr taṣvīrleri*), most likely silver-plated Byzantine icons, along with a "European figural tapestry" (*firengī muṣavver perde*). He did dispose of Mehmed II's Byzantine relic collection, enshrined in the same treasury, which his father had refused to sell to European rulers because he considered them "more precious than money." However, Bayezid's main purpose in dispersing these relics was to offer them as gifts to European rulers in exchange for holding his brother, Prince Cem, captive. He did, after all, preserve the figural mosaics of Hagia Sophia and his father's Italian prints with devotional and secular imagery. It is true that Bayezid chose not to cultivate Italianate figural art, but he was not reluctant to invite Leonardo and Michelangelo (ca. 1502–3 and 1506, respectively) to construct a bridge across the Golden Horn. Although the bridge was never built, the sultan's at-

of Prince Cem and the ambassador of the Mamluk sultan given to Kasım Beg are described by the Gonzaga secretary, in a letter to Isabella d'Este dated July 23, 1493, as "uno quadro de la figura del Turcho, che è a Roma, et de l'ambasciatore del soldano che haveva Andrea Mantinea"; cited in Kissling, *Sultan Bâjezîd's II. Beziehungen*, 23, 35–36; Bourne, "Turban'd Turk in Renaissance Mantua," 56. Bourne misunderstands "soldano," a common reference to the Mamluk sultan instead of the Ottoman sultan (called "Gran Signor" in Becagut's 1492 letter). She therefore assumes that the Mamluk ambassador's portrait probably depicted the Ottoman sultan's envoy, Kasım Beg: Bourne, "Turban'd Turk in Renaissance Mantua," 56n14. She corrects the misinterpretation of Kissling, who thought that these two portraits were sent by Bayezid II to Francesco II (and not the other way around) in connection with a secret plot to eliminate his half-brother Cem. For Francesco's palace frescoes, see Bourne, "Turban'd Turk in Renaissance Mantua," 54–56; as well as Bourne's excellent book, *Francesco II Gonzaga: The Soldier-Prince as Patron* (Rome, 2008).

187 For the ambassadors knighted by Bayezid II and Maximilan I, see respectively Soranzo, *Cronaca di anonimo veronese*, 362, 368; and Franz Babinger, "Zwei diplomatische Zwischenspiele im deutsch-osmanischen Staatsverkehr unter Bajezid II (1497 und 1504)," in Babinger, *Aufsätze und Abhandlungen*, 1:258–59.

tempt to procure the services of two leading Italian Renaissance artists for its construction testifies to his own personalized global outlook.[188]

Renewed artistic exchanges with Renaissance Italy under Selim I and Süleyman I

A merchant-banker of the Gondi Bank (established by the Florentine banking family of the Gondi who were prominent financial partners of the Medici) wrote a letter to Michelangelo in 1519, once again urging the artist to join the Ottoman Porte. This time he was to come immediately to Edirne or send without delay one of the best painters of Christendom, who should bring along the finest samples of his works (*uno altro pintore que sia di meglio che ogi di si trouj in Christianità di pitura*). The writer of the letter explained that Bayezid II's son and successor, Selim I, (r. 1512–20) had just paid a fortune for an undistinguished antique nude statue and, unlike his father, was fond of the figural arts. Apparently, the new sultan's brother, Prince Ahmed, who was executed in 1513, had shared this fondness. A tantalizing entry I came across in an unpublished inventory of Selim I's Inner Treasury refers to "two European images" (*taṣvīr-i firengī, iki*) among his late brother's confiscated belongings.[189]

The early sixteenth-century Veneto-Byzantine historian Teodoro Spandugino even claims that at the Council Hall in Venice he saw a painted representation of Selim I's victorious battle at Çaldıran (1514), which was said to have been sent by the sultan to Venice (*et est paincte en salle du Conseil de Venise, où je l'ay veue; et dict on que ledict Selym la leur envoya*). According to Giovio, this victory in Iran had given Selim I an "incredible reputation" for two reasons: it demonstrated to the "whole world" that the Safavid Shah Ismaʿil I was not invincible, and also revealed the sultan's military prowess, since he succeeded in advancing twenty days beyond the point where his grandfather, Mehmed II, had dared to go during the famous battle with Uzun Hasan. No-longer-extant paintings of the victory in Çaldıran once decorated two royal garden kiosks of Selim I along the Bosphorus, testifying to his pride in this feat. The sultan may therefore have sent a painting of that battle to his Venetian allies as a pictorial "*fatḥnāma*" (epistle of victory). One wonders whether a recently discovered, large, late sixteenth-century canvas painting in a palace in Palermo, which depicts Selim I's triumph in Çaldıran, has any connection to the painting Spandugino saw at the Council Hall in Venice. The sultan's subsequent conquest of Cairo was celebrated in an anonymous Italian portrait medal (ca. 1517) that naturalistically depicts his bust in profile. The subjugated Mamluk capital is represented on the medal's reverse by three elongated pyramids, separated by the Nile River from a fortified city with two heads prominently displayed on spikes. The heads have been interpreted as references to the last two Mamluk sultans successively defeated by Selim I. It has also been suggested that the medal was perhaps commissioned by the sultan himself, given the victory message of its imagery and of its Latin inscriptions: on the reverse, "Memphis [i.e., Cairo], captured from conquered kings"; on the obverse, "Selim, Emperor of the Turks." Two bronze portrait medals that represent Selim's son and successor, Süleyman I (r. 1520–66), in profile are the last known examples of their kind, though it is unclear who commissioned them.[190]

188 The treasury inventory dated 1505 (Topkapı Palace Archives, Ms. D. 10026) is reproduced in facsimile in Öz, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*, document XXI, 2, 8. This inventory of the "Imperial Inner Treasury," which belongs to a larger series of similar inventories that I am currently preparing for publication, has incorrectly been identified by Rogers as a list of objects that must have been taken out of the palace treasury to be donated for Bayezid II's then-recently completed mosque complex: see J. Michael Rogers, "An Ottoman Palace Inventory of the Reign of Bayezid II," in *Comité international d'Études pré-ottomanes et ottomanes, VIth Symposium, Proceedings*, ed. Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Emeri Van Donzel (Istanbul, Paris, Leiden, 1987): 51–53. For Bayezid II's dispersal of the Byzantine relic collection kept at the palace treasury, which his father refused to sell, see Raby, "El Gran Turco," 94–106; Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 135–36. Bayezid II's invitation to Michelangelo and Leonardo for the bridge project is discussed in Franz Babinger, "Vier Bauvorschläge Lionardo da Vincis an Sultan Bajazed II (1502/3)," in *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse 1 (Göttingen, 1952); Raby, "Opening Gambits," 72–73; Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, 88.

189 For the 1519 letter of the Florentine merchant-banker Tommaso da Zolfo (or Tolfo), see Sarre, "Michelangelo und der türkische Hof," 61–66; Raby, "Opening Gambits," 72–73; and Semavi Eyice, "II. Beyazıd Devrinde Davet Edilen Batılılar (Arnold von Harff, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo)," *Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi* 19 (1969): 23–30. I found the reference to Prince Ahmed's European paintings in the Topkapı Palace's Inner Treasury, in an undated inventory from the reign of Selim I: Topkapı Palace Archives, Ms. D. 3/2, fol. 10r.

190 Having renewed Bayezid II's 1503 peace treaty with Venice in 1513, the Venetians refused to help Shah Ismaʿil I and congratulated Selim I's victory in Çaldıran: see Selâhattin Tansel, *Yavuz Sultan Selim* (Istanbul, 1969), 219–21; Spandouyn (Spandugino), *Petit traicté*, 334; Giovio, *Commentario*, 134–35. The Sultaniye Kiosk had a painted lacquerwork wooden door depicting the victory at Çaldıran, and the kiosk of the Karabali garden featured a "*kunstliche Tafel*" celebrating the same victory: see Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 224–25; Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Suburban Landscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul as a Mirror of Classical Ottoman Garden Culture," in *Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires: Theory and Design*, ed. Attilio Petruccioli (Leiden, 1997), 37–38. The undated and unsigned painting with a long Italian inscription at the Mirto Palace in Sicily has yet to be contextualized and interpreted: see Mirella Galletti, "La bataille de Čālderān dans un tableau du XVIe siècle," *Studia Iranica* 36 (2007): 65–86; Mirella Galletti, "Un dipinto della battaglia di Cialdiran in Sicilia," *Kervan: Rivista Internazionale di Studii Afroasiatici* 2 (July 2005): 23–53 (www.kervan.to.it). Inscriptions on Selim I's medal read: "MEMPHI. CAPTA. REGIBUS DE VICTIS," "SELYMUS. TURCARUM.IMPERATOR." Portrait medals of Selim I and Süleyman I are discussed in Raby, "Pride and Prejudice," 185; Raby, entry in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 76, 94, 112; *Im Lichte des Halbmonds: Das Abendland und der türkische Orient* (exhibition catalogue) (Dresden, 1995), 74. A painted double-portrait, once in the Giovio collection, represents Selim I and the Mamluk ruler Tuman Bay (r. 1516–17), whom he defeated in 1517: see Raby, "Opening Gambits," 75, no. 65.

After Mehmed II's demise, invitations to Italian artists were issued only sporadically and no longer through official diplomatic channels but rather through the informal networks of the Florentine Gondi Bank and Franciscan friars residing in Pera. Artistic interactions with Italy would be reinvigorated in the early part of Sultan Süleyman's reign, during the grand vizierate of Ibrahim Pasha (1525–36). This pasha was born in Parga in Venetian Albania and his chief adviser-creditor was the well-connected Pera merchant Alvise Gritti, the illegitimate son of the reigning Doge of Venice, Andrea Gritti (r. 1523–38). The households of both Ibrahim and Alvise boasted kinship ties with personages who had enjoyed positions of power under Mehmed II and his two successors, ties through which the continuing cosmopolitanism of the Ottoman court was readapted to shifting cultural politics. It has been established that Ibrahim Pasha, christened Pietro and captured by corsairs, was raised as a household slave by a daughter of Iskender Bey (later Pasha, d. 1503), the previously mentioned Pera-born, Italo-Greek governor of Mehmed II, who rose to the vizierate under Bayezid II. As Süleyman's favorite, Ibrahim married a granddaughter of the late Iskender Pasha, and likely met Alvise Gritti through that family's Pera connections. The Doge's "bastard" son, on the other hand, inherited the precious connections of his father. As a leading merchant-diplomat, Andrea Gritti had resided for many years in Pera, where his great-uncle (the aforementioned Giovanni Battista Gritti) had served as bailo under Mehmed II.[191]

The intensification of artistic relations with Renaissance Europe during Ibrahim Pasha's grand vizierate was once again propelled by his royal master's aspiration for universal sovereignty as the long-awaited Last World Emperor, who would inaugurate the prophesied millennial order.[192] In a newly uncovered anonymous Italian epic poem eulogizing Selim I's victories in 8,000 verses, the crown prince, Süleyman, is hailed as the future messianic "world emperor" (*imperator del mondo*), who would "restore the Golden Age" (*farà tornar la età de l'oro*). Written in Veneto-Emiliana dialect by a possibly Venetian author, this poem's eschatological prophecy presents the only son and heir apparent of Selim I as his grandest accomplishment. Given the brevity of life, Süleyman would bring to completion the imperial project of his father, who was "born to dominate the world" (*per dominar il mondo al mondo nato*). The epic poem is datable to the last years of Selim's reign (ca. 1518–20), when the aforementioned Florentine banker-merchant invited Michelangelo or another world-famous painter to Edirne. It recalls an earlier epic poem in Latin, written in praise of Mehmed II: Giovanni Maria Filelfo's *Amyris*, which was commissioned by the Anconitan merchant Othman di Lillo Freducci (Ferducci), named after the Ottoman dynasty's founder by his father, who boasted close ties with Murad II. Perhaps the encomium that jointly pays homage to Selim I and his son was also commissioned by an Italian merchant seeking to curry favor with the reigning sultan, or by a diplomat affiliated with the Venetian embassy in Pera. Since the manuscript's first twenty-two folios and conclusion are missing, its authorship and context have not been established. Yet a connection with Venice is implied not only by internal clues, but also by striking parallels between its contents and the reports of Venetian ambassadors who met Selim I. It is noteworthy that the *bailos* residing in Pera in those years (Pietro Bembo [1516–19] and Tommaso Contarini [1519–22]) were associated with Andrea Gritti's mercantile circle, due to their personal interests in trading with the Ottoman capital. The Venetian ambassador Antonio Giustiniani, who in 1513 renewed the commercial privileges of the peace treaty concluded by Andrea Gritti with Bayezid II in 1503, notes that Selim I wished to imitate his grandfather, Mehmed II, and avoided having any more sons after Süley-

191 With Franciscan friars acting as intermediaries, Bayezid II invited Michelangelo to build the bridge crossing the Golden Horn: see n. 190 above. For Iskender Beg (later Pasha), see n. 8 above. Regarding Ibrahim Pasha's relationship with Alvise Gritti; the invitation to Istanbul in the 1530s of artists associated with the circle of Pietro Aretino in Venice; and the visits to the Ottoman capital of the artists Peter Coecke van Aelst and Gian-Maria di Andrian Gian-Battista, see Gülru Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry," *Art Bulletin* 71 (1989): 401–27. Ibrahim Pasha's connection with the family of Iskender Pasha and his marriage into that family have been established in Ebru Turan, "The Marriage of Ibrahim Pasha (ca. 1495–1536): The Rise of Sultan Süleyman's Favorite to the Grand Vizierate and the Politics of the Elites in the Early Sixteenth-century Ottoman Empire," *Turcica* 41 (2009): 3–36. For the biographies of Andrea Gritti and his Pera-born son Alvise (Ludovico), see Gizela Németh Papo and Adriano Papo, *Ludovico Gritti: Un principe-mercante del Rinascimento tra Venezia, i Turchi e la corona d'Ungheria* (Mariano del Friuli, 2002); Gizela Németh Papo and Adriano Papo, "Ludovico Gritti, partner commerciale e informatore politico-militare della Repubblica di Venezia," *Studi Veneziani* 41 (2001): 217–45; Ivone Cacciavillani, *Andrea Gritti: Nella vita di Nicolò Barbarigo* (Venice, 1995).

192 On Süleyman's claims to universal sovereignty and eschatological expectations throughout the Mediterranean world for a divinely ordained messianic Last World Emperor, who would establish a millennial order, see Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Dome of the Rock as Palimpsest: ʿAbd al-Malik's Grand Narrative and Sultan Süleyman's Glosses," *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 17–105; Cornell H. Fleischer, "The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman," in *Soliman le magnifique et son temps*, ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris, 1992), 159–77; Fleischer, "Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences," 236–43; Robert Finlay, "Prophecy and Politics in Istanbul: Charles V, Sultan Süleyman, and the Habsburg Embassy of 1533–34," *Journal of Early Modern History* 2, 1 (1998): 1–31; Ebru Turan, "The Sultan's Favorite: Ibrahim Pasha and the Making of the Universal Sovereignty in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2007).

man was born. The latter observation is repeated by the ambassador Luigi (Alvise) Mocenigo, who was sent to Cairo in 1517 with Bartolomeo Contarini to congratulate the sultan on his victory. There they were honorably received and succeeded in renewing the Serenissima's trading privileges in Syria and Egypt. Mocenigo, who alone accompanied the sultan to Istanbul in 1518, says that he had many occasions to talk familiarly with him. He observed that Selim I read the life of Alexander, whom he wanted to imitate, aspiring to be a "world emperor" (*signor del mondo*) with Europe, Asia, and Africa peacefully brought under his control. Giovio wrote in his *Commentaria* that he had heard from Luigi Mocenigo that no other man equaled Selim "in virtue, justice, humanity and magnanimity of spirit, not having any barbarian trait whatsoever, and whatever the common people opposed him for was excellently justified by him."[193]

These are precisely the characteristics emphasized in the laudatory epic poem on the sultan's deeds, which overlooks negative aspects of his personality and justifies some of his questionable actions. At the beginning of each *canto*, its unidentified author directly addresses the living sultan. He expresses his wish to eternalize the fame and glory of Selim, who, long before being born, had been predestined to conquer Persia, Syria, and Egypt, as had Alexander the Great. The future glories of the sultan and his son, prophesied 5,280 years prior, are revealed to Selim by pagan deities in a vision he has of a temple, where he receives sacred insignia before setting out on his victorious Safavid and Mamluk campaigns: a helmet from Mars, a sword from Justice, and a golden standard with a silver full moon from Fame, since the former dynastic crescent will no longer suffice as an emblem for the "world emperor" (*imperator del mondo*). Inside the temple, the divinely favored sultan encounters sculpted effigies of ancient heroes and of his Ottoman ancestors. Inscriptions on the effigies predict how Bayezid II would voluntarily hand over to Selim the vast empire that his grandfather, Mehmed II, took away from Constantine the Great. The series ends with a golden effigy of the infant Süleyman, who, the deities inform Selim, was born under an extraordinary triple astral conjunction. Predestined for grandiose deeds as Selim's designated successor, the equally virtuous prince possesses gentleness of spirit (*gentilezza d'animo*) and the sagacity of Solomon, whose namesake he is, which will temper his bellicose instinct.[194]

Styling himself the new Ottoman Alexander and Solomon, the young Süleyman, who inherited from his father a tri-continental empire greatly extended in size, shared Mehmed II's dream of restoring the Roman Empire by reuniting Constantinople with Rome. In his *Commentaria*, published with a dedication to Emperor Charles V in Rome in 1532, Giovio says he had heard from trustworthy persons that Sultan Süleyman often declared that the empire of Rome and the whole West belonged to him as the legitimate successor of Constantine the Great, who had transferred the empire to Constantinople. We learn from Giovio and other sixteenth-century sources that both Selim I and Süleyman I avidly read translations of the life of Alexander. An anonymous eulogist of Süleyman even greets him as "more fortunate than Alexander the Great" and "World Emperor." His panegyric in Italian, brought to light by Ana Pulido, is the second example of its kind after the epic poem discussed above (the earlier, third example in Latin by Filelfo, the *Amyris*, similarly highlights Mehmed II's favorable support by pagan deities). Like that of his father, the eulogy of Süleyman can be connected with a Venetian

193 For *Amyris* (1471–76), see n. 46 above. Since Filelfo's patron, Lillo, died before the poem was completed, he added to the three books already completed a fourth one, in which he abruptly changed gears and encouraged Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza to mount a crusade against Mehmed II. The manuscript on the deeds of Selim I was discovered by Emilio Lippi in Treviso (Biblioteca Communale, Ms. 4700). The poem is published in Emilio Lippi, "1517: L'ottava al servizio del Sultano," *Quaderni Veneti* 34 (2000): 49–88; Emilio Lippi, " 'Per dominar il mondo al mondo nato'. Vita e gesta di Selim I Sultano," *Quaderni Veneti* 40 (2004): 17–106; 42 (2005): 37–118; 43 (2006): 35–91; 45 (2007): 7–61. See also Emilio Lippi, " 'Born to Rule the World': An Italian Poet Celebrates the Deeds of the Sultan Selim I," *Tarih İncelemeleri Dergisi* 19, 1 (2004): 87–92. Lippi dates the poem to the end of 1517 or early 1518, with the death of Selim I in 1520 constituting its unequivocal *terminus ante quem*. He suggests that the author may have produced the text for the diplomats who were sent in 1517 to renew Venetian trading privileges in Syria and Cairo. Lippi notes the Venetian sympathies of the author, implied by the only European mentioned by name in the poem, the Venetian consul of Damascus, Andrea Arimondo, who honors the Mamluk sultan prior to the war with Selim I. To this clue, I would like to add another one: the author says that some of the Ottoman territorial possessions, such as Negroponte, are "in our sea" (*nostro mare*). Diplomatic relations and friendly embassies between Selim I and Venice, at a time when Pope Leo X was planning a crusade, are discussed in Tansel, *Yavuz Sultan Selim*, 219–21. For ambassadorial reports and the names of *bailo*s stationed in Istanbul in those years, see Eugenio Albèri, ed., *Le relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato durante il secolo XVI*, ser. 3, *Relazioni degli stati ottomani*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1840–55), 3:45–70. Giovio, *Commentario*, 144–45: "Mi diceva il clarissimo miser Luigi Mozenigo… che essendo lui in Alcayro ambasciatore appresso a soltan Selim e avendolo molto ben praticato, che nulla uomo era par ad esso in virtù, iustizia, umanità e grandezza d'animo e che non aveva punto del barbaro, e tutto quello che s'egli oppone dal vulgo lo giustificava eccelentemente."

194 For an overview of the manuscript's contents, see Lippi, "1517: L'ottava al servizio del Sultano," and Lippi, "Born to Rule the World." In my view, the post-1518 date of the manuscript is hinted at by the prominent role played in it by Piri Mehmed Pasha, who rose to the grand vizierate in 1518 after the fall of Cairo. Prior to the sultan's temple vision en route to the Persian campaign in 1514, it is this pasha who informs Selim I that his victories over the Safavid shah and the Mamluk sultan had been prophesied long before his birth. The hailing of Prince Süleyman as restorer of the "Golden Age" makes one suspect that the manuscript may have been written around 1520–21, shortly after the death of his father. But as Lippi points out, at the beginning of each canto the author directly addresses Selim I, implying that he is alive. Moreover, it is explicitly stated that when Selim's soul departs from his body, Süleyman will succeed him.

patron, since the text of the splendidly illuminated manuscript alludes to the sultan's "indissoluble" peace with Venice, which will "endure in perpetuity." As in the panegyrical poem on Selim I's deeds, the author of this manuscript, which is dedicated to "Divine Süleyman, Most Invincible" (*Divo Solimano Invictissimo*), directly addresses the sultan, comparing him with classical heroes, attributing his conquests of Belgrade, Rhodes, and Hungary to the favor of deities, and praising his many virtues, including those of humanity and clemency. He is, moreover, portrayed as a cultured patron of scholars and literati, being himself a talented practitioner of the fine arts (*le bone arti*). The text glorifies Süleyman's semi-divine Trojan ancestry and declares that he merits being "Absolute Monarch and Emperor of the whole world" (*Assoluto Monarca et Imperatore de tutto il mondo*). It concludes with the assertion that he deserves as divinely sanctioned "emperor of emperors" (*Imperatore de li Imperatori*) the triumphal crowns (*corona*) of the bejeweled gold helmet (*Elmetto*) "that we now see ornamenting your divine Caesarship" (*che ora veggiamo ornare la divina Cesarea tua*).[195]

The latter is clearly a reference to Sultan Süleyman's Venetian-made, tiara-like helmet with four superimposed crowns, designed by Alvise Gritti and Ibrahim Pasha on the eve of a coordinated attack by land and sea on Austria and southern Italy. It was presented to the sultan by the grand vizier in 1532, just before Süleyman marched to confront the Habsburgs in Hungary and Austria. Pulido makes the compelling suggestion that the manuscript hailing Süleyman as king of Hungary and ending with a wish for his continued success, may have been commissioned by Alvise and Ibrahim to be presented together with the helmet-crown, which is visually represented in its illuminated vignettes. One of these depicts Alvise's father, Andrea Gritti, concluding the 1503 peace treaty with Bayezid II in his capacity as ambassador, prior to being elected Doge. Each sitter, however, is portrayed with an anachronistic headgear: the ducal hat symbolizing the Doge of Venice and Süleyman's helmet-crown. The latter is represented in the manuscript as a dynastic insignia first worn by Mehmed II, thereby marking him as the real founder of the Ottoman Empire, as in the epic poem written for Selim I. I have argued elsewhere that this magnificent headdress, publicized to the world through Venetian printed portraits of Süleyman wearing it, challenged the alliance between the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and Pope Clement VII by symbolizing the sultan's claim for universal dominion over the "four corners" of the earth (fig. 28).[196] It was declared by Ibrahim Pasha to be a "trophy of Alexander the Great" (*un trofeo di Alexandro Magno*), the enduring role model of Süleyman, his father Selim I, and his great-grandfather Mehmed II.[197]

The new synthesis of a "classical" Ottoman canon in the arts and architecture subsequently promoted at Süleyman's court signaled the relative

195 Like Mehmed II, Süleyman emulated Alexander the Great and aspired to restore the Roman Empire by conquering Rome: see Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power." Another role model of both sultans was the prophet-king Solomon. An extant Greek manuscript of the *Testament of Solomon*, datable to Mehmed's reign, is recorded in Deissmann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai*, 60n17; Raby, "Greek Scriptorium," 17, 29. A Turkish *Süleymānnāme* commissioned by Mehmed II from the Ottoman poet Firdevsi was completed and illustrated during the reign of his successor, Bayezid II: see Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 46–49. The law code of Mehmed II specifies that his son Prince Cem should be addressed in chancellery documents as the "heir of the Solomonic dominion": cited in Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı*, 46. For sixteenth-century sources mentioning that Selim I and Süleyman I read the life of Alexander the Great, see Spandounes (Spandugino), *On the Origin of the Ottoman Emperors*, 63; Necipoğlu, *Topkapı Palace*, 153; Turan, "Sultan's Favorite," 62n132. Giovio writes about Süleyman: "Ho inteso da uomini degni di fede che spesso dice che a lui tocca di ragione l'Imperio di Roma e di tutto Ponente per essere legittimo successore di Costantino imperatore quale transferrì l'Imperio in Constantinopoli"; see Giovio, *Commentario*, 155–56. According to Giovio, Selim I read Turkish translations of the lives of the dictator Julius Caesar and of Alexander: "Estimava sopra tutti de capitani antichi Alessandro Magno e Cesare dittatore e di continuo leggeva le loro facende tradotte in lingua turchesca": Giovio, *Commentario*, 143–44. An İskendernāme translated from Latin into Ottoman Turkish for Sultan Süleyman by his court interpreter, Tercüman Mahmud, is published in Hazai, "Ein 'Iskendernāme'." The hitherto unstudied Italian manuscript at Harvard's Houghton Library (Ms. Typ 145) is reproduced in facsimile and analyzed in Ana Pulido's article in this volume, "A Pronouncement of Alliance: An Anonymous Illuminated Venetian Manuscript for Sultan Süleyman."

196 For an interpretation of the Italian text and images, see Pulido's article in this volume. An anonymous Italian report on the 1532 Ottoman campaign explains that certain Christian princes, renegades from Naples and Florence, and Christian merchants of Istanbul had urged the sultan's grand vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, to attack Austria and Italy at the same time, by both land and sea: cited in Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power," 439n39. The manuscript published by Pulido confirms my previous interpretation of the iconography of Süleyman's helmet-crown as a signifier of world dominion and its reference to Alexander the Great (pp. 411–16). In his correspondence with Süleyman, Ibrahim Pasha referred to the sultan as "universal ruler of the inhabited world," and "universal ruler of space and time": see Cornell H. Fleischer, "Mahdi and Millennium: Messianic Dimensions in the Development of Ottoman Imperial Ideology," in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilisation*, ed. Kemal Çiçek, 4 vols. (Ankara, 2000), 3:47n34. The universal sovereignty of Ottoman sultans was expressed by four horsetail standards and seven banners, symbolizing the "four corners" (*dört köşe*) and "seven climes" (*yedi iqlīm*). In a letter dated 1593, for instance, Murad III is referred to as the emperor of the "seven climes" and the "fortunate lord of the four corners (of the earth).": see Susan A. Skilliter, "Three Letters from the Ottoman 'Sultana' Safiye to Queen Elizabeth I," *Oriental Studies* 3 (1965): 131. More recent publications on the helmet-crown include Ennio Concina, *'Dell'arabico'. A Venezia, tra Rinascimento e Oriente* (Venice, 1994); Ennio Concina, ed., *Venezia e Istanbul: Incontri, confronti e scambi* (exhibition catalogue) (Udine, 2006), 100–103; and Von Jürgen Rapp, "Der Pergamentriss zu Sultan Süleymans 'Vierkronenhelm' und weitere venezianische Goldschmiedeentwürfe für den türkischen Hof aus dem sogenannten Schmuckinventar Herzog Albrechts V. von Bayern," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 54, 3 (2003): 105–49.

197 Cited in Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power," 409n34.

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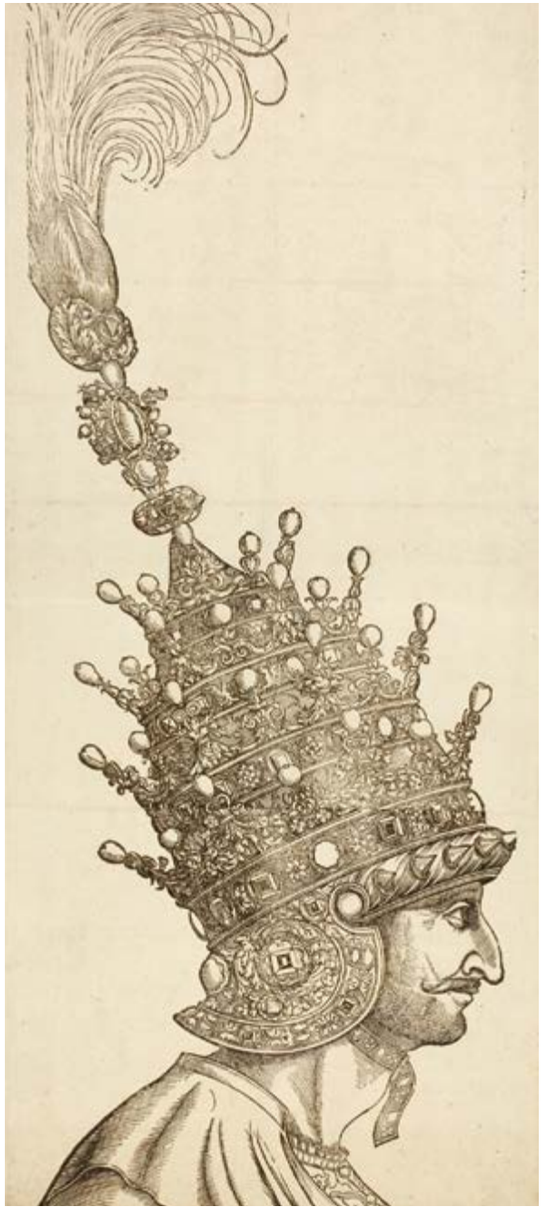

28. Anonymous Venetian woodcut, Portrait of Sultan Süleyman, 1532. London, British Museum, P&D 1845.8-19.1726. (After W. Stirling Maxwell, Examples of the Engraved Portraiture of the Sixteenth Century [London, 1872])

hardening of East-West territorial and cultural boundaries. Nevertheless, an official historian writing in the 1590s would still proudly proclaim among the dynasty's superior attributes the cosmopolitanism of its capital, arguably Mehmed II's greatest and most long-lasting creation: no other city in the world could claim Istanbul's unrivaled fame and its unique location at the "confluence of two seas," where ships "crisscrossing the straits of the Black Sea and Mediterranean" continually loaded and unloaded their wares. Moreover, no other state possessed a capital like it, assembling such a "diverse collection of communities," intermingling Christians and Jews and different kinds of peoples. In the centuries to come, Constantinople/Istanbul and Ottoman visual culture would never entirely lose sight of Mehmed II's cosmopolitan legacy—a legacy born from the conscious fusion of multiple artistic traditions to express a sense of belonging to both the East and the West.[198]

The eclecticism of Mehmed II's reign constitutes an enigma only because of our own rigid modern notions of identity and civilization. Mikail Bakhtin links the "polyglot consciousness" of the Romans with the emergence of hybrid literary forms that marked the concluding phase of the Hellenistic world, characterized by a "radical polyglossia," or "heteroglossia" born from the intersection of cultures and languages. What he defines as "intentional hybridity" in literature—the conscious fusion of different styles and languages, set against each other dialogically to illuminate and "interanimate" one another—finds a striking counterpart in the visual culture of Mehmed's new capital.[199] I have tried to show that it is possible to see an underlying pattern or unifying conception whereby the multiple facets of the sultan's artistic patronage in diverse media, reconsidered here in a holistic framework, might fit together like the pieces of a puzzle.

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198 The codification of the "classical" Ottoman style in the 1550s paralleled the reconceptualization of the imperial order in the legal discourses of law codes and the adoption of a single official language (Ottoman Turkish) in chancellery documents: see Necipoğlu, "A Kānūn for the State, a Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Arts and Architecture," in Veinstein, *Soliman le magnifique et son temps*, 195–216; Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, esp., 38–46. The late sixteenth-century historian Ta'likizade's statement is in Christine Woodhead, ed., *Ta'likizade's Şehnāme-i hümāyūn: A History of the Ottoman Campaign into Hungary, 1593–94* (Berlin, 1983), 119–20, 122. For luxury objects sought by the Ottoman elite from Venice and artistic exchanges that continued after the reign of Mehmed II, see Julian Raby, "The Serenissima and the Sublime Porte: Art in the Art of Diplomacy, 1453–1600," in Carboni, *Venice and the Islamic World*, 90–119; Deborah Howard, "Cultural Transfer between Venice and the Ottomans in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, vol. 4, Roodenburg, *Forging European Identities, 1400–1700*, 138–77.

199 By contrast, "organic hybridity" involves an unconscious mixing of styles whose combination remains "mute and opaque": see Bakhtin's essays in Michael Holquist, ed., *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin* (Austin, 2004), 60–68, 75–77, 358–66.

Cross-Cultural Artistic Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean

A PIMo COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AROUND THE EXHIBITION TITLED "ŞEYH HAMDULLAH ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH" AT THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

Zeren Tanındı

Decoration on Paper in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: 1400-1520

The earliest examples

Creating aesthetically pleasing books was an undertaking only made possible by culturally sophisticated and wealthy individuals. This long-standing tradition of decorated manuscript production required a team of artists. Patrons commissioning works of this kind were people of high standing who chose the text, put together a team of master artists and craftsmen, decided how the work would be shared, and commissioned a draft copy for their perusal before giving the go-ahead. Decorating the pages with illumination began in the eastern Mediterranean with the Koran, the holy Muslim scriptures, in the 8th-9th centuries.[1] The earliest examples were written on parchment pages that varied in size from 16 x 11 cm to 40 x 28 cm (fig. 1). From the 11th century until the early 20th century, Korans written on paper that was richly decorated were widely produced in southern Spain, North Africa, Egypt, Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Iran and Afghanistan. Those described as "royal" manuscripts, characterised by ornate decoration, could only be produced at palace art studios established by powerful states. Copying the text of the Koran became a specialised field and the first expert calligraphers were ʿAli b. Hilal al-Bawwab (d. 1022) and Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Mustaʿsimi (d. 1298), both of whom trained in Baghdad. The pages of sacred text had a special design, governed by rules about the script style and arrangement of the writing and positioning of the illumination. This text was written in the *naskh*, *thuluth*, *rayḥānī*, *muḥaqqaq*, *tawqīʿ* or, rarely, in the *taʿlīq* script style; either using a single style for the entire text or several styles alternately on each page. The earliest Korans, however, were written in the *hijāzī* or *kūfic* script styles. The pages varied widely in height, from 2 cm to 100 cm, and when the writing was completed, skilled illuminators decorated the pages. Finally the pages were bound by expert binders, who decorated

1 Massumeh Farhad and Simon Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an. Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, 15 October 2016- 20 February 2017* (Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2016).

1. Page from a parchment Koran. 8th century. Damascus, Umayyad period. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, ŞE 80, fol. 30v. 25 x 28.5 cm.

the leather covers with stamped and tooled floral and geometric designs, or occasionally made bindings that were faced with sheets of gold or other precious metals and studded with precious stones.[2]

Korans were not always made in the form of books. From the earliest times Korans in the form of scrolls were produced, and these were kept in cylindrical cases made of leather or metal (fig. 2). Although scrolls are not as practical to read, they are easier to carry around, which is why Korans, talismanic texts and prayers continued to be made in the form of scrolls, as I will discuss below. Some of these scrolls were illuminated in royal style and illustrated with drawings. Muslim pilgrims visited the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the Kaaba in Mecca and the Tomb of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina during certain months of the year. Rich-

2 Cengiz Köseoğlu, *The Topkapı Saray Museum. The Treasury,* trans., ed., exp. J. M. Rogers (New York and Boston: Graphic Society Book and Little Brown and Company, 1987), 78-83.

2. Koran scroll. First half of 16th century. Ottoman. Topkapı Palace Library, EH. 485. 9 x 110.5 cm.

ly ornamented pages with coloured drawings of the holy sites and the topography of the region were made into scrolls that served like guide books for high-ranking members of society who were unable to perform the pilgrimage.[3] They could hang the pilgrimage scroll on a wall and look at the holy sites as if they had made the journey in person. When hung on the qibla wall of a mosque, they could be seen by large numbers of people.[4] Some other types of paper documents designed as scrolls and intended to be hung on walls were significant as examples of calligraphy. Official texts such as edicts, letters and endowment deeds were produced as scrolls that could be several metres or more in length, with the tughra (royal monogram) of the ruling sultan at the top.[5] The first Ottoman edict with a tughra illuminated in royal style was issued by Sultan Bayezid II

3 Şule Aksoy and Rachel Milstein, "A Collection of Thirteenth-Century Illustrated Hajj Certificates," in *M. Uğur Derman 65 Yaş Armağanı. The 65th birthday festschrift,* ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi, 2000), 101-34.

4 Sabiha Göloğlu, "Camera, Canvas, and Qibla: Late Ottoman Mobilities and the Fatih Mosque Painting," *Muqarnas* 38 (2021), 276-78.

5 Ayşegül Nadir, ed. *Osmanlı Padişah Fermanları. T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi İbrahim Paşa Sarayı, 19 September 1986-18 January 1987,* exhibition catalogue (London: 1986) [Ayşegül Nadir, ed. *Catalog of an Exhibition held at the Türk and İslâm Eserleri Müzesi, Istanbul, Turkey, September 19, 1986 - January 18, 1987*, exhibition catalogue (London: 1986)]

3. Dioscorides and his pupils. From a manuscript of his work on botany and zoology. Dated 1228. Northern Mesopotamia. Topkapı Palace Library, A.2127, fols. 1v-2r. 31 x 24 cm.

(r. 1481-1512).[6] Some scrolls are nearly 30 metres in length; an example being a scroll thought to have been produced around 1400 in Samarkand during the Timurid era, which is 29.5 metres long and 34 cm wide, and includes designs for architectural ornamentation (fig. 6).[7]

Although the first books decorated in royal style were copies of the Koran, it was uncommon for human figures to be portrayed in illustrations of the text; probably for religious reasons. On the other hand, existing examples of figural illustrations in books allow us to conclude that these began in the late 11th century. The first royal examples of illustrated books were produced in central and southeastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia in the 12th and 13th centuries, and include astrological, botanical, mechanical and literary works (fig. 3).[8]

6 İsmail H. Uzunçarşılı, İbrahim K. Baybura and Ülkü Altındağ, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Osmanlı Saray Arşivi Kataloğu. Fermânlar,* 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1985), 4, n. 38.

7 Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll–Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* (Santa Monica: The Getty Center, 1995).

8 Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, *The Topkapı Saray Museum. The Albums and Illustrated Manuscripts,* trans. exp. ed. J. M. Rogers (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 21-51.

Increasing diversity of paper decoration

From the beginning of the 14th century, the diversity of texts written on paper and decoration in royal manuscripts increased sharply. Sultans and vezirs of the Ilkhanid state (1250-1350), which was the Mongol power in western Asia, were influential in creating works of decorated paper in Hamadan, Sultaniyya and Baghdad in the late 13th century and first half of the 14th century. Based in Tabriz, the Ilkhanids had close ties with both the Far East and Near East, and largely through them Far Eastern culture was introduced to western Asia.[9] Mongol influence was not confined to the western region of modern Iran, but from the second half of the 13th century extended far into Anatolia. As will be discussed below, the artists of the Anatolian polities were also influenced by decorated paper produced by the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria.

In this way, in the early 14th century, Ilkhanid calligraphers, painters and illuminators who produced works of art on paper gave rise to the creation of books of a monumental size, with striking designs and large-scale illustrations, of a kind that had never been seen in the Mideterranean region before. Ahmad Musa and Shams al-Din were among the most famous Ilkhanid painters (fig. 4). Best known among the calligraphers who wrote in letters of monumental size was Ahmad b. al-Suhrawardi, whose calligraphy was illuminated by Muhammed b. Aybeq b. Abdullah.[10]

After 1350, when the Ilkhanids lost their power, the Jalayirid sultans took over the production of royally ornamented paper. Now young Jalayirid artists worked together with artists who had been trained in the Ilkhanid tradition in Tabriz and Baghdad, which had been Ilkhanid centres of art. Interactions of this kind gave rise to spectacular drawings and paintings; the earliest of which are found in albums in Topkapı Saray. These pictures, the largest of which measures 46 x 33.5 cm, were pasted onto the paper pages of these albums.[11] Two Jalayirid sultans, Shaykh Uways (r. 1356-74) and his son Ahmad (r. 1382-1410) were particularly interested in music and art. Although few books decorated in royal style made for these two rulers have survived, those that are extant and written sources provide

9 Linda Kamaroff and Stefano Carboni, eds. *The Legacy of Genghis Khan. Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353* (New Haven and London: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and Yale University Press, 2002); Nourane Ben Azzouna, *Aux origines du classicisme. Calligraphes et bibliophiles au temps des dynasties mongoles (Les Ilkhanides et les Djalayirides, 684-814/1258-1411)* (Leidon and Boston: Brill, 2018).

10 David James, *Qur'āns of the Mamlūks* (London: Alexandria, 1988), 76-177.

11 Çağman and Tanındı, *The Topkapı Saray Museum,*69-84.

4.

4. The Prophet Muhammad speaking with an angel in the form of a cockerel during his Mir'aj. The miniature is attributed to the artist Ahmad Musa and dates from ca. 1330. The album was designed in the Safavid period and is dated 1544. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2154, fol. 61v. 49 x 34 cm.

evidence of the art patronage of father and son.[12] Sultan Ahmad was a poet, whose *Dīwān* (collected poems) was inscribed by ʿUbaydullah b. ʿAli, the famed calligrapher of *nastaʿlīq* script.[13] He completed the task of writing the *Dīwān* on 10 Shaʿban 809 (13 February 1407) and then the pages of the manuscript were decorated by a skilled illuminator. The binder who produced the superbly ornamented leather binding for the manuscript was probably Qiwam al-Din. Thus Sultan Ahmad became one of the first sultans to have his poetry transformed into a magnificent book with decorated paper. The first place in the Islamic world where the diverse artists who decorated paper in an elegant style with outstanding mastery gathered together must certainly have been the Jalayirid art studio, which was active in both Tabriz and Baghdad, under the patronage of Shaykh Uways and his son Sultan Ahmad. Mir ʿAli was the master of masters among calligraphers writing in the *nastaʿlīq* script hand on paper.[14] Foremost among his followers was Jaʿfar al-Tabrizi, who mainly copied works of literature. From the inscriptions on the leather binding of a book produced for Shaykh Uways and works of calligraphy in the Topkapı Saray albums, written on miscellaneous sheets of paper, some of which are signed, one mentioning the Muzaffarid sultan Shah Shujaʿ (r. 1357-84) and the other the Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uways, we know that the calligraphers employed at this court studio were skilled at writing in other script styles.[15]

Most notable among the artists are Junayd, Mir Dawlatyar and ʿAbd al-Hay, who decorated even minute areas of paper with incredibly beautiful pictures.[16] ʿAbd al-Hay and Mir Dawlatyar were masters of the so-called "black pen" technique of drawing in black ink (fig. 5). This technique was so admired that even Sultan Shaykh Uways and Sultan Ahmad themselves are known to have tried drawing in ink. A second copy of Sultan Ahmad's *Dīwān* dating from the beginning of the 15th century demonstrates how popular this style of drawing was at this period. In the margins of the manuscript

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12 Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, "Selections from Jalairid Books in the Libraries of Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 28 (2011), 221-64; Ben Azzouna, *Aux origines du classicisme*, 473-523; Ilse Sturkenboom, "The Paintings of the Freer Divan of Sultan Ahmed b. Shaykh Uveys and a New Taste for Decorative Design," *Iran* 56:2 (2018), 184-214.

13 Çağman and Tanındı, "Selections from Jalairid Books," 229-30.

14 On Jalayirid, Timurid and Turkmen calligraphy: Priscilla P. Soucek, "The Arts of Calligraphy," in *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, ed. Basil Gray (London: Serindia/Unesco, 1979), 7-34.

15 Çağman and Tanındı, "Selections from Jalairid Books" 223-24; David J. Roxburgh, " 'Our Works Point to Us'. Album Making, Collecting, and Art (1427-1565) under the Timurids and Safavids" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1996), 507-8, 573, 595.

16 Basil Gray, "The History of Miniature Painting. The Fourteenth Century," in *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia*, ed. Basil Gray (London: Serindia/Unesco, 1979), 110-20.

are ink drawings of superb beauty depicting various subjects that have no connection with the text.[17] Some of the black ink drawings on paper made by Jalayirid artists in Tabriz or Baghdad reveal that the influence of Latin West (Frankish manner) extended as far as the eastern Mediterranean.[18]

The Jalayirid sultan Shaykh Uways had contact with the Ottoman sultan Murad I (r. 1362-89), during whose reign the Ottoman state was beginning to gain power in western Anatolia. Murad sent an embassy with a letter announcing his accession to the throne and the conquest of Edirne, accompanied by gifts to Shaykh Uways, who responded with a letter of congratulation and gifts taken by his own envoy.[19] Shaykh Uways's son Ahmad placed such trust in the Ottomans, that when political unrest broke out in his own lands, he sent his daughter to the Ottoman palace. Sultan Ahmad also established amicable relations with Murad I's son Sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402). Although these crumbs of information are not indubitably confirmed by documentary evidence, proof that migrations of artists caused by international events reverberated on the arts of the book can be found in manuscript libraries.[20]

The upheavals caused by Timur (r. 1370-1405), ruler of Transoxania, when he invaded the lands ruled by the Jalayirids in Iran and Mesopotamia, and also advanced into Anatolia, between 1388 and 1403, prompted some Jalayirid artists in these regions to escape the approaching danger and seek new patrons in countries offering a more reliable future. One of them was Maʿruf, a Jalayirid master calligrapher of *nastaʿlīq* who emigrated to the Fars region of Iran, which was then under the rule of Timurid princes. Timur exiled some of the artists to Samarkand; among them the painter ʿAli from Bursa, the Ottoman capital, who was exiled in 1402.[21] It is thought that the calligrapher Jaʿfer b. ʿAli al-Tabrizi and

17 For the latest study of this subject: Sturkenboom, "The Paintings of the Freer Divan," 184-214.

18 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images between Europe and China: The "Frankish Manner," in the Diez and Topkapı Albums, c. 1350-1450," in *The Diez Albums. Contexts and Contents*, eds. Julia Gonnella, Friederike Weis and Christoph Rauch (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 536-91.

19 Zeren Tanındı, "Seçkin Bir Mevlevi'nin Tezhipli Kitapları," in *M.Uğur Derman 65 Yaş Armağanı*, ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul: Sabancı Üniversitesi, 2000), 534.

20 Zeren Tanındı, "An Illuminated Manuscript of the Wandering Scholar Ibn al-Jazari and Wandering Illuminators Between Tabriz, Shiraz, Herat, Bursa, Edirne, Istanbul in the 15th Century," in *Turkish Art 10th International Congress of Turkish Art. 17-23 September 1995 Geneva*, ed. François Deroche (Geneva: Fondation Max Van Berchem, 1999), 647-55.

21 Zeren Tanındı, "Fetihlerin ve Ticaretin Sanata Yansıması: Göçer Bilginler, Dervişler ve Sanatçılar," in *Osman Gazi ve Bursa Sempozyumu. Payitaht Bursa'nın Kültürel ve Ekonomik İlişkileri. 4-5 Nisan 2005*, ed. Cafer Çiftçi (Bursa: Osmangazi Belediyesi, 2005), 193-94. Nakkaş ʿAli returned to Bursa in the years following Timur's death and between 1415 and 1424 was engaged in designing the marble, woodwork, tiling and *kalem işi* decoration in the mosque and tomb of Mehmed I (r. 1413-21). He must have worked with other artists who also arrived in Bursa at this time, some of whom are known to have come from Tabriz. These migrant artists must have brought sketches on paper that they had drawn in the course of their work and other art works on paper with them from the cities where they had been employed. Consequently there is a close resemblance between the calligraphic and decorative schemes that the artist Ali and his team produced in Bursa and those of royal buildings constructed during the late 14th and early 15th centuries in Samarkand, where they had come from. The combination of *kūfic* and *thuluth* in the same inscription, the name Ali written in geometrical *kūfic* like a kind of charm between the tile decoration and the *thuluth* inscription *Allāhu walī al-tawfīq* (God who brings success) written on a lamp inside the tiled prayer niche of Mehmed's tomb and on the tiled window pediment of two rooms on the upper floor of the mosque at Mehmed I's complex in Bursa can also be found in art works on loose paper by Jalayirid and Timurid artists prior to 1400: Topkapı Palace Library, H.2152, fol. 7r; B.411, fol. 94v: Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'", 669, 1087.

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5. Drawing signed Mir Devletyar. From an album dated ca. 1400, Jalayirid. The calligraphies ca. 1460-80, Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu Turkmen. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 119v, 50.8 x 33.8 cm. The album was designed in the 16th century Ottoman palace workshop.

the binder Qiwam al-Din were also among the artists specialising in paper decoration who emigrated to Herat in the early 15th century. From an account by a poet who moved in elite Jalayirid circles in Baghdad, it appears that Jalayirid dignitaries and artists who were fleeing the unrest caused by Timur's invasions sought the protection of powerful Anatolian rulers like Kadı Burhaneddin (d.

1398).[22] Paper decorators were among these diverse master artists and they worked together with local artists in the places where they migrated, leading to the creation of outstanding works of art.[23]

Splendid works of art on paper created by artists from Herat under the protection of art-loving *mirzas*

From the beginning of the 15th century, master artists who were forced to migrate from Tabriz, Baghdad and Shiraz to Transoxania and Herat carried on their work with local artists in Samarkand or in Herat under the patronage of Sultan Shahrukh and his son Baysunghur. They created books, notably works of literature, whose every page was a work of art.[24] Foremost among the first examples of paper transformed into a work of art on a monumental scale in this region is the abovementioned scroll, which contains geometric designs for architectural decoration (fig. 6).[25] Literary works like *Kalīla wa Dimna* produced for Baysunghur are the first examples of royally decorated paper works. One group of works produced at the art studio in Herat under the patronage of Baysunghur consists partly of some that were originally begun at the Jalayirid art studio and the Timurid art studio in Shiraz but for some reason had not been completed; and partly of books with worn pages that were restored.[26] One of the loveliest products of the Herat studio is a Koran written in *naskh* and *tawqī*ʿ scripts by the calligrapher Shams al-Baysunghuri and completed on 23 Ramaḍan 837 (3 May 1434).[27] Shams was a follower of the Baghdad calligrapher Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Mustaʿsimi and departed from the tradition of Koran calligraphers by mainly copying works of literature in *nastaʿlīq* script which were exquisitely illuminated and illustrated.

22 Aziz b. Erdeşir-i Esterâbâdî, *Bezm u Rezm. Eğlence ve Savaş*, trans. Mürsel Öztürk (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2014), 20-35.

23 On migrations of artists and the artistic changes they brought about in Transoxania: Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision. Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.: Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 1989),16-65.

24 For an evaluation of Timurid period illuminated manuscripts: Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*.

25 Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll*.

26 Bernard O'Kane, *Early Persian Painting. Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 256-60; Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, "Topkapı Sarayı'nın Kitap Hazinesinin İki *Câmi'ü't-Tevârîh* Nüshası Hakkında (H.1653-H.1654)," *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı* 30 (2021), 187-257.

27 Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 236-39.

Diplomatic relations between the Near East and China continued in the early 15th century. Yellow, mauve and blue Chinese paper decorated with landscapes were popular in Herat[28] and there is a Koran written on this type of Chinese paper dating from around 1440 (fig. 7).[29] Towards the middle of the 15th century, even when the ruling sultan changed, the studio in Herat continued its prolific work. Superb examples of the arts of the book in diverse styles produced in Herat during the reign of the Timurid ruler Sultan Husayn Bayqara (r. 1468-1506) have survived to the present day. Copies of poetry by the contemporary poets ʿAli Shir Nevayi (d. 1501) and Nur al-Din ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492) as well as the earlier poets Mevlana Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273) and

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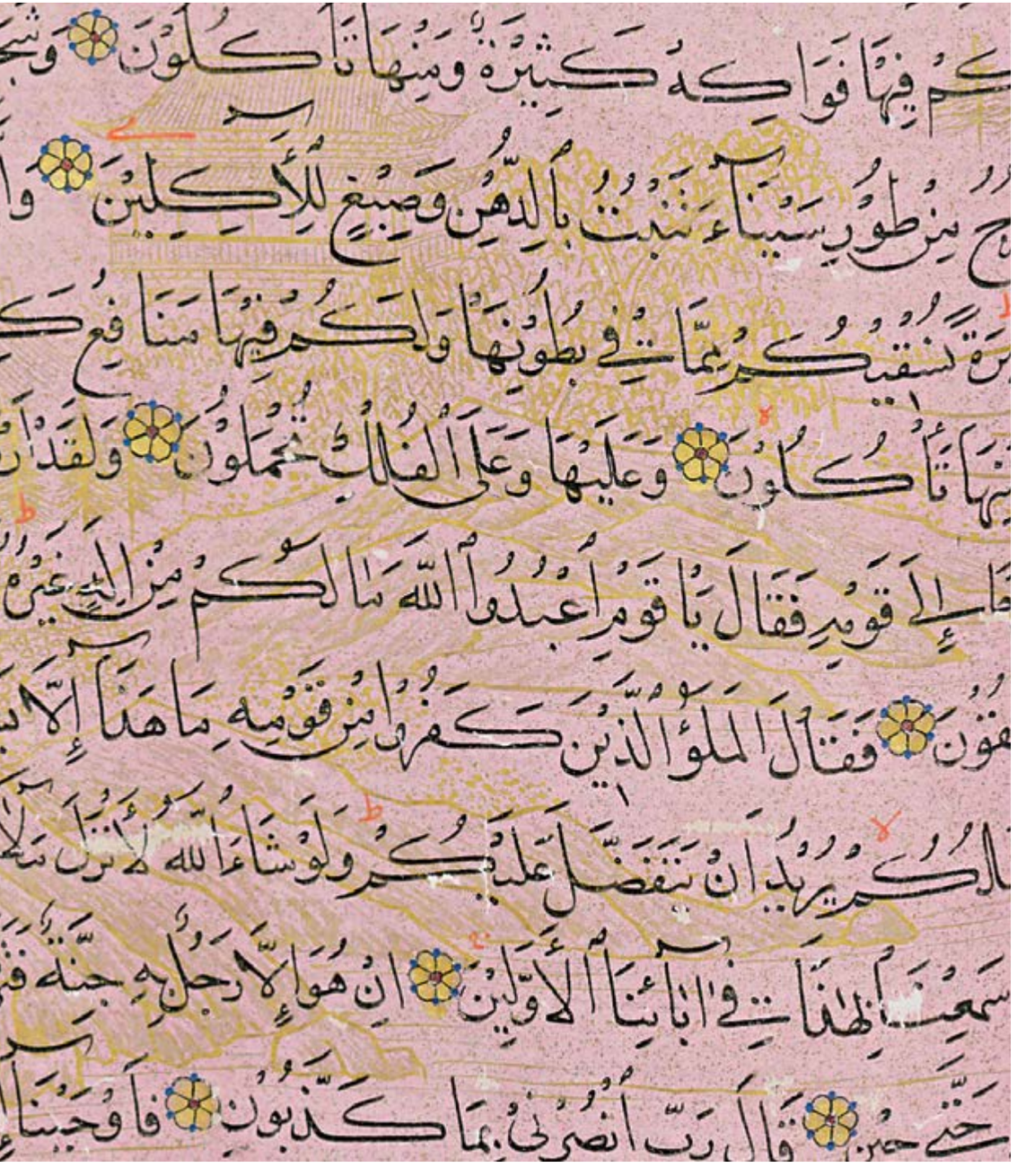
6. Geometric and *kūfic* calligraphic designs for architectural decoration. From a scroll ca. 1400. Timurid. Topkapı Palace Library, H.1956. Length 29.5 m, width 34 cm.

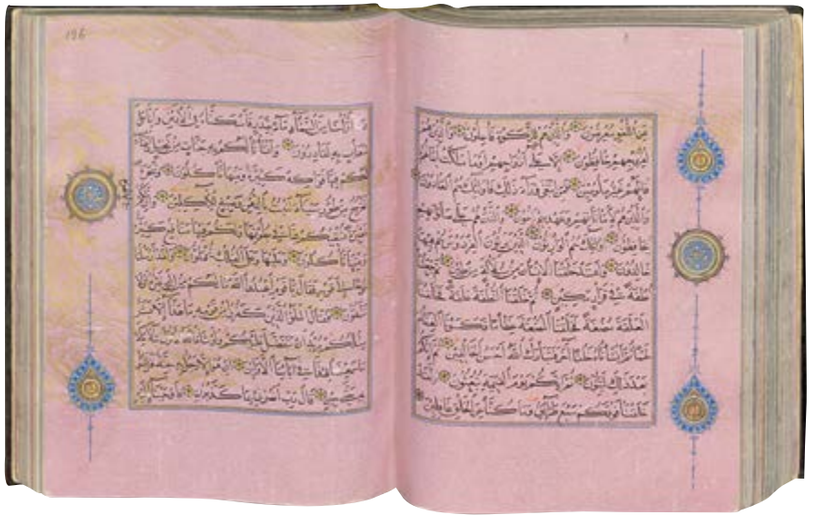
28 Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, 159-65.

29 Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 240-43.



←7a

7b



7a-b. Koran written on tinted Chinese paper decorated with landscapes. Timurid, Herat, ca. 1440. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.41, fols. 195v-196r. 27.7 x 18 cm.

Amir Khusraw Dihlavi (d. 1325) were decorated with illumination or in some cases both illumination and illustrations.

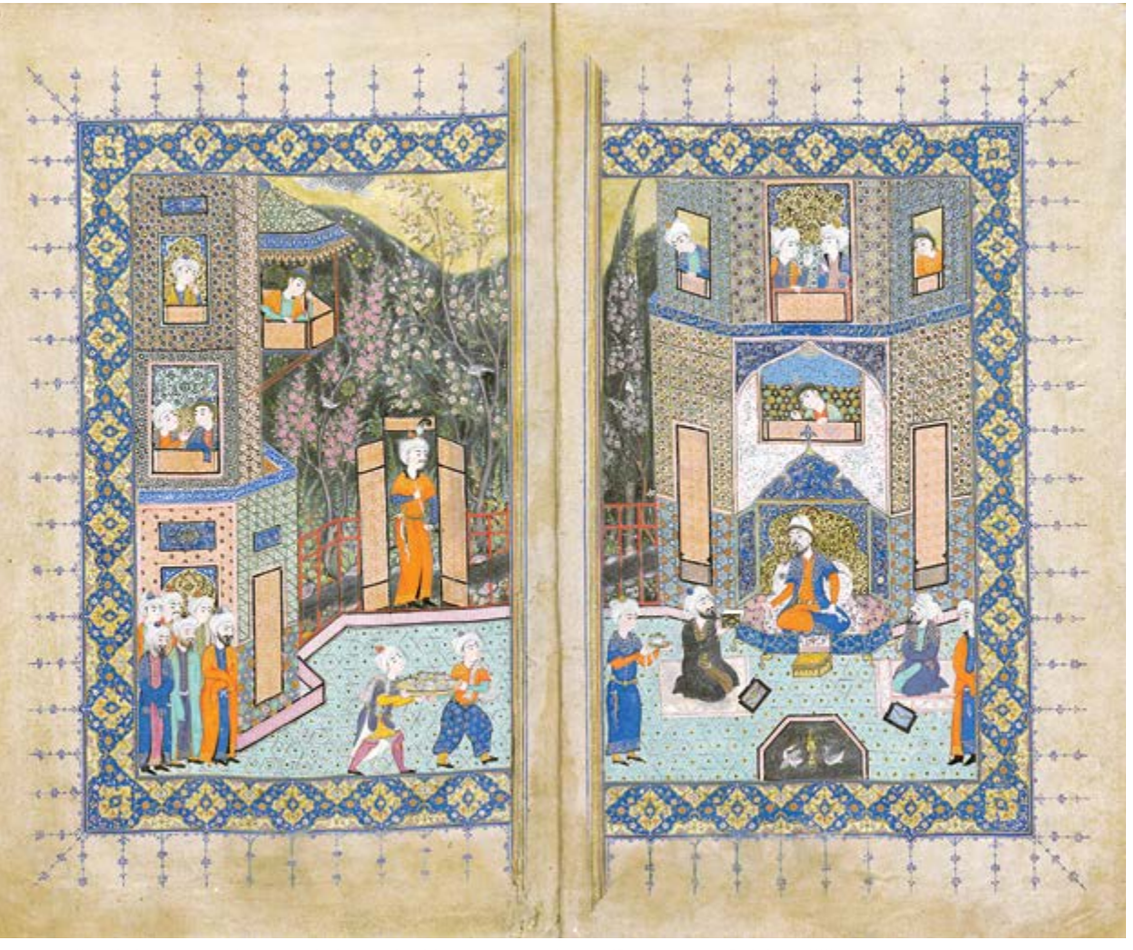
Behzad was a master painter, particularly of portraits. The calligrapher Sultan ʿAli al-Mashadi was a master of *nastaʿlīq* script, who produced a superbly written copy of Sultan Husayn Bayqara's *Dīwān* on 11 Shaʿbān 897 (8 June 1492) in Herat, which was known as *dār al-saṭanat* (land of the sultanate). The illuminators of this book used paints mixed with powdered mother-of-pearl for some of the motifs, enhancing the beauty of its pages still further (fig. 8).[30] An outstanding illuminated copy of the Koran in a beautiful leather binding is the work of the calligrapher Muhammed b. Sultanshah al-Harawi, who completed the work on 9 Ramaḍān 890 (19 September 1485) in the city of Herat.[31] On each page the text is written alternately in *muḥaqqaq*, *naskh* and *thuluth*. The most distinctive characteristics of the gorgeous bindings made by the binders of Herat was their use of pigments mixed with mother-of-pearl powder for motifs on leather, and pieces of mother-of-pearl to enhance these motifs.[32] Herat was a major cultural centre

30 Filiz Çağman, "The Miniatures of the *Divan-ı Hüseyni* and the Influence of Their Style," in *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art,* ed. Geza Féher (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1978), 231-59.

31 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," I, 217-18.

32 Tim Stanley, "The Rise of the Lacquer Binding," in *Hunt for Paradise. Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501-1576,* eds. Jon Thompson and Sheila Canby (Milan: Skira, 2003), 185-96.

8



8. Sultan Husayn Bayqara with the poets at the palace courtyard. *Dīwān-i Husaynī*. Dated 1492, Timurid, Herat. Topkapı Palace Library, EH. 1636, fols. 1v-2r. 24 x 15.5 cm.

of the Khorasan region. In 1507 the city was invaded by the Uzbeks, bringing about the downfall of the Timurid state. Shortly afterwards Shah Ismail (r. 1502-24), founder of the Safavid state in Iran, conquered Herat from the Shaybanids (1510) and on returning to his capital Tabriz, brought a number of Khorasan artists with him. In addition he brought a captive, Badiʿ al-Zaman Mirza (d. 1517), the bibliophile son of the sultan of Herat.[33]

33 Çağman, "The Miniatures of the *Divan-ı Hüseyni*," 242.

Arts of the book in the Fars region during the 15th century: Works by Timurid masters

The Timurid nobles who served as governors of the Fars region of Iran between the late 14th and mid-15th century commissioned illuminated manuscripts in Shiraz, Yazd and Isfahan. From the mid-14th century onwards, artists of the book working in Fars produced beautiful manuscripts under the rule of the Injuids (1305-57) and Muzaffarids (1335-93). The art studios continued the tradition of paper decoration in this region of Iran, which towards the end of the 14th century was conquered by the Timurids.[34] Iskandar (d. 1415), one of Timur's grandsons who was governor of Shiraz, was responsible for keeping up the tradition of paper decoration in Fars; notably leading in commissioning richly decorated manuscripts as well as the introduction of this tradition to Herat.[35] Miscellanies known as *majmūʿa*, *sefīne* or *cöng*, consisting of hundreds of pages of texts on history, geography, astrology, literature and other diverse subjects were copied in *nastaʿlīq* script for him and then illuminated in a naive style, mainly using the widely diverse designs developed by Muzaffarid artists. Illustrations relating to the texts, drawn in black ink with partial gilding, were also added between the lines or in areas left blank by the designer for this purpose. So the person who turned the pages of these manuscripts not only read the text but got pleasure from looking at the pages. The tradition of producing decorated miscellanies of this kind had begun before Iskandar became a noted patron of the arts in Fars.[36] In this way, those who transformed *majmūʿas* into richly ornamented books were the artists trained in the Muzaffarid tradition in Fars and the artists who had emigrated to Baghdad from the lands ruled by the Jalayirid sultan Ahmad.

34 Elaine Wright, *The Look of the Book. Manuscript Production in Shiraz, 1303-1452* (Washington, D.C: Freer Gallery of Art. Smithsonian Institution, and University of Washington Press, 2012), 3-62, 153-65.

35 Wright, *The Look of the Book,* 84-105, 165-72.

36 One of the earliest known examples of royal *majmūʿas* was produced in Fars towards the end of the Muzaffarid period and another in Fars during the early years of Timurid rule over the region. Both of these books have an interesting history and entered the Topkapı Saray book treasury before 1520: Priscilla P. Soucek and Filiz Çağman, "A Royal Manuscript and Its Transformations: The Life History of a Book," *The Book in the Islamic World. The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East*, ed. George N. Atiyeh (Albany: State University of New York, 1995), 179-207; Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts T.1950 was taken to the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts from Hagia Sophia Library and has still not been the subject of detailed codicological study. For publications: Wright, *The Look of the Book,* 164-65, 360, n.14.

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9. Astronomers in an observatory. From a *majmu'a*. Dated 1413, Timurid, Shiraz. Istanbul University Library F.1418, fols. 1v-2r, 27 x 17.5 cm.

In the first fifteen years of the 15th century *majmūʿa* type manuscripts consisting of compilations of texts on diverse subjects, with dazzlingly beautiful pictures and illumination, were being produced all over the Islamic world. One such *majmūʿa* produced for Iskandar Sultan consisted of over nine hundred pages measuring 27 x 17.5 cm.[37] There was a picture of astronomers at work in an observatory and spectacularly beautiful astrological illustrations painted in a wide range of colours. This magnificent manuscript must have been a gift presented to the Ottoman palace in the late 15th century, because the almond-shaped seal of the Ottoman sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) is stamped on the first page (fig. 9). The content of this book drew the attention of ʿAtufi, the scholar who classified and recorded the books in the Topkapı Saray book treasury, because in the library register he described it as "the book of astronomy belonging to Iskandar, the son of ʿUmar Shaykh, son of Amir Timur".[38] This exquisite book remained complete in the book treasury at the Ottoman palace until the beginning of the 20th century, when a malicious "bibliophile" divided it into sections, left the smaller part in the book treasury and arranged for the larger section to be taken abroad.[39] The flourishing activity of master artists producing manuscripts filled with pictures and illumination under the patronage of Muzaffarid and Jalayirid rulers in Fars and of scholars in the same cultural milieu were brought to an end after Iskandar was removed from his post as governor. Some of these artists were sent to Herat at the command of Sultan Shahrukh (r. 1409-47). This exodus of artists and scholars formerly patronised by Iskandar in Fars to Herat, which is today in Afghanistan, led to the city becoming a major centre for the production of manuscripts ornamented in royal style for nearly 150 years, beginning some time after 1400. These emigrants to Herat did not just serve Shahrukh and his art-loving son Baysunghur (d. 1433), but also Muhammad Juki (d. 1445) and Ulugh Beg (d. 1449), the ruler of Transoxania.

Meanwhile those artists who remained in Shiraz continued to decorate works of literature – principally the *Khamsa* of Nizami– and history over the period 1420-1445. In addition, large sized Korans written in *muḥaqqaq* script, with naive style illumination and tooled leather bindings, either bound in *juz* sections or as single volumes, were produced here.[40] The covers of the leather bindings for these manuscripts were magnificently decorated with stamped and tooled floral motifs, and their doublures were decorated with cut-paper designs. The first surviving examples of royal bindings decorated with human figures were produced at this period.[41]

37 Priscilla Soucek, "The Manuscript of Iskandar Sultan: Structure and Content," *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, eds. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny, *Supplement to Muqarnas* 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 116-31.

38 Zeren Tanındı, "Arts of the Book: The Illustrated and Illuminated Manuscripts Listed in Atufi's Inventory," *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/03-1503/04)*, eds. Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar and Cornell H. Fleischer (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), I, 221-23.

39 There are other rare books with similar life histories in Istanbul's royal libraries: Zeren Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının Ciltleri ve Tezhipleri," *1400.Yılında Kur'an-ı Kerim* (Istanbul: Antik, 2010), [Zeren Tanındı, " The Bindings and Illuminations of the Qur'an." In *The 1400th Anniversary of the Qur'an* (Istanbul: Antik, 2010]), 111; Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 306-9.

40 Wright, *The Look of The Book*, 105-24, 271-82; Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an,* 226-35.

41 Oktay Aslanapa, "The Art of Bookbinding," *The Arts of the Book in Central Asia,* ed. Basil Gray (London: Serindia/Unesco, 1979), 79.

Turkmen art patrons and their illuminated manuscripts: Baghdad, Shiraz, Tabriz

The Qaraqoyunlu Turkmens, who settled in southern Iran towards the middle of the 15th century, took the place of the Timurids first, followed by the Aqqoyunlu Turkmens. Illuminated manuscripts with dedications to the Qaraqoyunlu sultan Jehan Shah (r. 1438-67) and his son Pir Budaq (d. 1466), governor of Baghdad, are evidence of their art patronage between the years 1450-1465.[42] When the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmens settled in the Fars region, they continued their work side by side with the paper decorators who were employed at the Shiraz art studio under Timurid patronage. Together with the artists already working at this studio, they completed the illumination and illustration of half-finished manuscripts.[43]

Jehan Shah's other son Yusuf ibn Jehan Shah (d. 1469) must have attached importance to a *mashq* (calligraphic exercise) that he wrote in *nasta ʿlīq* on a tiny piece of paper in Shiraz, because it has been preserved in one of the Topkapı Saray albums.[44] From the 15th century onwards, three calligraphers who were masters of *nastaʿlīq*, Shaykh Mahmud al-Harawi, ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Khwarizmi and Fakhr al-Din Ahmad, copied works in Persian by famous poets for Pir Budaq in Baghdad and Shiraz; while the most skilled artists, illuminators and binders continued to turn these books into works of art. The pictures, illumination, openwork leather decoration filling the doublures of books, and single-page works of art consisting of intricate cut-paper calligraphy, trees, animals and diverse designs all demonstrate the skill of the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen artists (fig. 10). A matchless example is a firman written in the Iranian city of Sava in 871 (1466-67) in the script known as ancient *taʿlīq* or *dīwānī*.[45] Although the political career of the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmens in the Fars region was brief, surviving manuscripts containing examples of decorated paper, and pictures and calligraphy on loose sheets of paper are proof of the technical skill and aesthetic power achieved by Qaraqoyunlu master artists.

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42 For the latest study of Qaraqoyunlu arts of the book: Masoumeh Mohammedinezhad, "Akkoyunlu Türkmen Sultanı Halil'in Kitap Sanatı Hamiliği" (Ph.D. dissertation. Istanbul Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, 2021), 57-69, 162-63, 234-45.

43 Zeren Tanındı, "Additions to Illustrated Manuscripts in Ottoman Workshops," *Muqarnas,* 17 (2000), 155-58.

44 Topkapı Palace Library H.2160, fol. 41v.

45 Filiz Çağman, *Katʿı. Osmanlı Dünyasında Kâğıt Oyma Sanatı ve Sanatçıları* (Istanbul: Aygaz, 2014), 51-54. [Filiz Çağman, *Katʿı. Cut Paper Work and Artists in the Ottoman World* (Istanbul: Aygaz, 2014), 51-54].

10

10. Cut-paper of a tree from an album. Qaraqoyunlu or Aqqoyunlu Turkmen, Baghdad, Shiraz, Tabriz, 1460-80. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 193r. 50.8 x 33.8 cm. The album design is 16th century Ottoman palace workshop.

11a

11a. Loose decorated pages from an album. The pictures are signed by Shaykhi. Painting and calligraphies Aqqoyunlu Turkmen, ca. 1480. Tabriz. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 146v, 50.8 x 33.8 cm. The album design is 16th century Ottoman palace workshop.

The Aqqoyunlu Turkmen sultan Uzun Hasan (r. 1457-78) conquered the Qaraqoyunlus, but the artists and craftsmen who produced illuminated manuscripts and art works on paper continued their work with the support of their new patron. The new rulers did not allow political clashes to affect their attitude towards artists, who were allowed to continue working as usual. Uzun Hasan's son Khalil (d. 1478), who became governor of Shiraz in 1470, and another son Yaʿqub (r. 1478-90), who went on to succeed to the Aqqoyunlu throne, became patron of the arts of the book in Tabriz.[46] Literary texts written in an exquisite *nastaʿlīq* hand by ʿAbd al-Karim and ʿAbd al-Rahim (who used the pen-name Enisī), both sons of the calligrapher ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Khwarizmi, who worked for Pir Budaq and Sultan ʿAli al-Yaqubi, are decorated between the lines with delightful designs of pale pink and grass green flowers on a lapis blue or gilded ground. Qaraqoyunlu artists continued to make cut-paper calligraphic compositions and pictures at the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen studio. One of these artists, Muhammad b. Sayyid Ahmad al-Sufi al-Meraghi of Maraga, wrote a hundred sayings by ʿAli in letters of diverse sizes and script styles, cut from white, beige and gilded paper in 876 (1471-72). The artist then pasted the lines of calligraphy onto salmon-coloured, beige and white paper, creating in all 20 pages measuring 28 x 24 cm of text in cut-paper lettering. In its present form, these pages have been surrounded by wide borders, creating a book measuring 45 x 31.5 cm.[47]

The calligrapher ʿAbd al-Rahim b. ʿAbd al-Rahman began to make this copy of the *Khamsa* by the renowned Persian language poet Nizami of Ganja in 880 (1475-76), at the request of the Aqqoyunlu prince Khalil (d. 1478) and completed the manuscript in Tabriz in 25 Muharram 886 (26 March 1481) during the reign of Sultan Yaʿqub (r. 1478-90). Shaykhi, an artist as skilled as the ancient painter Mani, and Derviş Muhammad were commissioned to illustrate the manuscript, and master illustrators began to ornament the section headings (fig. 11b). However, the pictures had not all been completed by the time of Sultan Yaʿqup's death. Some of the miniatures and illuminations were completed during the reign of Shah Ismail (r. 1502-24), the founder of the Safavid state who invaded the Aqqoyunlu lands and Tabriz. The binding of the manuscript was executed under the patronage of Shah Ismail's deputy, Amir Najm al-Din Masʿud (d. 1512). A text explaining the life story of the manuscript was added at the end and it was bound in royal style. This binding is reminiscent of a piece of jewellery, with lines of poetry in praise of Najm al-Din Masʿud written in *taʿlīq* on the outside and inside of the fore-edge flap. This book project, which was close to the hearts of members of both the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen and Safavid dynasties, continued for nearly 30 years, from the initial design to binding. Despite the fact that some of the illustrations were never completed, the result was an exquisite work of art that was taken to Istanbul along with other treasures from Tabriz and the Hasht Behesht Palace and placed in the treasury at Topkapı Saray in 1515.[48] With its paper decorat-

46 Mohammedinezhad, "Akkoyunlu Türkmen Sultanı", 58-246.

47 Çağman, *Katʿı*, 54-55.

48 Topkapı Palace Library, H.762: Filiz Çağman, "Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Hazine 762 No.lu *Nizami Hamsesi*'nin Minyatürleri" (Ph.D. dissertation, Istanbul Üniversitesi, 1971); Çağman and Tanındı, The *Topkapı Saray Museum*, 110-13; Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and Princely Vision,* 244-45; Mohammedinezhad, "Akkoyunlu Türkmen Sultanı", 284-87, 350-54. For the book's binding and sources: Zeren Tanındı, "Safavid Bookbinding," *Hunt*

11b

11b. Behram Gur enthroned. *Khamsa* of Nizami. Aqqoyunlu Turkmen. Tabriz, 1475-1481. Topkapı Palace Library, H.762, fol. 163v. 30 x 19.7 cm.

ed by master artists, this book is a masterpiece without equal among Islamic manuscripts and demonstrates the value placed on royal manuscripts in elite circles, and in particular how they were given pride of place in the book treasury of sultans who had a sophisticated appreciation of art.

Surviving examples of work by the artist Shaykhi are not confined to the pictures in this exquisite manuscript. Pictures by him are pasted on the pages of two palace albums, most of them with attributions to the artist, executed on loose sheets of polished paper varying in size from around 34.5 x 26 cm to 6 x 9 cm, on an untinted ground (fig. 11a).[49] His superb paintings include some in Chinese style adapted to Turkmen tastes. Another of his works is a painting on fabric with pieces of mother-of-pearl pasted onto some of the painted surfaces. Some of the manuscripts produced at the art studio in the palace of the Turkmen sultan Yaʿqub b. Hasan in Tabriz are written on Chinese paper that is decorated with landscapes.[50]

During the reigns of the Aqqoyunlu princes who succeeded Sultan Yaʿqup at his death, illuminated book production continued in Shiraz and Tabriz until the late 15th century. These were mostly works of literature, with a few Korans written in *naskh* script, illuminated and bound by master binders. This style continued to be influential into the early 16th century in Fars and southern Caucasia, which were invaded by the Safavids. One of the places in Shiraz where illuminated manuscript production is known to have continued, is the sufi lodge of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim (d. 1034), founder of the Kazaruni sect. A follower of Shaykh who is known by the cognomen Murshidi recorded the name of this place, which employed numerous scribes, in the colophon of the books that they copied.[51] When the Safavid sultan Shah Ismail brought an end to Aqqoyunlu rule in 1502, the Aqqoyunlu artists of the books living in southern and western Iran, in Tabriz and its environs in Azerbaijan, began to work for a new patron, the Safavid sultan.

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for Paradise. Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501-1576, eds. Jon Thompson et al. (Milan: Skira, 2003), 162, n. 26. Not only the shah's treasury but those of leading statesmen whose estates had been transferred to the state after their deaths were kept at Hasht Behesht Palace. One of these was the treasury of Shah Ismail's deputy Najm al-Din Masʿud that was among the treasuries sent to Istanbul in 1514: Vural Genç, "From Tabriz to Istanbul: Goods and Treasures of Shah Ismail Looted After the Battle of Chaldiran," *Studia Iranica* 44 (2015), 241-42.

49 Çağman and Tanındı, *The Topkapı Saray Museum,*74, 75.

50 Priscilla, P. Soucek, "The New York Public Library *Mahzan al-Asrār* and Its Importance," *Ars Orientalis* 18 (1988), 17-18.

51 Filiz Çağman and Zeren Tanındı, "Manuscript Production at the Kāzarūnī Orders," *Safavid Art and Architecture*, ed. Sheila Canby (London: The British Museum Press, 2002), 43-48.

The transformation of the book into a work of art in the land of the Mamluks

The Mamluks ruled territory in the eastern Mediterranean region, extending from southeastern Anatolia, to Syria, Palestine and Egypt, from the mid-13th century to the early 16th century. Alexandria and other eastern Mediterranean port cities, including those on the southern coast of Anatolia, played an important role in trade and cultural relations with ports in the western Mediterranean region, particularly the Italian city states. In the 14th century and first half of the 15th century, the Mamluks were the principal power in the eastern Mediterranean and also famed for their educational institutions and scholars. This prompted leading intellectuals of the period, such as the poet Darir (d. after 1405) from Erzurum, the poet Ahmedi (d. 1413) from Amasya, and Kadı Burhaneddin Ahmed (d. 1398), who went on to rule the Eretna state in Sivas, to travel to the major Mamluk cities of Damascus and Cairo. When the poet Darir arrived in Cairo the Mamluk sultan heard of his fame and asked him to write a story about a prophet. Darir wrote a biography of the Prophet Muhammad entitled *Siyer-i Nebī* based on Arabic sources but written in Turkish, and presented it to Sultan Barquq (r. 1382-99). The fame of this book spread to Bursa in Anatolia in the early 15th century and it won wide acclaim; so much so that a copy illustrated with more than 800 miniatures was produced at the Ottoman palace art studio in 1595 and presented to Sultan Mehmed III (r. 1595-1603).[52]

Some scholars migrated in the opposite direction; as in the case of the renowned Mamluk Koran scholar Ibn al-Jazari (d. 1429), who in 1396 travelled from Damascus to Alexandria, and from there by ship to Anatolia, where he travelled to Bursa, then the capital of the Ottoman state. There Sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402) appointed Ibn al-Jazari as tutor to his children.[53] Occasionally Anatolian and Mamluk rulers exchanged diplomatic gifts that were presented by their envoys. Mamluk paper decorators displayed their highest skills on the pages of illuminated Korans (fig. 12).[54]

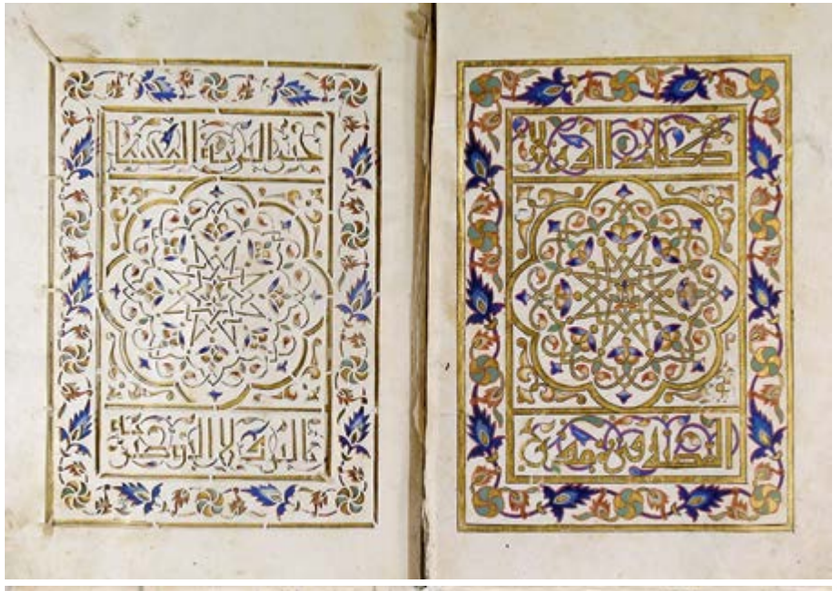
12

12. Illuminated double page frontispiece of a Koran. ca. 1380. Mamluk. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.445, fols. 1v-2r. 75 x 45 cm.

52 Zeren Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebî. İslâm Tasvir Sanatında Hz.Muhammed'in Hayatı* (Istanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı, 1984.) [Zeren Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebī. An Illustrated Cycle of the Life of Muhammed and Its Place in Islamic Art* (Istanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı, 1984).]

53 Tanındı, "An Illuminated Manuscript," 647-48.

54 Esin Atıl, *Renaissance of Islam. Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981); James, *Qur'āns of the Mamlūks*; Alison Ohta, "The Relations Between Mamluk, Ottoman and Renaissance Bookbindings," in *The Thirteenth International Congress of Turkish Art*, eds. Geza David and Ibolya Gerelyes (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2009), 491-503; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, ed. *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria: Evolution and Impact* (Bonn: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012); Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an,* 248-65.



13a

13b

13a. Pages with illuminated and cut-paper decoration. *Qasīda al-Burda*. Dated 1372. Mamluk. Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya 4170, fols. 1v-2r. 27.3 x 18.5 cm.

13b. Courtly entertainment and illuminated dedication. Ahmedi's *İskendernâme*, dated 1467. Istanbul University Library, T.6044, fols. 1v-2r. 27 x 18.5 cm.

Some of the royal style manuscripts were more than a hundred centimetres in height. The pages of Korans are illuminated and the covers and doublures of their chestnut coloured leather bindings have stamped, tooled, or occasionally openwork leather lattice decoration. These outsized books give a sculptural impression when they are displayed. Magnificently ornate books were produced as endowments to public buildings founded by the sultan. One such statuesque Koran was probably a gift sent by Sultan Barquq as an endowment to the tomb of the Ottoman sultan Murad I (r. 1362-89) in Bursa.[55]

So far as I am aware, the first manuscript with a text written in the cut-paper technique known as *katı'* was produced under the Mamluks. On the basis of surviving examples, it appears that the earliest use of this technique in the context of Islamic manuscripts was to decorate leather bindings. The first manuscript with a cut-paper text that I encountered was the book I will now discuss. This is a copy of Busiri's *Qasīda al-Burda*, which is a literary work in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, completed by the artist Ahmad b. Toghayi al-Mu'izzi in Ramaḍān 773 (March/April 1372). Each page of text is followed by a page of openwork flower motifs cut out like lace (fig. 13a). This openwork page is followed by a page with the same text and the same decorative design, but this time painted instead of cut.[56] In this way the owner of the book could enjoy looking at the paper on which the text was written, as well as reading it.

In the 15th century Mamluk illuminated books began to shrink in size. During this period the production of works of literature, theology and history, enhanced by richly ornamented paper, continued to be made not just for sultans like Abu an-Nasr Inal (r. 1453-61), Qaitbay (r. 1468-96) and Qansuh al-Ghawri (r. 1501-16), but also for the book treasuries of regional governors and other members of the elite such as Hoshkadam b. Abdullah (d. 1467) and Amir Yashbegh (d. 1481).[57] Illuminated books, some written

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55 Zeren Tanındı, "The Arts of the Book: Patrons and Interactions in Erzincan between 1365 and 1410," in *At the Crossroads of Empires: 14th and 15th Century Eastern Anatolia. Proceedings of the International Symposium held in Istanbul, 4th-6th May 2007,* ed. Deniz Beyazıt (Paris: De Boccard, 2012), 224.

56 Zeren Tanındı, *Yazıda Ahenk ve Renk. Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Koleksiyonundan Sanatlı Kitaplar, Belgeler ve Hüsn-i Hatlar*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı Sadberk Hanım Müzesi, 2019), 1, 56-57. [Zeren Tanındı, *Harmony of Line and Color. Illuminated Manuscripts Documents and Calligraphy in the Sadberk Hanım Museum,* 2 vols (Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Foundation Sadberk Hanım Museum, 2019), 1, 56-57.]

57 Zeren Tanındı, "Two Bibliophile Mamluk Emirs: Qansuh the Master of the Stables and Yashbak the Secretary," in *The Arts of the Mamluks in Egypt and Syria - Evolution and Impact*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif (Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2012), 267-81. On the

in Turkish, some with dedications to the Turkish-born Mamluk sultan and his governors who ruled the eastern and southeastern Mediterranean region, arrived at the Ottoman palace book treasury as gifts or by other means at the beginning of the 16th century. They include two books composed of examples of the script styles used by the Mamluk scholar and skilled calligrapher Muhammed b. Hasan al-Tayyibi, who was active in the second half of the 15th century.[58] There are a considerable number of books with decorated paper in royal style and the text written in Turkish for Mamluk statesmen. An illuminated Koran written in *naskhī* script for Amir Qansuh (d. 1496) has a Turkish translation between the lines. A copy of the *İskendernāme* by the Anatolian poet Ahmedi made for Hoshkadam b. Abdullah was decorated with illustrations and illumination around the year 1460 (fig. 13b). One of the last examples of royal style manuscripts produced for the bibliophile Mamluk elite was a Turkish translation of the *Shahnāme*, a Persian epic, produced at the wish of the Mamluk sultan Qansuh al-Ghawri. The translation was written on pages measuring 41 x 25 cm and when completed, 62 pictures illustrating the text were added around 1500.[59] These pictures did not only illustrate the legendary events narrated in the text, but Mamluk architecture, local plants and furniture used in palace circles that could be seen by an observant reader. The Mamluks continued to transform paper and leather bindings into art until the early 16th century. One of the loveliest examples of these is a copy of *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn* by the Islamic philosopher Ghazali (d. 1111) made for the Mamluk author Muhib al-Din Mahmud b. Aja, dated 14 Shaʿbān 910 (20 January 1505).[60] In 1517 the Mamluk state was conquered by the Ottomans.

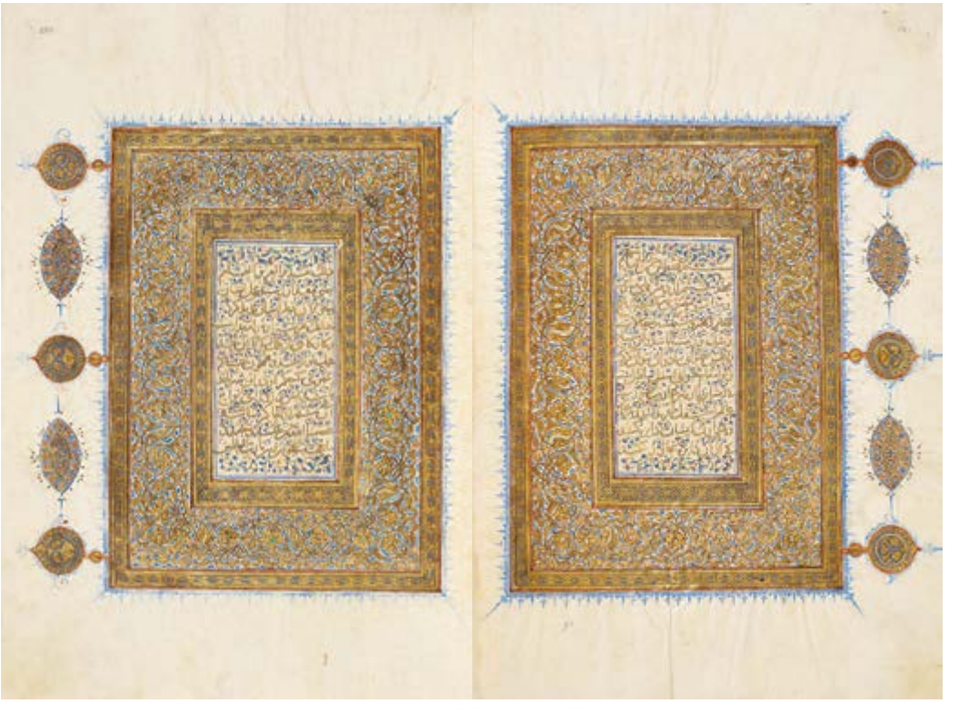
formation of Mamluk book-related cultural treasuries in the southeastern Mediterranean: Doris Behren-Ebouseif, *The Book in Mamluk Egypt and Syria (1250-1517). Scribes, Libraries and Market* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018).

58 Muhittin Serin, *Hat Sanatı Târîhi. Ekoller ve Takipçileri*, 2 vols (Istanbul: Kubbealtı, 2019), 1, 115,123-25.

59 On illustrated Turkish books in royal style: Esin Atıl, "Mamluk Painting in the Late Fifteenth Century," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984),160-70.

60 Nuruosmaniye Library 2233. Unpublished. 23 x 17 cm. The leather binding with flap decorated with a fully gilded medallion and cornerpieces composition is an example of the binder's art at its finest. The chestnut brown doublures have compositions of a medallion and cornerpieces filled with cut-leather decoration. The illumination on fol. 1r is the work of a master artist. Stylistic interaction between Mamluk, Aqqoyunlu Turkmen and Anatolian artists of the book in the early 16th century is reflected in the binding and illumination of this manuscript. On fol. 1r is the endowment seal of Sultan Osman III (r. 1754-57) and an endowment annotation.

14



14. Illuminated opening pages of Part Six of the *Mathnawī*. Dated 1278. The illuminator is Muhlis b. Abdullah el-Hindī. Konya. Seljuk. Konya Mevlana Museum, 51. fols. 268v-270r. 33.5 x 29.5 cm.

The advent of books with paper decorated in royal style in the Anatolian states

Research in recent years has begun to uncover some crumbs of information showing that collecting manuscripts with decorated pages was widespread among the cultured elite of the small states founded in Anatolia in the 13th and 14th centuries. Here exquisitely decorated copies of the *Mathnawī* by the mystic Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, who lived in Konya, began to be read with almost the same reverence as the Koran from 1280 onwards (fig. 14).[61] Until the beginning of the 15th century the *Mathnawī* held its position as the primary work of literature whose paper was decorated in royal style. Throughout the 14th century, bibliophile

61 Zeren Tanındı, "Examples of *Mesnevî* in Islamic Book Art," *On the Facsimile Edition of the Original Copy* (*Nüshkhā-i Qadīma*) of the Mathnawī (Istanbul: Konya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2022), 61-93.

15. Illuminated double page frontispiece. *Dīwān* of Ahmedi, dated 1437. The illuminator is Ahmed b. Hacı Mahmud al-Aksarayī. Bursa or Edirne. Ottoman. Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Hamidiye 1080m, fols. 1v-2r. 30 x 20.5 cm.

members of the cultural elite living in the cities of Konya and Erzincan who belonged to the Mevlevi order, commissioned beautifully illuminated copies of Mawlana's *Mathnawī*.

The first Ottoman books with decorated pages and their patrons: Sultan Murad II and his son Mehmed II

Patronage of the arts of the book was traditionally one of the fundamental activities of a ruler, and I can say with certainty that in Anatolia this began in the first Ottoman capitals of Bursa and Edirne during the reign of the Ottoman sultan Murad II (r. 1421-44; 1446-51), when it was seen as an integral part of statesmanship. Bursa, the first Ottoman capital, was a major centre of trade and manufacturing, notably raw silk production and silk weaving, from the late 14th century and throughout the 15th century, despite the political turbulence of the time. Merchants from as far away as Florence, Genoa and Iran came here, as well as travellers and statesmen. Scholars and artisans formed an influential segment of the city's large population. Bursa was an impressive city in the 15th century, as its monumental works of architecture, such as the jewel-like building known today as the Green Mosque, still bear witness. The royal manuscripts preserved in libraries are also documents reflecting this past, although not on public view. The fame of the work on musical theory by the scholar and musician ʿAbd al-Qadir Maraghi (d. 1435), who lived in Samarkand during the Timurid period, must have reached the palace of the Ottoman sultan Murad II, because a copy of this Persian book written in a lovely *nastaʿlīq* script on paper measuring 31.3 x 21.8 cm is dated 14 Jumada II 838 (15 January 1435). The first two pages are superbly illuminated and the leather binding is also beautifully decorated. When the book was completed it was presented to Sultan Murad.[62] Ahmedi (d. 1413) of Amasya was one of the contemporary writers admired by the sultan. Ahmedi's Turkish poems were collected in a *Dīwān* dated 5 Shawwāl 840 (12 April 1437), written by the skilled calligrapher Ahmed b. Hacı Mahmud al-Aksarayi in *naskh* script on pages measuring 30 x 20.5 cm. This calligrapher was also an expert illuminator and he decorated the first two pages of the book and the spaces between the lines. This royally ornamented book was then presented to Murad II (fig. 15).[63] Poetry by Ahmedi was also admired at the palace of Sultan Murad's son Mehmed II (r. 1444-46, 1451-81). Ahmedi was renowned for his *Dīwān* but it was his *İskendernāme* that really brought him fame. In the second half of the 15th century, illuminated and illustrated copies of this work were produced at the palace art studios in Edirne and Istanbul.[64] During the early years of his reign, Sultan Murad lived in his palaces in both Bursa and Edirne. A Koran whose pages measure 59 x 47.5 cm and is written in alternate lines of *naskh* and *rayḥānī* script styles must have been produced in Bursa or

62 Julian Raby and Zeren Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding in the 15th Century. The Foundation of Ottoman Court Style*, ed. Tim Stanley (London: Azimuth, 1993), 21-41; Zeren Tanındı, "Kitap ve Cildi", "Kitap ve Tezhibi" in *Osmanlı Uygarlığı*, vol. 2, haz. Halil İnalcık ve Günsel Renda (Istanbul: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, 2003), 2: 872-75. [Zeren Tanındı, "Books and Bindings", "Manuscript Illumination" in *Ottoman Civilization*, vol. 2, eds. Halil İnalcık and Günsel Renda (Istanbul: Ministry of Culture, 2003), 2: 872-75.]

63 Tanındı, "The Arts of the Book: Patrons and Interactions," 229, 237-38.

64 Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda ve Zeren Tanındı, *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019), 21-33. [Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda and Zeren Tanındı, *Ottoman Painting* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2019), 21-34]; Serpil Bağcı, "Sözden Surete-Suretten Söze: Edirneli Bir *İskendernâme*," in *Zeren Tanındı Armağanı: İslam Dünyasında Kitap Sanatı ve Kültürü/Zeren Tanındı Festschrift: Art and Culture of Books in the Islamic World*, eds. Aslıhan Erkmen and Şebnem Tamcan Parladır (Istanbul: Lale Yayıncılık, 2022), 127-41.

16. Calligraphic picture of a lion formed by words describing Ali b. Abi Talib. Calligraphic scroll compiled by Ataullah b. Muhammed al-Tebrizi, 1458. Ottoman. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2878. 41 x 164 cm.

Edirne around 1440.[65] Although the calligraphy is unremarkable, the leather binding is the work of a binder of outstanding technical skill and the illuminator of the first two pages was a master artist. This Koran is the first monumental Turkish manuscript whose paper is decorated in royal style.

The first illuminated manuscript produced in Edirne that I am aware of is a Koran measuring 33 x 24.5.[66] The text is the work of the calligrapher Abdullah b. Hijazi, who migrated from Timurid Shiraz to Edirne and is written in alternating lines of *naskhī*, *thuluth* and *rayḥānī* on paper in 856 (1452). It was owned by Mehmed's vezir Mahmud Pasha (d. 1474). The manuscript was probably illuminated by artists who had migrated from Shiraz. From illustrations in the abovementioned books, we know that as well as

65 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 106-11.

66 *Islam. Faith and Worship. Abu Dhabi July 22-October, 2009. Exhibition Catalogue* (Istanbul: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2009), 100-5.

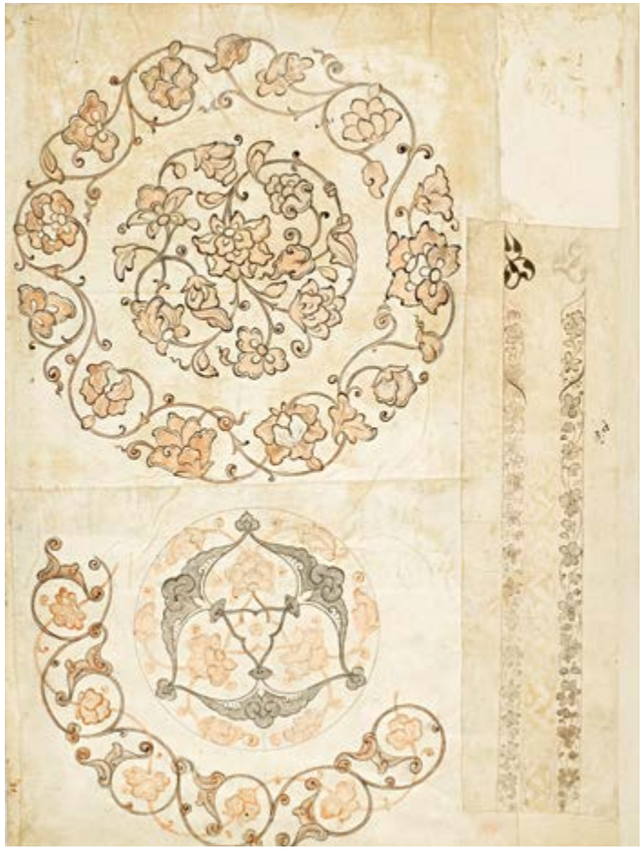
master calligraphers and illuminators, miniature painters who had migrated from Shiraz also worked in Edirne. A Koran that was probably produced in Edirne is written in black ink in *muḥaqqaq*, *rayḥānī* and gold *thuluth* script styles on paper measuring 36 x 26.7 cm. After the text was completed in 862 (1457-58) the first two pages, another two pages forming the first part of the Surah al-Maryam and the surah headings were exquisitely illuminated in exceptionally diverse designs. From the design of the motifs and wide range of colours, it is clear that the illuminator was a follower of the artists who designed the tile decoration for royal buildings in Bursa and Edirne.[67] The almond-shaped seal of Mehmed's son Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) stamped on the first and last page shows that this was one of the rare manuscripts in the book treasury of Topkapı Saray before 1512. A scroll measuring 164 x 41 cm made for Mehmed II and dated 4 Rabīʿ II 862 (20 January 1458) was compiled by ʿAtaullah b. Muhammed al-Tabrizi and must be another of the books produced at the palace art studio in Edirne for Mehmed II. ʿAtaullah of Tabriz probably migrated to the Ottoman lands from Tabriz in the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen period, and his scroll consists of calligraphic exercises by various calligraphers (fig. 16).[68] The beginning of the scroll is illuminated in a naive style. On the following sheet of paper is an inscription in an *istif* composition (in which the letters and words are arranged one above the other rather than side by side) in *thuluth* script, explaining that the scroll was produced for Sultan Mehmed II. On one of the sheets of paper that make up the scroll are two of the earliest examples of calligraphic pictures in Islamic art; consisting of adages and sacred names, whose letters are arranged to form the figures of a bird and a lion respectively.

Decorated paper produced at the palace art studio in Istanbul

The Ottomans did not establish royal art studios in different cities as the Safavids did in Iran, particularly from the 16th century onwards. Instead there was a royal studio in the city where the sultan resided, where artists were employed to produce every kind of art work for the palace. So far no documents providing definite proof of the existence of palace art studios in the earlier Ot-

67 Farhad and Rettig, *The Art of the Qur'an*, 306-15. The dazzlingly beautiful illuminated pages of this manuscript, which is known to belong to Topkapı Saray book treasury, were removed around the beginning of the 20th century and taken abroad.

68 David J. Roxburgh ed. *Turks. A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 439, cat. 246.



17a

17a. Loose decorated papers attributed to Baba Nakkaş. From an album. ca. 1470. Ottoman. Istanbul University Library, F.1423, fol. 13r. 39 x 29 cm. The album was designed at the Ottoman palace art studio probably after the 16th century.

toman capital cities of Bursa or Edirne have been found. However, books illuminated in royal style that were produced in Bursa and Edirne and are today preserved in libraries allow us to conclude that the art studio where such manuscripts were produced was originally situated in these two cities. The first art studios that were officially responsible for carrying out palace commissions were active from the 1460s, after the construction of Topkapı Saray in Istanbul had been completed. Art was viewed as an important area of state activity and an organisation called the *ehl-i ḥiref*, composed of artists and craftsmen responsible for producing art works for the Topkapı Saray was established. They worked in ateliers called *naḳḳāşḫāne* in and around Topkapı Saray; each designed for the particular type of work to be undertaken.[69] Books with pages decorated in royal style and illuminated documents were produced in one of these special ateliers. Surviving examples show that the art studio where decorated paper was produced was active until the turn of the 19th century, although output declined and the royal style of ornamentation became increasingly drab.

Books on medicine, philosophy, logic, rhetoric and geography produced for Sultan Mehmed II form the majority of the earliest examples of illuminated paper produced at the palace art studio in Istanbul.[70] Each of these books is inscribed by master calligraphers, most of whom emigrated from Iran after 1450; written in the *naskh*, *nastaʿlīq*, *taʿlīq*, ancient *taʿlīq* or *dīwānī* script styles; and their first pages are almost covered with illumination.[71] Baba Nakkaş is one of the paper decorators whose name is documented (fig. 17a) and it has been suggested that the illumination in some manuscripts and designs on single sheets of paper may have been his work. Consequently this decorative style found in works produced at the Ottoman palace art studio during the second half of the 15th century is referred to as the Baba Nakkaş style.[72]

Not all the artists at the palace in Istanbul were of local or eastern origin; some came from the Italian city states at the invitation of Mehmed II. Signed works by the latter include an oil portrait of the sultan and bronze medallions bearing his portrait. A few studies on paper of figures wearing Turkish costume are also attributed to these European artists.[73] The two pictures that might also be the work of a European artist can be seen in a literary book.[74] There are also portraits on paper of Mehmed II painted by Ottoman painters around 1480. One of these is attributed to Sinan Beg,

69 Filiz Çağman, "Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Yeri Üzerine Düşünceler," *Sanat Tarihinde Doğudan Batıya. Ünsal Yücel Anısına Sempozyum Bildirileri* (Istanbul: Güzel Sanatlar Matbaası, 1989), 35-46; Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization of Knowledge in the Ottoman Palace Library: An Encyclopedic Collection and Its Inventory," in *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/03–1503/04)*, 2 vols, eds. Gülru Necipoğlu et al. (Leiden-Boston, 2019), 63, n.42.

70 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 138-83.

71 Zeynep Atbaş, "Artistic Aspects of Sultan Bayezıd II's Book Treasury Collections: Extant Volumes Preserved at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library," in *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/03–1503/04)*, 2 vols, eds. Gülru Necipoğlu et al. (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2019), 1: 167; Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," 229.

72 Süheyl Ünver, *Fatih Devri Saray Nakkaşhanesi ve Baba Nakkaş Çalışmaları* (Istanbul: Istanbul Üniversitesi, 1958); Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 59-60 ; Gülru Necipoğlu,"Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversations with Renaissance Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople," *Muqarnas* 29 (2012), 44.

73 Necipoğlu,"Visual Cosmopolitanism," 18-43.

74 Necipoğlu,"Visual Cosmopolitanism,"44-47; Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim*, 54-55. [Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, 54-56.]

17b →

who studied art in Italy, and the other to his student Ahmed Şiblizade of Bursa (fig. 17b). These two portraits are pasted onto two separate pages of a famous palace album. We know that the painter Sinan Beg was buried in Bursa, because his elegantly carved marble gravestone is now in the Bursa Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts. The abovementioned Italian and Turkish painters started the tradition of Istanbul palace artists making portraits of the Ottoman sultans. From surviving examples we know that in no other eastern Mediterranean country were so many portraits of rulers made as those of the Ottomans between the 16th and 19th centuries.[75]

A legacy from father to son: books with decorated paper belonging to Bayezid II

Mehmed II's two sons Cem (d. 1496) and Bayezid (d. 1512) both had been appointed governors of provincial cities to gain experience of government: Bayezid of Amasya and Cem of Konya. Like their father, both created lively cultural milieus in these cities. Cem wrote poetry in Turkish and Persian, and a bound copy of these poems is preserved in İnebey Library in Bursa, where the prince lived for a time. Probably this manuscript was produced during Cem's lifetime. As was customary in royal manuscripts, the first page was decorated with an illuminated design known as a *ẓahriyya* in the form of a medallion, with an attribution to Cem Sultan inscribed in the centre. The first pages of both sections of the book are also illuminated. The elegantly ornamented leather binding must be the work of the master binder Ghiyath al-Din al-Mujallid al-Isfahani, who migrated from the Aqqoyunlu state.[76] Sixteenth-century biographers mention Cem's talent as a poet. In a copy of ʿAşık Çelebi's (d. 1572) book of biographies dating from around 1590, there is a portrait of Cem by a Turkish artist in the section discussing his poetry.[77] Cem's love of decorated works of literature is shown by the fact that he owned an illuminated and illustrated copy of the *Muammiyāt* by the poet

75 *Padişahın Portresi: Tesavir-i Âli Osman* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası, 2000). [*The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası, 2000).]

76 Cemal Kafadar, "Between Amasya and Istanbul: Bayezid II and his Librarian, and the Textual Turn of the Late Fifteenth Century," in *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/03–1503/04)*, 2 vols, eds. Gülru Necipoğlu et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 1: 96.

77 İFMK: Ali Emiri 772, fol. 96v: Aslıhan Erkmen Birkandan, "Metinlerden Tasvirlere Yansıyan Yüzler: Musavver Bir *Meşâ'irü'ş-şu'arâ* Nüshasının Portreleri" (Ph. D. dissertation, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2011), 82, 110, 129-30, 290-91, 370.

17b. Loose decorated pages from an album. Portrait of Mehmed II. Sinan Beg (attr.), ca. 1478-81. Calligraphies ca. 1480. Paintings early 15th century. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 145v. 50.8 x 33.8 cm. The album was designed in the 16th century at the Ottoman palace workshop.

ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami from Herat.[78] Ghiyath al-Din al-Mujallid al-Isfahani was both the calligrapher and binder of this manuscript.[79]

The elder of the two brothers, Bayezid, served as governor of Amasya for 27 years and from the scribes and poets working in the city, the illuminated manuscripts produced there and the sultan's close friendship with the bibliophile Müeyyedzade (d. 1516), it is evident that cultural life in Amasya during this period was far more intense than that in Konya. At the prince's request, Cüneyd Tokati, a teacher at Atabey Gazi Madrasah in Amasya, copied a theological work in *nastaʿlīq* script in 881 (1477). This manuscript was illuminated by a master decorator in the naive style and a master binder made a tooled leather binding with mythical animals and plants on the cover and openwork leather doublures with a design of a central medallion and cornerpieces.[80] The calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah (d. 1520) from Amasya was one of the circle of intellectuals and artists around Prince Bayezid and Müeyyedzade.[81] He copied a scientific work for Bayezid's father Sultan Mehmed II in Amasya and later became the foremost calligrapher at Topkapı Saray.[82]

After succeeding to the throne Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) continued his cultural patronage and a considerable number of illuminated manuscripts produced in Istanbul for him have survived to the present day. The calligraphers Muhammed al-Badakhshi and Ghiyath al-Mujallid al-Isfahani, who copied books in *nastaʿlīq* for Sultan Mehmed II, also copied books for Sultan Bayezid II. A scientific work copied by Muhammed al-Badakhshi for Bayezid II in Rabīʿ I 905 (October-November 1499) is illuminated but, even more importantly, this book measuring 30 x 20 cm has a magnificent cherry red leather binding that is the work of a master binder.[83] Another calligrapher who copied literary works in *nastaʿlīq* script for Bayezid II's book treasury during the years 1499-1507 was Sultan Ahmed al-Herevi. Again it is likely that the masterful illumination is the work of Hasan. The decoration on the black leather covers is superbly executed and when the book is opened the reader is dazzled by the gilded stamped designs in high relief on the doublures.[84] This binding must be the work of Ahmed, a master binder whose name is recorded in contemporary sources.[85]

Uzun Firdevsi of Bursa made a copy of his *Süleymānnāme*, a work consisting of legends about the prophet Solomon, for Bayezid II. At the beginning of the manuscript is a double spread picture of the prophet Solomon and Queen Bilqis enthroned; a composition which has no precedent.[86] The first illustrated Ottoman *shahnāma* in Persian verse was made for Bayezid II around 1495 by the calligrapher Derviş Mahmud b. Abdullah Nakkaş, who wrote the text in *nastaʿlīq* and painted the illustrations. This *shahnāma* was written by the poet Melik-i Ahi and is entitled *Şehnāme-i Melik-i Ahī*.[87] The miniature painters, illuminators and bindings employed at the palace art studio during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II continued to produce decorated books as if determined not to lag behind their Timurid and Turkmen contemporaries. In the 15th century, the most popular illustrated books were copies of the story *Khusraw u Shīrīn*, both in the Persian version by the poet Hatifi and the Turkish version by the poet Şeyhi.[88]

Palace administrators and those responsible for the book treasury clearly knew which books were works of art, because some of the pictures in rare books that arrived at the palace in Istanbul before their illustrations had been completed were painted at the Topkapı Saray art studio. Those that lacked bindings or had worn bindings were rebound by the highly skilled palace binders.[89] Consequently we know that Bayezid II's art studio also carried out restoration work on precious manuscripts in the palace book treasury. I presume that restoration of this kind was undertaken after Sultan Bayezid's decision to catalogue the books in the Imperial Treasury, as I will discuss below.

78 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," 228-29.

79 For other books copied and bound by this artist: Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 76.

80 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 184-87.

81 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 81-89, 96-100; Muhittin Serin, *Hattat Şeyh Hamdullah* (Istanbul: Kubbealtı, 2007); Serin, *Hat Sanatı*,193-202.

82 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," 239, n.95.

83 Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya 3510: Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," 988.

84 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book," 232-33.

85 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 222-23.

86 Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim*, 48-50. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting*, 48-51.]

87 Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim*, 50-51. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting*, 51-52.]

88 Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim*, 44-49. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting*, 45-48.]

89 Tanındı, "Additions to Illustrated,"150-55; Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim ," 200, 245, 256. [Tanındı, " The Bindings and Illuminations of the Qur'an," 200, 245, 256.]; Atbaş, "Artistic Aspects," 183-84; Simon Rettig, "A 'Timurid-Like Response' to the Qur'an of Gwalior? Manuscript W563 at the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore," in Éloise Brac de la Perrière at Monique Burési, eds., *Le coran de Gwalior. Polysémie d'un manuscrit à peintures* (Paris: Boccard, 2016), 202-3.

The most esteemed artist at the Istanbul palace studio: Şeyh Hamdullah

As I said at the beginning of this essay, copies of the Koran were the first examples of texts written on paper by expert calligraphers in the Islamic world. These early calligraphers who transformed writing into an art, won their reputations by copying the Muslim holy text. Based on surviving examples, we can say that the tradition of decorating book pages with illumination also began with the Koran. Şeyh Hamdullah (d. 1520) became renowned as a calligrapher who inscribed Korans. He was born into a family from Bukhara in the Transoxania region who migrated to Amasya. There he grew up in the rich cultural milieu of this Anatolian city, where the future Sultan Bayezid spent his years as a crown prince.[90] When Bayezid succeeded to the throne and came to Istanbul, Şeyh Hamdullah was employed at Topkapı Saray. Five illuminated Korans, most of which he copied for the sultan in Istanbul between 1494 and 1508, are foremost among the royally decorated manuscripts produced at that time in the art studio at Topkapı Saray.[91] Two of these five Korans were exquisitely decorated by the illuminator Hasan ibn Abdullah (fig. 18).[92] Hasan's full-page illuminated compositions have geometric layouts that melt into the intricate floral decoration so they are imperceptible at first sight. He was an expert at designing these compositions and at the use of lapis blue.

What little information we have suggests that the palace calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah, whose patron was Sultan Bayezid II, was permitted to look at manuscripts in the Topkapı Saray book treasury while working at the palace and was inspired by them.[93] It is likely that among these were Korans that had a *Fāl al-Qur'ān* (Koranic divination) text added at the end, which gave him inspiration for those he himself produced.[94] The prose and verse *Fāl al-*

90 On Şeyh Hamdullah: Nefeszade İbrahim, *Gülizâr-ı Savab,* ed. Kilisli Muallim Rifat (Istanbul: Güzel Sanatlar Akademisi, 1938), 48-53.

91 Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.402, Topkapı Palace Library, EH.71, 72, A.5, Istanbul University Library, A.6662: Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding,* 196-201, 204-13; Derman, *Doksandokuz İstanbul Mushafı,* 22-31. [Derman , *Ninety-Nine Qur'an,* 22-31.] A detailed study of characteristics of illumination compositions dating from the reign of Sultan Bayezid, with drawings: Gülnihal Küpeli, "II. Bâyezid Dönemi Tezhip Sanatı" (Proficiency in Art dissertation, Istanbul Marmara Üniversitesi, 2007).

92 Topkapı Palace Library, A.5; Istanbul University Library, A. 6662.

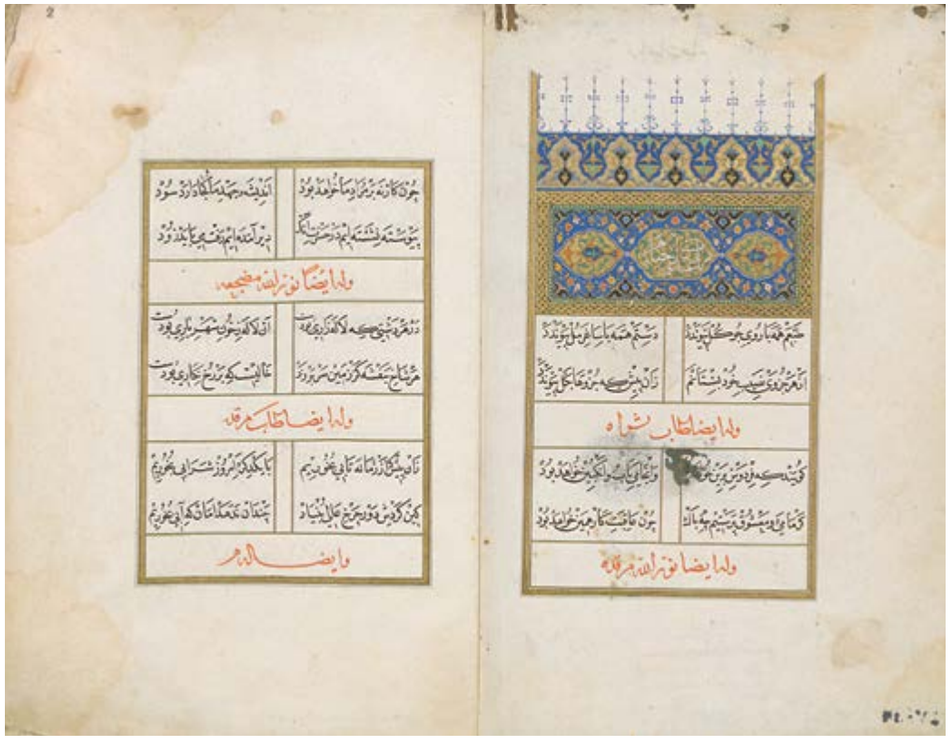
93 Nefeszade İbrahim, *Gülizâr-ı Savab,* 49.

94 Tanındı, "Kur'an-ı Kerim Nüshalarının ," 244. [Tanındı, "The Bindings and Illuminations of the Qur'an," 244]. Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 46. The first example of a *fālnāma* (divination text) added at the end of a Koran, is a royal copy produced in the Delhi Sultanate in India during the late 14th century: Sabrina Alilouche and Ghazaleh

18. Last page of a Koran signed by Şeyh Hamdullah (Hamdullah b. Mustafa Dede al-maruf b. al-Şeyh). Dated 1494. Istanbul palace art studio. Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.402. fol. 259v. 33.3 x 23.6 cm.

Qur'ān texts that he wrote in *nastaʿlīq* script and added at the end of four of his Koran copies reflect this inspiration.[95] The decoration of these texts is different on every page, and the intricate motifs and rich colour palette are used with such mastery that prior to this no Turkish illumination in either works of literature or the Koran was so spectacular. Moreover, no comparable collection of Korans written by a palace calligrapher and ornamented in royal style has survived to the present day in the book treasury of any sultan.

The Surah al-Anʿām of the Koran was one of the most widely read by Ottoman Muslims. Consequently famous calligraphers made elegant pocket-sized copies of this surah. A page who served at the court of Bayezid II recorded in his memoirs that the Anʿām surah was read in the presence of the sultan at night.[96] The large number of Anʿām copies made by Şeyh Hamdullah reflect this interest. Two beautifully illuminated copies of this surah were made in H. 912 (1506-07) by Fazlullah b. Veli, a calligrapher in the circle of Şeyh Hamdullah, and he illuminated one of these himself.[97] A feature of Şeyh Hamdullah's work that distinguished him from other calligraphers of the time was that he not only made copies of the Koran and the Anʿām surah but also copied literary and medical works, compilations of hadiths and other subjects in *naskh* script. The pages of these books are decorated with illumination. One of these is a copy of Omar Khayyam's Persian poems, written in *naskh* on paper measuring 25.5 x 16.5 cm and magnificently illuminated. This manuscript is stamped with the almond-shaped seal of Bayezid II (fig. 19).[98] Another famous poet who wrote in Persian was ʿAbd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), who was active in Herat during the Timurid period. His poetry was admired at the Ottoman palace and in elite



19

19. Poems by Omar Khayyam written by the calligrapher Hamdullah Şeyhzade (Şeyh Hamdullah). ca. 1480. Istanbul palace art studio. Topkapı Palace Library, MR.541. fols. 1v-2r. 27 x 18 cm.

circles, and the royal libraries in Istanbul contain a large collection of illustrated and illuminated copies of his works. As already mentioned above, Bayezid's younger brother Cem Sultan owned an illustrated and illuminated copy of his *Muʿammiyāt*. The earliest copies of Jami's *Dīwān* that are illustrated with miniature paintings and illuminated copies of his *Külliyāt* or collected works were acquired for the Topkapı Saray book treasury during the poet's lifetime, and one of these was owned by Bayezid II's son Ahmed (d. 1513).[99] Şeyh Hamdullah made a copy of his poems in *nastaʿlīq* script in Shaʿbān 904 (March-April 1499).[100] In this way Şeyh Hamdullah proved that a skilled Koran calligrapher who opened the way to other Turkish colleagues could write in a range of different script styles.

Esmail-Pour Qouchani, "Les gloses marginales et le fālnāma du Coran de Gwalior: témoignages des usages multiples du Coran dans l'Inde des Sultanats," in *Le coran de Gwalior. Polysémie d'un manuscrit à peintures,* eds. Éloise Brac de la Perrière and Monique Burési (Paris: Boccard, 2016), 85-110. One of the Delhi Sultanate period Korans with a divination text at the end is stamped with the seal of Sultan Bayezid II. The exceptional leather binding is as fine as those produced by the renowned binder Ahmed, who was active during Bayezid's reign: Rettig, "A 'Timurid-like Response to the Qur'an of Gwalior?," 191-205. This royal manuscript probably arrived at Topkapı Saray in the late 15th century, was repaired and bound in leather by a palace binder. On Indian-Ottoman relations in the 15th century: Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 42-43. A probate register dated 1917 records the sale of "a large illuminated Koran made in India" for the price of 24,200 piasters. İsmail Erünsal, *Osmanlılarda Sahaflık ve Sahaflar* (Istanbul: Timaş, 2013), 450. The Indian Koran is one of those in collections outside Turkey and may be that in the Walters Art Museum.

95 Prose: Istanbul University Library, A.6662; verse: Topkapı Palace Library,A.5, EH.71; Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.402.

96 Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 46; Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 96-104.

97 TS EH. 320, 321: Tanındı, "Arts of the Book: The Illustrated, " 217-18.

98 Atbaş, "Artistic Aspects," 182.

99 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book: The Illustrated," 226-27.

100 Serin, *Hat Sanatı,* 208.

A work that documents Şeyh Hamdullah's mastery of script styles is his famous *aqlām-i sitta*, in which he gives examples of six script styles: *thuluth, tawqīʿ, naskh, muḥaqqaq, rayḥānī* and *riqāʿ*. This work is designed in the form of a scroll (fig. 20).[101] As I have explained above, the influence of *nastaʿlīq*, which was the script style favoured particularly for works of literature by calligraphers who migrated from Iran, was also used by the calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah. He added lines of poetry in *nastaʿlīq* by renowned poets who wrote in Persian at the end of his *aqlām-i sitta* scroll, which thereby gives examples illustrating a full range of calligraphic script styles for his followers.

Şeyh Hamdullah's circle included other calligraphers who copied the Koran. One of these was the aforementioned Fazlullah b. Veli, who was also known as Ibn al-ʿArab. He completed a Koran on 10 Muḥarram 899 (22 October 1493) and illuminated this manuscript.[102] Another of the Koran calligraphers in Şeyh Hamdullah's circle was Mehmed b. Celaleddin al-Amasi, who wrote a Koran in *naskhī* on paper measuring 38.8 x 26.6 cm in 906 (1500-01). The delightful decoration on the pages of this manuscript must be the work of a follower of the illuminator Hasan[103] and the black leather binding can be attributed to the binder Ahmed. Derviş Hasan b. İlyas al-Bursevi was also skilled at writing in different script styles. In 914 (1508) he copied a Koran in *medīne-i Kosṭanṭiniyye* (the city of Constantinople) in *muḥaqqaq*, a script style not traditionally used for Ottoman Korans at that period. It is written in black ink, on paper measuring 48.5 x 35 cm, and the first page is illuminated. Sultan Bayezid's almond-shaped seal is stamped on the first and last pages.[104] The maroon leather binding is probably the work of the master binder Ahmed.

Literary works are also among the manuscripts produced by artists of the book at this period. The calligrapher Sultan Ahmed al-Herevi, who had migrated from Herat, made a copy of the *Khamsa-i Muḥayyira* in *nastaʿlīq* script in 913 (1507-08).[105] The first page is decorated with a

101 Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 120-26.

102 J. M. Rogers, *Empire of the Sultan. Ottoman Art from the Collection of Nasser D. Khalili* (London: The Nour Foundation and Azimuth Editions Limited, 1995), 48-49. Of the five Korans written by Şeyh Hamdullah, two (Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T.402, Topkapı Palace Library, EH.72) must have been decorated by the illuminator Fazlullah.

103 Hannover Kestner-Museum. 4852: *Türkische Kunst und Kultur aus osmanischer Zeit* (Frankfurt-Essen: Verlag Aurel Bongers Rechlinghausen, 1985), 84, 90.

104 Derman, *Doksandokuz İstanbul Mushafı,* 38-39. [Derman , *Ninety-Nine Qur'an*, 38-39.]

105 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book: The Illustrated," 232-33. For other works by this calligrapher: Simon Rettig, "Regarding the East: Notes on Artists of the Book from Iran in Late Fifteenth-Century Istanbul," in *Zeren Tanındı Armağanı: İslam Dünyasında Kitap Sanatı ve Kültürü / Zeren Tanındı Festschrift: Art and Culture of Books in the Islamic World*, eds Aslıhan Erkmen and Şebnem Tamcan Parladır (Istanbul: Lale Yayıncılık, 2022), 489-501.

20

20. Scroll consisting of examples of seven script styles written by Şeyh Hamdullah. ca. 1500. Istanbul palace art studio. Topkapı Palace Library, EH.2086. 30 x 190 cm.

full-page illuminated panel by a master artist, possibly Hasan, who decorated the pages of two Korans written by Şeyh Hamdullah. The outer cover is made of black leather with tooled decoration and the doublures of cherry-coloured leather have gilded embossed decoration. The outstanding technical skill exhibited by this binding suggests that it must be the work of the binder Ahmed.

Documents and seal impressions in manuscripts demonstrate that Sultan Bayezid II's sons and one of his grandsons were also book collectors.[106] Şehzade Korkut (d. 1513) was sufficiently skilled at calligraphy to copy a

106 Atbaş, "Artistic Aspects," 202.

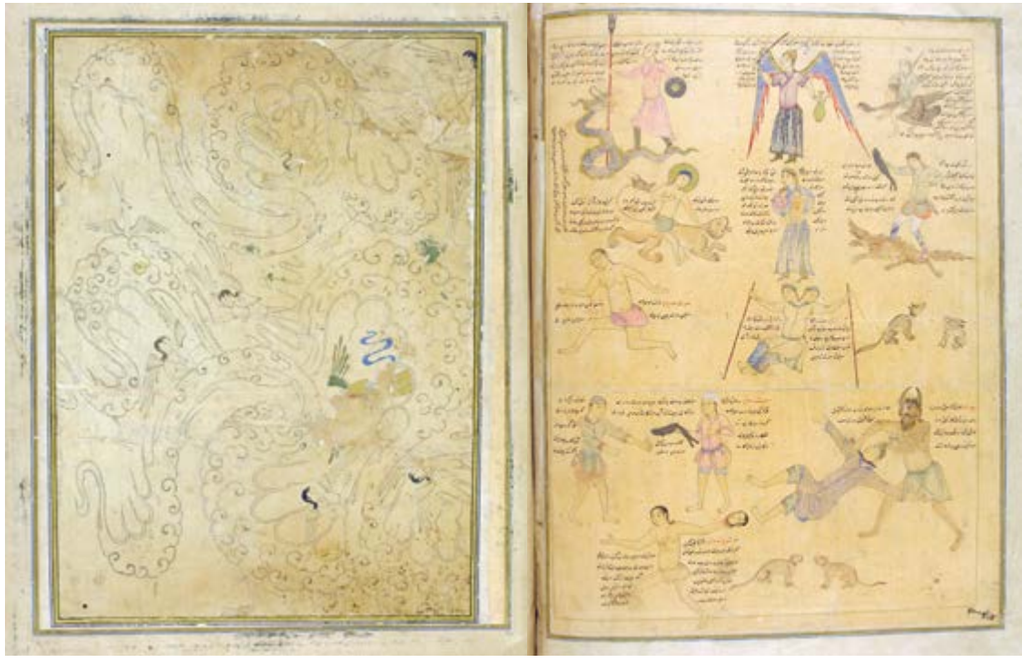
Koran himself. Bayezid gave his son Şehzade Ahmed (d. 1513) books by renowned Persian language poets. Ahmed was also interested in illustrated books by non-Muslims. Ahmed's son ʿAlaeddin (d. 1513) owned an illuminated and exquisitely illustrated copy of the *ʿAjā'ib al-Makhluqāt* and stamped his personal seal, which is not found in any other manuscripts, on the first page of this book.[107]

Revealing the wealth of decorated paper works in Topkapı Saray book treasury: Librarian ʿAtufi's catalogue

When Sultan Bayezid died in 1512, Topkapı Saray book treasury contained a large number of manuscripts with decorated pages, as shown by the books mentioned above. A catalogue of the works in the palace book treasury reveals the extent of this collection, both in numbers and wide range of content. This document recording the books in the treasury is a register that has been the subject of a comprehensive publication in recent years.[108] The scholar and *ḥāfiẓ-ı kütüb* (palace librarian) Hayreddin Hızır b. Mahmud ibn ʿÖmer al-ʿAtufi (d. 1541) was charged with cataloguing the books by Sultan Bayezid II and he carried out this work during the years 1502-1504. Altogether the catalogue records 5700 volumes, among which some have beautifully decorated pages.[109] When we examine the books recorded in ʿAtufi's catalogue, in which he classifies them by subject, we find that most of them are still in Istanbul's royal manuscript libraries, and a few are now in libraries in outside Turkey. So it is evident that apart from Istanbul there was no library of well-preserved royal books of such artistic merit anywhere east of the Mediterranean before 1512.[110]

A large number of books listed in the catalogue are of artistic value. One of these can be regarded as a document that greatly enhances knowledge of how loose sheets of decorated paper were kept and preserved. This is an album measuring 48 x 36.4 cm (fig. 21)[111] containing calligraphy, pictures and texts belonging to unfinished books on loose paper, dating from the 13th to the first half of the 15th century. Sultan Bayezid's almond-shaped seal has been stamped on the first and last pages of the album, and on the first page a note gives the title of the album as "*kebīrce muraqqaʿ* (quite large album) meaning *sefīne-i kebīr* (large album)". ʿAtufi's library register records a manuscript with this title.[112] My study of the album in the light of the latest data led to my concluding that ʿAtufi's classification and catalogue did not only cover the books in the Imperial Treasury but also loose decorated paper. Some of the decorated sheets of paper in the album consists of works left over from manuscript projects undertaken by the palace art studio; some of studies made either for a book on a wide range of sub-

21



21. Amuletic paintings and flying angels. Dated 1413, Isfahan. Timurid. From an album. Topkapı Palace Library, B.411, fols. 159v-160r. 48 x 36.4 cm. The album was designed at the Ottoman palace art studio, before 1504.

107 Tanındı, "Arts of the Book: The Illustrated," 222-23.

108 Gülru Necipoğlu, Cemal Kafadar and Cornell H. Fleischer, eds. *Treasures of Knowledge: An Inventory of the Ottoman Palace Library (1502/03–1503/04)*, 2 vols (Leiden and Boston, 2019).

109 Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 1: 1-77.

110 Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 1: 14-17.

111 Topkapı Palace Library, B.411: Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision,* 148-50. For a detailed catalogue of this album: Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'," 89-643. For an evaluation of the album: David Roxburgh, *The Persian Album: 1400-1600. From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 85-121.

112 Gülru Necipoğlu was the first to point out the relationship between ʿAtufi's library register and the notes on the first page of B.411. She established that these notes had been written at the beginning of the album by ʿAtufi before he recorded it in the register, so proving that the album was in the palace library during the years 1502-04: Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 1021, 1054-55.

jects or for a *majmūʿa* (miscellany); and some of special works produced by artists as gifts for their patrons. Like manuscripts, loose decorated paper works must have been brought to the palace from the lands of the eastern Mediterranean before 1500, particularly by diplomats from regions ruled by the Timurids, Turkmens and Shirvanshahs, but also by princes, poets, writers, artists and scholars who took refuge at the Ottoman court. Probably these loose paper works were stored in chests in the Imperial Treasury at Topkapı Saray; later classified by ʿAtufi and his team with the help of people who knew about the origin of these art works; then after the task of cataloguing had been completed, some of them were arranged and pasted onto both sides of large sheets of paper.[113] These pages were then sewn together to form a large album called *sefīne* or *muraqqaʿ*, as noted on the first page, and finally bound.[114] The almond-shaped seal of Bayezid II was stamped in the album, which was recorded in ʿAtufi's catalogue.

113 Among the decorated paper in B.411, the most outstanding is the 22 page illustrated text of a *majmūʿa* (fols. 137a-166a) written in Isfahan on paper measuring 35.3 x 25 cm for the Timurid prince Iskandar in 813 (1413). The page size of this valuable text is 48 x 36 cm, so it is highly probable that the album was produced as a means of preserving this text. Paper was cut to the size of the text pages and broad ruled gilded borders painted around the area where the pages of the text would be pasted into the album. The loose decorated sheets of paper were probably in the same place as the 22 pages of text. With a few exceptions these were carefully pasted in place so as not to overlap the border. In this way a 168-page album, which is still extant, was created.

114 The medallion and cornerpieces on the chestnut brown leather covers of the album's binding with flap are filled with tooled and stamped decoration, while the medallion and cornerpieces on the red leather doublures are filled with stamped and gilded decoration on a blue ground. The style of this binding decoration is typical of Aqqoyunlu Turkmen bindings dating from around 1470. The inscription in *thuluth* script on the fore-edge flap of the binding was first correctly read by David Roxburgh and from this we know that the binding was made for the Shirvanshah sultan Farrukh Yasar (r. 1465-1500). Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'," 489-91. The Timurid ruler Abu Saʿid (r. 1451-69), who invaded Azerbaijan, was taken prisoner by Farrukh Yasar and later killed. Farrukh Yasar established close relations with the Qaraqoyunlu Turkmens, who lived in the same region, but later allied and intermarried with the Aqqoyunlu Turkmens who brought the Qaraqoyunlu state to an end. He sent a diplomatic delegation with gifts to the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II and corresponded with Bayezid II: Elnur İsmayilov, "XIV-XV. yüzyıllarda Şirvanşahlar Devleti (Derbendîler Hanedânı)" (MA thesis, Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi, 2016). Although there are few surviving examples of manuscripts with decorated pages, these serve to demonstrate the interest in these manuscripts by Shirvanshah rulers from the second half of the 14th century: Çağman and Tanındı, "Selections from Jalayirid Books," 226-27; Mohammedinezhad, "Akkoyunlu Türkmen,"185-90. From this binding and a small number of illuminated manuscripts produced in Shirvan, it is evident that political relations between Farrukh Yasar and the Timurid, Turkmen and Ottoman states, which produced royal books, led to reciprocal influence in the field of art. In my view the binding of B.411 originally belonged to another book produced for Farrukh Yasar and sent as a gift to the Ottomans. Either because it was the right size for this album or for some other reason, the binding must have been removed from the original book around 1500 or later and used to bind album B.411 after the folios had been sewn together and formed into a book.

The book collection inherited by Sultan Selim I (r. 1512-20) is preserved and enlarged

Selim was born in Amasya (1470?), where his father Bayezid II lived for twenty-seven years. He lived with his father in the rich cultural environment of this city for nearly fifteen years, during which time he became acquainted with highly cultured members of the elite, including poets and artists who were familiar with the Timurid, Turkmen and Mamluk courts. He must have listened to their first-hand accounts of the political situation in regions to the east and west of the Ottoman Empire. Shortly after his father succeeded to the throne in 1481 and moved to Istanbul, Selim was appointed as governor of the sub-province of Trabzon, a major port on the eastern Black Sea coast. When Selim succeeded his father in 1512 he was forty-two years of age and from an early age had been closely informed about the political situation in the neighbouring lands to the east and southeast of Anatolia, beginning with his boyhood in Amasya and then his decades as governor in Trabzon, close to the border with Iran. In 1514 he defeated Shah Ismail at the Battle of Çaldıran and captured the Safavid capital city Tabriz, then quickly went on to conquer the Mamluks in 1517. Shah Ismail had gathered the moveable cultural treasuries of the Shirvanshah, Qaraqoyunlu, Aqqoyunlu and Timurid palaces at the Hasht Behesht Palace in Tabriz. After Selim's army entered Tabriz in 1514, he sent the artists employed at Hasht Behesht Palace together with their families and moveable works of art to Amasya, and from there to Istanbul in 1515.[115] Sultan Selim was informed about the book treasuries of the bibliophile Mamluk sultans and emirs, and had their moveable art works also sent to Istanbul.[116]

In this way Sultan Selim I expanded the book collection that he had inherited from his father Bayezid II with book collections from the Safavid capital Tabriz in 1514 and those from the Mamluk lands in 1517. When Selim conquered Tabriz, the artists working at the palace art studio of Shah Ismail and artists from Khorasan who had earlier been brought from Herat by Shah Ismail, together with their families were sent to Istanbul in 1515, along with Badiʿ al-Zaman Mirza, son of the last Timurid sultan Husayn Bayqara, who was in Tabriz.[117] Among the precious objects taken to Istanbul from Shah

115 Murat Uluskan, "Ehl-i Hıref Maaş Defterine Kayıtlı Tabrizli Sanatkârlar," *Belleten* 85 (2021), 855.

116 Serpil Bağcı and Zeynep Yürekli, "Book-Picking in a Conquered Citadel," (forthcoming).

117 Çağman, "The Miniatures of the *Divan-ı Hüseyni*," 242; Bağcı et al. *Osmanlı Resim,* 56-67. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting*, 57-69.]

Ismail's Hasht Behesht Palace in Tabriz were illuminated manuscripts and the treasury of Najm al-Din Masʿud, the shah's deputy.[118] The master calligraphers, binders, painters and illuminators who were taken to Istanbul, were employed at the art studio at Topkapı Saray, where they worked alongside other artists, some local and others who had migrated in previous years. This collaboration led to the creation of entirely new styles. Among these artists was the calligrapher ʿAbd al-Wahid, a master of *nastaʿlīq* script, and the painter ʿAbd al-Ghani.[119] The calligrapher ʿAbd al-Wahid made a copy of the *Dīwān* of the Iranian poet Amir Shahi soon after arriving at the palace studio in Istanbul, and this manuscript was illuminated and illustrated by the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani, who also painted the gold decoration in the margins. ʿAbd al-Ghani must also have made the lacquer binding decorated with a picture of the Ottoman sultan and his retinue for this manuscript.[120] Another copy of Shahi's *Dīwān* was written by the famous calligrapher Shaykh Mahmud, who was employed by the Qaraqoyunlu prince Pir Budaq (d. 1468) in Shiraz in 864 (1459-60). This copy is written in *nastaʿlīq* script on paper measuring 19.6 x 11.6 cm[121] and decorated by a master illuminator with a frontispiece and panel on the first page of text. The leather binding is the work of a master binder, with stamped motifs on the cover and openwork decoration on the doublures. The name of the book's owner, Sultan Selim b. Bayezid Han, is written on the first page. Another copy of the poet Shahi's *Dīwān*, written in the year 865 (1461) in *nastaʿlīq* by Sultan ʿAli, is found in a *majmūʿa* that was probably copied in Baghdad during the Qaraqoyunlu period. This *majmūʿa*, which is illuminated and in its original leather binding, was also owned by Selim I, as shown by the almond-shaped seal on one of the first pages of the manuscript.[122]

118 Genç, "From Tabriz to Istanbul," 272. The inadequate descriptions of the physical characteristics of the books listed make it difficult to identify them with illuminated manuscripts in Turkish libraries.

119 Genç, "From Tabriz to Istanbul," 268; Uluskan, "Ehl-i Hıref," 864-65.

120 Dorethea Duda, *Die illuminierten Handschriften und Inkunabeln der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Islamische Handschriften I. Persische Handschriften* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1983), 185-88. The colophon of the book gives the name of the calligrapher but not the date when the text was copied. Below the picture on fol.1v is an annotation explaining that the marginal illumination and illustrations are the work of ʿAbd al-Ghani. It is unusual for the names of artists and illuminators to be written on their work or in the margin.

121 Ahmet Ateş, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Farsça Manzum Eserler. I (Üniversite ve Nuruosmaniye Kütüphaneleri)*, (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1968), 358-59, cat. 541.

122 Ateş, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde*, 359, cat. 542. Another copy of Shahi's *Dīwān* was copied in 934 (1528) by the calligrapher Shuja al-Farsi, who either alone or with his family had migrated from Iran during the reign of Selim I's son Süleyman I (r. 1520-66). The binding,

Two works by the renowned sufi writer in Persian, Farid al-Din ʿ Attar (d. 1229-30) the *Manṭiqu'ṭ-ṭayr* and *Tadhkiratu'l-Awliyā* were popular at the Timurid, Turkmen and Ottoman palaces in the 15th century, and illuminated copies of these include exquisite examples recorded in the catalogue of Bayezid II's book treasury. Sultan Selim owned a copy of the *Tadhkiratu'l-Awliyā* written by the calligrapher Sayyidi Ahmad al-Murshidi that was probably produced around 1470 in Shiraz during the early Aqqoyunlu Turkmen period. This manuscript has a superb leather binding by a master binder.[123] Selim's almond-shaped seal is stamped on the first and last pages of this book, and on the first page are two other seals beneath that of Selim. The seal in the centre belongs to Ughurlu Mehmed (d. 1477), son of the Aqqoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan. Mehmed had taken refuge at the court of Selim's grandfather, the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II, and married Mehmed's daughter, Selim's aunt. Consequently Selim inherited this manuscript from his aunt. The third seal is that of İbrahim Pasha (d. 1536), who served as first vezir to Selim's son Süleyman (r. 1520-66). This exquisite manuscript changed hands through members of the Ottoman dynasty until eventually being taken to the book treasury at Topkapı Saray. This small piece of information is one of those that documents the interest felt by members of the Ottoman royal family in the work of poets past and present, and particularly in manuscript copies with decorated pages. Undoubtedly the most fascinating example of poetry books bearing Sultan Selim's almond-shaped seal impression is a copy of Katibi's *gazel*s written by the calligrapher Sultan ʿAli al-Mashadi in Herat in 880 (1475-76).[124] Measuring 16.5 x 11 cm, this lovely illuminated manuscript has a note on the first page that makes it stand out from other examples. The note explains that the owner of the book was the Timurid prince Badiʿ al-Zaman Mirza, who

illuminations, illustrations and decorations in the margins must be the work of the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani from Tabriz or one of his followers: Zeren Tanındı,"Rugani Türk Kitap Kaplarının Erken Örnekleri," *Kemal Çığ'a Armağan* (Istanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 1984), 228, 242-43; Bağcı et al. *Osmanlı Resim,* 59-60. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting,* 61]. Shahi of Sabzvar (d. 1453) was among the most admired poets at the Timurid, Turkmen and Ottoman courts throughout the 15th century and illuminated and illustrated copies of his works were produced.

123 Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya 3133. Unpublished. The binding of this manuscript must be the work of the binder Ghiyath al-Din al-Isfahani: Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding,* 182-83.

124 Paris BNF. Suppl. Persan 1176: Francis Richard, *Splendours Persanes. Manuscrits du XII au XVII siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1997), 98/52. Katibi of Nishapur (d. 1435) was another writer who was admired at the Timurid, Turkmen and Ottoman courts throughout the second half of the 15th century, and illustrated and illuminated copies of his works were produced.

was brought to Istanbul from Tabriz by Sultan Selim. This manuscript is another rare work of art that demonstrates how royal books changed hands amongst members of different dynasties.

The first illustrated copy of ʿAttar's *Manṭiquṭ-ṭayr* that was produced at the Ottoman palace art studio is dated 15 Muḥarram 921 (2 March 1515). The pages measure 22 x 12 cm and the margins are ornamented with delightful gilded floral designs. The illustrations each cover two pages of an open spread, and the *ʿunwān* illuminated panel on the first page of text is the work of a master illuminator. However, the binding is not original and must date from the early 20th century. The illumination, marginal decoration and style of the illustrations all demonstrate that these are the work of the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani, who decorated the abovementioned copy of Shahi's *Dīwān*.[125]

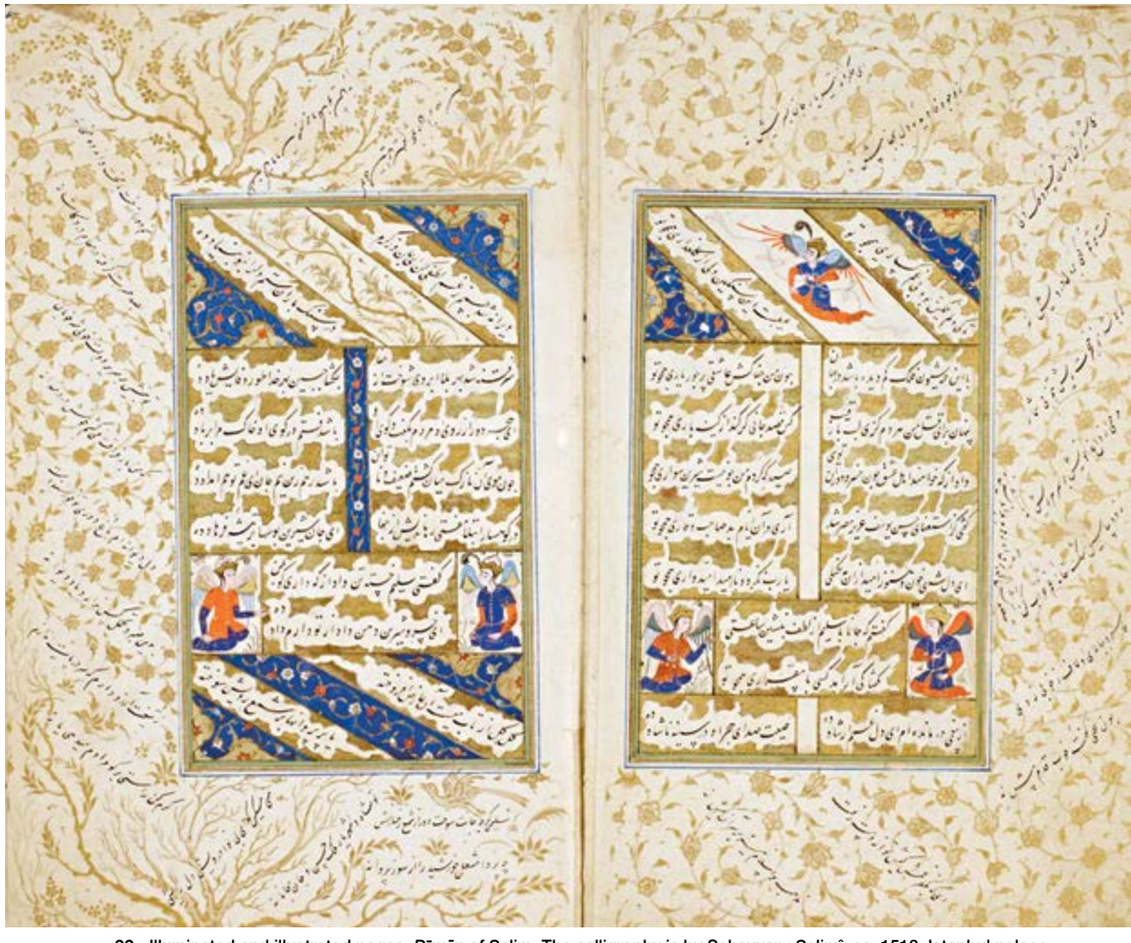
Sultan Selim owned illuminated copies of works by famous poets who wrote in Persian and he himself wrote Persian poetry that was compiled into a *Dīwān,* whose fine copy was written in *nastaʿlīq* by the calligrapher Şehsuvar.[126] The illumination, illustrations and gilded marginal decoration consisting of floral and zoological motifs that ornament this poetry book by Sultan Selim are the work of a master artist. One of the most striking aspects of the decoration is the figures of *perī* (fairies) seated or flying, dressed in colourful clothes, with coronets on their heads, painted in small panels inserted between the lines. In his poetry Selim frequently likened his beloved to a *perī*, which explains why the artist included so many depictions of *perī*s in his decoration of the manuscript (fig. 22). On the last page of the book is an impression of Selim I's almond-shaped seal, which indicates that the manuscript was completed and presented to him around 1519, before his death in 1520. Another manuscript by the scribe Şehsuvar has survived: a copy of the *Dīwān* of the Timurid poet Jami written on paper sprinkled with large gold flecks, and with an illuminated frontispiece by a skilled illuminator.[127] Three *quṭʿa*, written by Şehsuvar in *nastaʿlīq* script, one of which was written

125 Bağcı et al. *Osmanlı Resim,* 58. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting,* 59.] The binding is not original.

126 Bağcı et al. *Osmanlı Resim,* 61-62. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting,* 63-64.]

127 Ateş, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde*, 431, cat. 624. The style of illumination in this manuscript suggests that the scribe Şehsuvar worked in Tabriz during the Aqqoyunlu Turkmen period and that when the Safavid ruler Shah Ismail conquered the Aqqoyunlus and captured Tabriz, he continued to work for the Safavids in the same studio until 1515, when Sultan Selim took Tabriz, and that he then came to Istanbul. However, his name is not on the list of calligraphers who were brought from Tabriz. Therefore I assume that either he was listed under a different name or he arrived in the Ottoman Empire before 1515.

22



22. Illuminated and illustrated pages. *Dīwān* of Selim. The calligraphy is by Şehsuvar-ı Selimî, ca. 1519. Istanbul palace art studio. Istanbul University Library, F.1330, fols. 60v-61r. 19.5 x 11 cm.

23. Loose decorated pages from an album. The miniature paintings ca. 1460, Qaraqoyunlu Turkmen, Baghdad. The calligraphies are Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu Turkmen, ca. 1460 and 1480. Baghdad, Shiraz, Tabriz. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2160. fols. 59v, 62r. 50.7 x 34.7 cm. Album designed at the Ottoman palace art studio, 1515-1520.

in Tabriz, are pasted into two palace albums.[128] It is evident from their style that the illuminated decoration and illustrations of the poetry book by Sultan Selim were the work of the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani, who decorated the abovementioned *Dīwān* by Shahi.[129]

The oval seal of Sultan Selim I is stamped in an album composed of loose decorated paper in the Topkapı Saray book treasury, demonstrating that the work of classifying loose paper works of art continued during the reign of the new sultan. As in the abovementioned palace album stamped with the seal of Bayezid II, this album also contains calligraphy and pictures on loose sheets of paper in various sizes that have been pasted onto the front and back of large sheets of paper; around which borders have been added before binding the pages into an album.[130] None of the loose paper works in Selim I's album date from later than 1512 and none of them are of Ottoman origin. The majority of these paper works of art pasted onto the album pages were produced in south-eastern Anatolia, Azerbaijan, southern Iraq and Iran during the Qaraqoyunlu and Aqqoyunlu Turkmen periods and consist of works produced in the palace studios during the second half of the 15th century that were not used in manuscripts and individual works by palace artists; while others are loose works of a royal character produced at the Ilkhanid, Jalayirid and Timurid palace studios (fig. 23). This album demonstrates that the task of organising and classifying loose paper works, which had begun during the reign of Bayezid II, continued during the early 16th century. Codicological examination of the palace albums shows that this classification of decorated paper did not end during that period, but continued for a considerable time.[131]

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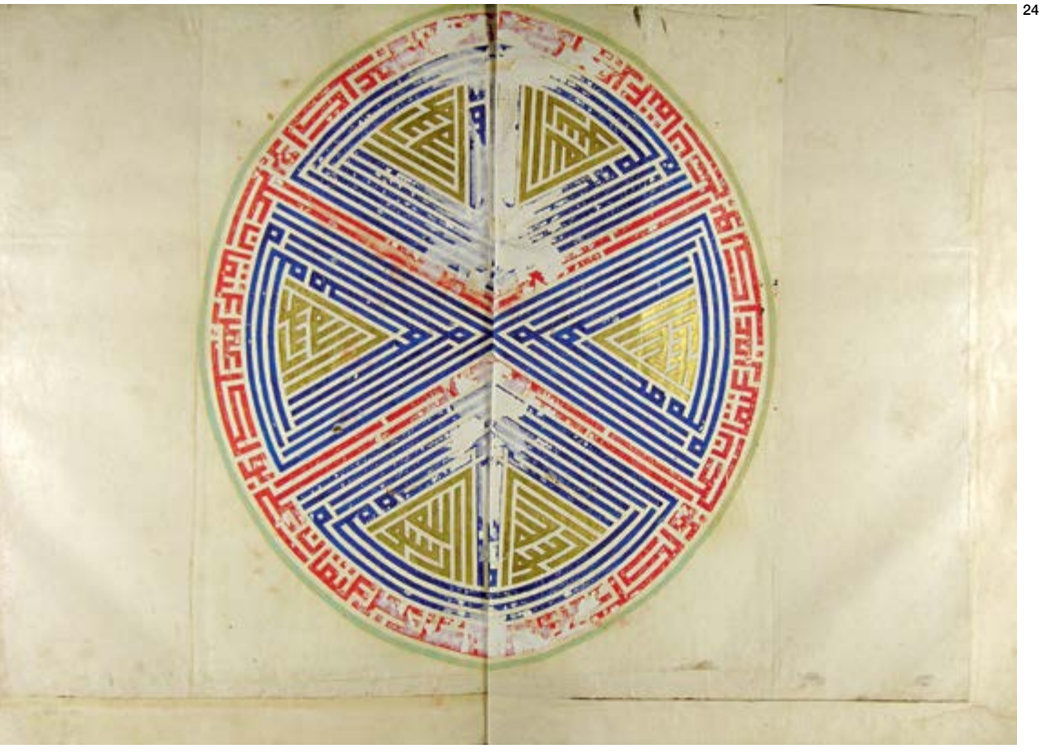
128 Topkapı Palace Library, H.2160, fols. 40v, 65r; Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 174v.

129 The painting style of the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani and his apprentices continued to be influential through the first half of the 16th century, particularly in illustrations of literary works. The fact that pictures in sixteen books and loose paper works in two albums are in the style of the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani or his followers, and that the texts of illustrated books are written in the *nastaʿlīq* script, demonstrate that master artists from Tabriz played an important role in the emergence and burgeoning of Ottoman miniature painting. Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim,* 98-99, 105-5. [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting,* 100-1, 106-7.] A document dated 1555-56 lists the artist ʿAbd al-Ghani among the illuminators who decorated copies of the Koran for Süleymaniye Mosque, so evidently he was also a master illuminator: Esin Atıl, *The Age of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent,* (Washington, D.C. and New York: National Gallery of Art and Harry N. Abrams, 1987), 291.

130 Topkapı Palace Library, H.2160, fols.1a, 90b. For the latest studies of this album: Necipoğlu, "Persianate Images," 532-33; Gülru Necipoğlu, "The Composition and Compilation of Two Saray Albums Reconsidered in Light of 'Frankish' Images," Topkapı Albums (H.2153 and 2160), forthcoming. ["İki Saray Albümünün Tasarımına ve Derlenmesine "Frenk" Üslubu Işığında Yeniden Bakmak," Topkapı Albümleri (H.2153 ve H.2160), basılacak].

131 The oval seal of Selim I is stamped in one other Topkapı album: Topkapı Palace Library, H.2152, fol.3a: For a detailed catalogue of album number H.2152: Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'," 644-770, and for an evaluation of the album: Roxburgh, *The Persian Album,*



24

24. The names of God and the four caliphs written in *kūfic* script. From an album dating from ca. 1400, Timurid or Jalayirid. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2152, fols. 34v-35r. 68 x 51 cm. Album designed at the Ottoman palace art studio, 16th century.

According to my research findings, the Imperial Treasury at Topkapı Saray contained more than four thousand art works on loose paper as well as nearly six thousand manuscripts in the early 16th century. These consisted of calligraphic works and paintings and drawings on paper varying in size from 2 x 3 cm to 40 x 30cm (figs. 5, 11a, 17b, 23, 24-26). Additionally there were some paintings on fabric and some pictures and calligraphy that had been cut from scrolls and pasted onto large sheets of paper. Works of art on loose paper dating from the period between the second half of the 13th century and early 16th century were largely produced in a region stretching from China to Central Asia, Caucasia and Mesopotamia. There are a few woodcuts produced in China before the 15th century and some 15th-century Italian prints produced using various techniques (fig. 26). Just five pictures in one of the albums were produced in the Ottoman palace studio around 1480.[132]

Examination of the books listed in ʿAtufi's catalogue that are in royal libraries in Istanbul and collections outside Turkey shows that books and decorated loose papers produced at the leading palace studios in the Islamic world entered Topkapı Saray book treasury in and before 1515. We know that the sultan and palace dignitaries looked at these works of art from time to time and sometimes borrowed them.[133] There can be no doubt that the people in charge of art production at the palace were aware of the importance of this collection. There is also evidence that works of art in the book

85-121. The oval seal of Selim I is stamped on a small empty rectangular piece of paper pasted to the lower edge of a calligraphic composition in this album and above is a second calligraphic composition. This placing of the seal does not show that the album was designed during the reign of Selim I, but instead that the stamped paper was found loose and probably pasted into the album not later than the 16th century. The seal of the sultan or other person who owned a valuable book was traditionally stamped on the first page and generally also on the last page. For the first comprehensive study of Topkapı albums H.2153 and H.2160: Ernst J. Grube, "The Problem of the Istanbul Album Paintings," *Islamic Art* 1 (1981), 1-30. The latest study, consisting of articles by a group of scholars and facsimiles of both albums, is about to be published: Topkapı Albums (H.2153 and H.2160). Another album consisting of loose decorated papers dating from the 15th century and earlier measures 39.5 x 29.5 cm. According to the inscription on a loose piece of paper pasted onto the first page the title of this album is the *Mecmūʿatü'l-ʿAcā'ib*. The decorated papers in the album include a large number of designs attributed to Baba Nakkaş, who has been discussed above. When this album was being compiled in the 16th century or later, the loose decorated papers were carelessly arranged on the album pages: Istanbul University Library, F.1423. Ünver, *Fatih Devri*; Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, 53. A collection of loose decorated papers, that were purchased in Istanbul by the German diplomat H. F. Diez before 1790 and date mainly from the 15th century and earlier, were pasted into an album page that is in Berlin (Nr.70: 46.1 x 34.7 cm; 71: 35.2 x 26.7 cm; 72: 34.1 x 29.2 cm; 73: 39.7 x 37.2 cm): Julia Gonnella et al. eds. *The Diez Albums*.

132 Grube, "The Problem of the Istanbul Album," figs. 27-30.

133 Necipoğlu, "The Spatial Organization," 30-31.

treasury were shown to master artists such as Şeyh Hamdullah who were employed at the palace art studio. Since copying the works of past master artists was a way of achieving mastery in various arts, calligraphers and artists engaged in copying.[134]

When the four palace albums composed of loose art works on paper that reached the Ottoman palace art studio are examined, it can be seen that Turkish calligraphers used loose paper calligraphy in different script styles written by master calligraphers as examples. Between the 16th and 20th centuries some calligraphers made copies of small works compiled in albums or large scale works intended for hanging on walls, but added their own interpretations to these copies (fig. 25).[135] As in the case of a picture copied by the Ottoman painter Nakşi Bey, it is clear that painters also made copies of pictures in these albums.[136]

An interesting point is that there were people able to classify the thousands of illuminated manuscripts and art works on loose sheets of pa-

134 Grube, "The Problem of the Istanbul Album," figs. 53-63, 83-86, 107-09; Zeren Tanındı, "Repetition of Illustrations in the Topkapı Palace and Diez Albums," in *The Diez Albums. Context and Contents*, eds. Julia Gonnella et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 163-93.

135 A beautiful interpretation of repeated calligraphic compositions is the work of the famous Turkish calligrapher Ahmed Karahisari (d. 1556). This calligraphic style is known as *musalsal basmala* (Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, 240). One of the earliest examples of the *musalsal basmala* style can be found among the loose papers in a palace album (Topkapı Palace Library, B.411, fol. 56v). Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'", 1088). A text written in Herat by the Timurid calligrapher Shams al-Din Baysunghuri in 837 (1433-34) begins with a *musalsal basmala*. For the design of adages written in the *kūfī*, *thuluth* and *muthennā* script styles on a loose sheet of paper around 1400 during the Timurid or Jalayirid eras and pasted onto a page in another album (Topkapı Palace Library, H.2152, fol. 7r): Roxburgh, "'Our Works Point to Us'", 669. From the first half of the 15th century onwards, these would be echoed in the work of Ottoman artists on tiles, plaster, wood and paper: Zeren Tanındı and Ayşe Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi Kitap Sanatları ve Hat Koleksiyonu* (Istanbul: Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi, 2012), 262, 286, 301, 342-44 [Zeren Tanındı and Ayşe Aldemir, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection of the Arts of the Book and Calligraphy* (Istanbul: Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi, 2012), 262, 286, 301, 342-44]; Lale Uluç, "The Perusal of the Topkapı Albums: A Story of Connoisseurship," in *The Diez Albums. Context and Contents*, eds. Julia Gonnella et al. (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016), 121-62; Tanındı, *Yazıda Ahenk and Renk,* 93-94, 608, 716 [Tanındı, *Harmony of Line and Color,* 93-94, 608, 716].

136 Grube, "The Problem of the Istanbul Album," figs. 83-86; Bağcı et al. *Osmanlı Resim,* 197-98 [Bağcı et al. *Ottoman Painting,* 209-11]. Transforming loose works of calligraphy, illumination and pictorial art by master artists into an album by arranging them on the pages and so creating a book of diverse masterpieces became widespread among the Ottomans, Safavids and Baburids from the 16th century onwards. Preparing such albums became a field of expertise and royal examples were among the finest examples of the arts of the book: Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*; Elaine Wright, *Muraqqa'. Imperial Muhgal Albums from the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin* (Alexandria, VA: Art Service International, 2018); Emine Fetvacı, *The Album of the World Emperor. Cross Cultural Collecting and the Art of Album-Making in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

25

25. Adages and sacred names written on loose papers in the *musanna*, *kūfic* and *thulth* script styles. From an album. ca. 1400, Jalayirid or Timurid. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2152, fol. 7r. 68 x 51 cm. Album designed at the Ottoman palace art studio, 16th century.

26

26. Album page composed of loose papers with calligraphies and an engraving. An Italian engraving dating from the 15th century and writing by Aqqoyunlu Turkmen calligraphers ca. 1480. Topkapı Palace Library, H.2153, fol. 78v. 50.8 x 33.8 cm. Album designed at the Ottoman palace art studio, 16th century.

per produced at various art studios in the eastern Mediterranean region at the Ottoman palace prior to 1520. The works that these individuals classified included pictures and calligraphy on tiny pieces of paper, which they preserved by pasting them into albums. They showed meticulous care in arranging pictures bearing the signature of the same artist or others that were unsigned but characterised by the same style on the same pages, and similar care was taken with the classification of examples of calligraphy; showing that this work was carried out by knowledgeable people. It is possible that artists from regions under Timurid or Turkmen rule who were working in Istanbul were employed in this classification work. Therefore it can be assumed the attribution signatures on some pictures must have been written by people familiar with the style of particular artists or who knew them through conversations about the artists whose signatures appear; and that some of these attributions were written when they were pasted into albums by these people, who were engaged in this palace classification project. Large numbers of decorated books and albums in Istanbul's manuscript libraries bear witness to the long history of collecting illuminated manuscripts at the Ottoman palace and are part of royal collections of rare and beautiful books that have survived to the present day.

Cross-Cultural Artistic Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean
A PIMo COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AROUND THE EXHIBITION TITLED "ŞEYH HAMDULLAH ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH" AT THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

Muhittin Serin

The Calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah: His Forerunners, Contemporaries and Followers

The Calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah's predecessors

The art of calligraphy is a shared cultural heritage of Muslim peoples in many different countries. With the birth of Islam and the emergence of a universal worldview, the Arabic writing system became an important part of this new civilisation and for centuries has been a powerful religious, cultural and artistic link between the Islamic countries.

The Prophet Muhammad, who was charged with teaching his followers the Holy Koran and the principles of Islam, endeavoured to spread reading and writing among the populace, eradicate ignorance and give advice. He declared, "God appointed me as a teacher" and set about institutionalising education in Medina.

In all his undertakings the Prophet Muhammad displayed his discernment and understanding, and this was true of his approach to writing. To ensure that the script would be pleasing to the eye he instructed his scribe, who wrote down the revelations, "Place raw silk fibre in the inkwell, cut the nib of the pen diagonally, write the first part of the *basmala* vertically, let the 'teeth' of the letter *sin* and the 'eye' of the letter *mim* be open, and endeavour to write the name Allah beautifully." In this way he pioneered in transforming writing into an art, giving his revelation scribes their first lessons in the aesthetics of calligraphy. When he declared "Bind knowledge with writing", he meant that it was important to record the divine revelations in writing so that knowledge of them would not be lost and they would be preserved, and that learning calligraphy was necessary as a way of enriching the cognitive and emotional world of human beings and a source of happiness. In addition, these words of Muhammad and the harmonious verses from the Koran that he recited inspired a love of art in the souls of people who were already sensitive to every form of music and poetry, and gave it guidance. Scribes devoted all their artistic abilities in the presence of the Prophet to write the words of God with meticulous care and love, in a script style that was first called *Mekki*, then *Medeni* and later took the name *kūfic*.

This torch of art lit by Muhammad, together with the scribes' knowledge and experience of art, were passed down from generation to generation, leading to new styles, schools and script types that were used for different purposes. The art of calligraphy inherited by the Ottomans after filtering through nearly eight centuries of Islamic civilisation achieved its final stage and golden age with the school of the Ottoman calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah.

Under the patronage of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs and the opportunities they provided, the *kūfic* and *mawzūn* scripts[1] that were widely used in daily life and official institutions underwent significant developments in terms of both the alphabet and spelling. Meanwhile harmonious, rhythmic and regularly proportioned script styles emerged, shaped by the fine artistic sense and genius of artists like Qutba al-Muharrir (d. 771), Ishak b. Hammad, who flourished during the caliphate of al-Mahdi Billah (d.775-785) and Ahwal al-Muharrir, who rose to fame during the reign of al-Ma'mūn (d. 813-833). In this way the art of calligraphy, which aroused such religious exhilaration through its use in the arts of the book and architecture, came into being as one of the foremost Islamic arts, which inspired and fulfilled the aesthetic feelings of Muslims.

The Baghdad Calligraphy School and its masters

Ibn Muqla and Ibn al-Bawwab

Radical innovations and developments in the art of calligraphy, such as the emergence of the *aqlām-i sitta* or "six scripts" (*tawqī', riqā', muhaqqaq, rayhān, thuluth, naskh*) and the formulation of their aesthetic rules, took place in Baghdad, capital of the Abbasid state.

Ibn Muqla (d. 940) and his younger brother Abu Abdullah Hasan b. 'Ali (d. 949)[2] are regarded as marking a turning point in the art of calligraphy. They selected the best of the *mawzūn* scripts and classified them; defined the principles of their geometric proportions and rules and so laid the ground and pioneered the birth of the *aqlām-i sitta* (also known as the *mansūb* scripts).[3]

1 *Mawzūn* scripts were a wide variety of script styles that emerged and named according to their fields of application, subjects and width of pen nib. These were known as the *asli* (original) and *mevzun* (measured, proportional) scripts: Muhittin Serin, *Hat Sanatı Tarihi Ekoller ve Takipçileri* (Istanbul: Kubbealtı Neşriyatı, 2019), I, 118.

2 İbnü'n-Nedim, *el-Fihrist*, ed. Eymen Fuad Seyyid (London: Müessetü'l-Furkan li't-Türasi'l-İslami, 2009), 16.

3 Müstakimzade Süleyman Sadeddin, *Tuhfe-i Hattatin*, ed. İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal (Istanbul, 1928), 428; Mustafa Āli Efendi, *Menāķıb-i Hünerverān*, ed. İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal (Istanbul, 1926), 22, 23; Nefeszade İbrahim, *Gülzar-ı Savab*, ed. Kilisli Muallim Rifat (Istanbul, 1938), 40; Suyolcuzade Mehmed Necib, *Devhatü'l-Küttab*, ed. Kilisli Muallim Rifat (Istanbul, 1942), 7.

Copyists working in libraries during the Abbasid period, when their collections of books were expanding—mainly as a result of the growing number of translations into Arabic and new books being written—developed *naskh*, one of the proportional scripts, for making copies of the Koran and other books (for the earliest known examples of *naskh* (see Köprülü Library no. 1507 and Reisülküttab Mustafa Efendi no. 908 in Istanbul). Later on *naskh* script divided into two styles known as *rayḥān* and *naskh*, to become the most widely used scripts for Korans and other books,[4] replacing *kūfic* in the fourth century AH (tenth century AD).

Ibn al-Bawwab (d. 1022),[5] who is regarded as the second great master calligrapher in the history of calligraphy, reduced the unknown number of script styles identified by Ibn Muqla to eight and defined their geometric proportions more exactly. He subjected these styles to further careful examination, refinement and selection, carrying out lasting innovations in the *aqlām-i sitta* and so establishing a new school. Calligraphers of Baghdad, Iran and Egypt followed in his footsteps for nearly three centuries, until the spread of the school of Yaqut (d.1298). Ibn al-Bawwab's treatise on the art of calligraphy entitled the *al-Qasīda al-Rā'iyya* was published in Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* and annotated by Ibn al-Wahid. Following in the footsteps of Ibn al-Bawwab, many other treatises on calligraphy were written, including that by Muhammad b. Hasan et-Tayyibī dated 1503 (Topkapı Palace Library, Koğuşlar, 882). Ibn al-Bawwab is known to have copied 64 Korans and of those identified as his work in museums and libraries today, the finest is that dated 1001 preserved in Dublin (Chester Beatty Library, 1431). The main text of this manuscript Koran is written in *rayḥān*, which was beginning to emerge as a new style at the time, while the *surah* headings and annotations are written in *tawqī'*. This manuscript is one of the most reliable examples of early period Koran copies that illustrate the development of *rayḥān* script and the established styles of writing Korans, and the style of Koran illumination, which is thought to be his own work. Blue triple dots mark the end of each verse and every five verses are marked by a drop motif representing the letter *hah*, whose gematrical value is five. Every ten verses are marked with two medallions representing *'ashr* (ten), either placed between the verses or sometimes in the margin.[6]

4 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 118-19.

5 Müstakimzade, *Tuḥfe,* 331; Kadı Ahmed b. Şerafeddin el-Kummi, *Gülistan-ı Hüner*, ed. Ahmed Hüseyni Hansari (Tahran, 1352), 18; Āli, *Menāķıb,* 17-23; Nefeszade, *Gülzar-ı Savab,* 43; Suyolcuzade, *Devhatü'l-Küttab,* 82.

6 al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al A'shā,* III, 12; D. S. Rice, *The Unique Ibn al-Bawwāb Manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library* (Dublin: Emery Walker Ltd., 1955).

The Yaqut School and its masters

Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi, known as *Qiblah al-Kuttāb* (Kaaba of Calligraphers), made very good use of the experience and knowledge of past masters in the art of calligraphy. He was an artistic genius who defined the classical rules of writing the "six scripts", so bringing about one of the most influential developments in the history of calligraphy. The six students whom he trained and his followers pioneered the formation of new schools over the next one and a half centuries. The Yaqut school was a rich source for the Egyptian school of calligraphy in the arts of the book, which carried calligraphy to its highest level in Cairo; for stylistic experimentation by members of the Ottoman calligraphic school in Istanbul and establishment of the Şeyh Hamdullah school; and for all the exuberant art movements in cities such as Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan and Herat in Iran during the Qaraqoyunlu, Aqqoyunlu, Jalayirid, Timurid and Safavid periods. The formation of a new school in calligraphy never occurred independently; each was rooted in traditional rules that lived on in successive schools, providing a thread of continuity. That is why traces of Ibn al-Bawwab can be found in Yaqut's style and of the Yaqut school in calligraphy by Şeyh Hamdullah.

Yaqut was enslaved in Anatolia at a young age and taken to Baghdad, where he was purchased by the last Abbasid caliph Musta'sım-Billāh, hence his cognomen al-Musta'sımi. As the caliph's protégé, he received an excellent education at the palace in the traditional subjects taught at the period. He became a fine scholar of the Arabic language and literature and was particularly interested in the art of calligraphy, which he studied under the famous musician Safi al-Din Abd al-Mu'min al-Urmawi and went on to display outstanding skill.[7] After completing the traditional course of study in calligraphy, Yaqut went on to make extensive study of the work of Ibn al-Bawwab and other masters and it was this that led to his true development. Inspired by their most beautifully formed letters, he fulfilled his own artistic powers and eventually became the founder of a new school of calligraphy.

In the Yaqut school, the angle of the pen nib was altered and dots made by the pen became the unit by which the aesthetic measures and proportions of each of the "six scripts" were defined: such as the widths and lengths of letters, the depths and widths of their curves and tails, the arrangement of lines, and spaces between letters and words. Yaqut was able to achieve these thanks in large measure to Caliph Musta'sim, who assisted and supported him in every way, encouraged him and frequently rewarded him with gifts. Yaqut became the caliph's closest companion and lived a life of ease at the palace.

The difference and superiority of the Yaqut style in comparison to that of the Ibn al-Bawwab school can be seen in all the script hands, but reached its classical form and beauty most particularly in the *muhaqqaq* and *rayḥān* scripts. Although the classical proportions of *thuluth* and *naskh* were defined by the Yaqut school, these scripts had yet to rise to a higher level and attain their golden age with the school of Şeyh Hamdullah.

Hard times awaited Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi in 1258 when Hülagu conquered Baghdad, but before long he had won the respect and support of the Ilkhanid governor of the city, Ala al-din Ata Malek al-Juwayni, and his younger brother Shams al-din al-Juwayni. The many years that followed were the most productive of his life; spent training pupils and writing albums of calligraphic compositions, single compositions consisting of short inscriptions, Korans and other books. Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi died at an advanced age in Baghdad in the year 698 (1298).[8]

Yaqut trained six pupils in each of the "six scripts" and so together with Yaqut himself they became known collectively as the *asātiza-i sab'a* or *ustādān-i sab'a* (the seven masters). Each of his pupils taught the Yaqut style in the Islamic lands and so the style spread far and wide. Foremost among these master calligraphers who represent the Baghdad school and whose works are found in museums and libraries around the world are as follows:

Ergun b. Abdullah al-Kamil (d. 1343), who specialised particularly in *muhaqqaq* script and copied 29 Korans. One of these, written in *rayḥān*, is in the Topkapı Palace Library (EH. no. 151), and another dating from the Ilkhanid period is in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (nr. 1498, 1494).[9]

Ahmed b. al-Suhrawardi specialised in *naskh* and the magnified form of script called *jalī*, and is known to have written 33 Korans. Three sections of one of these, written for the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan, are in the Topkapı Palace Library (EH. 247, 249, 250).[10]

Mübarekşah es-Süyufi was particularly skilled in *rayhān* script. One of his Korans is in the Topkapı Palace Library (Yeniler, 2468).[11]

Mubarak Shah b. Qutb specialised mainly in *naskh* and became a famous calligrapher. One of his works is preserved in the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul (Ayasofya, 4116).[12]

7 Suyolcuzade, *Devhatü'l-Küttab,* fol. 77v; Āli, *Menāḳıb,* 18; Kummi, *Gülistan-ı Hüner,* 19; Selâhaddin el-Müneccid, *Yâḳūt el-Müstaṣımî* (Beyrut, 1985) 7-11; Nihat Çetin, "Yâkūt", *İslam Ansiklopedisi,* XIII, 356; Müstakimzade, *Tuḥfe,* 575; Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 129.

8 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 131.

9 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 132.

10 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 132.

11 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 132.

12 Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, I, 132.

Abdullah b. Mahmud al-Sayrafi was particularly skilled in *thuluth* script. Korans by him are preserved in the Topkapı Palace Library (EH. 49; Yeniler, 5725) and in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (nr. 1468).[13]

Nasrullah al-Tabib specialised particularly in *muhaqqaq* script and wrote 25 Korans. Other examples of calligraphy by these masters are in the Topkapı Palace Library (H. 2153, 2310, III. Ahmed, 3663, Bağdat, 410, 411).[14]

In some sources on the subject of the art of calligraphy the names of three other pupils—Yahya Sufi, Yusuf b. Yahya al-Mashhadi and Seyyid Haydar Gundanuvis—are given, in addition to the six mentioned above.

Most of the works by Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi in museums and libraries around the world are Korans. He wrote so many, that he is often figuratively said to have written "1001 Korans". Among his complete Korans and Koran sections that have survived, 22 are in Topkapı Palace Library (see Karatay, I, 29-36), four in the Istanbul University Library (AY 6734, 6674, 6680, 1673), five in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts in Istanbul (nos. 28, 328, 505, 507, 525), and two in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (nr. 15.1500, 15.1452).

The school of Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi spread the tradition of writing short calligraphic compositions known as *qiṭ'a* and albums of calligraphic compositions known as *muraqqa'*. Works of this type by Yaqut are preserved in various museums and libraries. Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi was interested in poetry and literature, and he wrote compilations of selected extracts from poetic works (British Library, Add. 23475; Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya 3765, 4306, 3764), as well as compilations of hadiths and prayers (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, *Ad'iyāt al-ayyām al-Sab'a,* Ar. 4737) that are outstanding examples of his calligraphy.

One of the innovations in calligraphy made by Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi was an arrangement of the Koran's text known as the "Yaqut format". There are several variations of this format, but principally it consisted of writing one long line in *muhaqqaq* followed by some short lines in *rayḥān*, then a long line in *thuluth* followed by short lines in *naskh*, and the final line on each page in *muhaqqaq*. A variation on this layout is the use of *naskh* or *thuluth* only on one page, and *muhaqqaq* or *rayḥān* on the others.[15]

13 Serin, *Hat Sanatı,* I, 133.

14 Serin, *Hat Sanatı,* I, 133.

15 Serin, *Hat Sanatı,* I, 569.

The Egyptian Calligraphy School

Following the death of Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi, Baghdad gradually lost its importance as the centre of scholarship and art in the Islamic world, to be succeeded by Cairo.[16]

During the time of the Tulunid rulers of Egypt (868-905) Cairo rose to rival Baghdad in the fields of scholarship and art. Tabtab al-Muharrir, scribe to the Tulunid ruler Emir Khumaraway, was an outstanding calligrapher whose fame spread throughout the Islamic world.[17] Administrative and political relations that began with the Tulunids of Egypt led to close interaction between Arab and Central Asian Turkish culture and the acculturation that resulted continued into the twentieth century, with ever-closer ties. The Tulunids were succeeded as rulers of Egypt by the Fatimids and Ayyubids, and during these periods the art of calligraphy continued to flourish as it had in the past.[18] Adorning the madrasa and magnificent monuments of Cairo with *jalī kūfic* inscriptions reached its greatest brilliance in Islamic civilisation during the Mamluk period (1250-1517). Superb Korans of large dimensions that belonged to the Mamluk sultans and are preserved in the Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah in Cairo and in many European museums and libraries illustrate the heights achieved in the *aqlām-ı sitta*, illumination and binding.[19]

Surviving manuscripts, documents, inscriptions and Korans from the period preserved in museums and libraries demonstrate that until the second half of the fourteenth century Cairo was as illustrious as Baghdad had once been. The city's calligraphers produced work that played a pioneering, influential and central role in scholarship and art.

During this period scholars and artists developed new educational methods, particularly in teaching the art of calligraphy. These are described in works they wrote on the subject of calligraphy and its teaching methods, such as *al-'Ināyat al-Rabbāniyya fī Ṭarīqat al-Sha'bāniyya* by Şeyh Zayn al-din Sha'ban b. Muhammad al-Asari (d. 1424), *Minhāj al-Iṣāba* by Ebū Ali Muhammad b. Ahmed ez-Zeftāvī (d. 1402), who taught in Fustat, *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā* by Zeftavi's pupil al-Qalqashandi, *Tuhfatu Ūlī al-Albāb* by Abdurrahman b. Yusuf Ibn al-Saigh, and a treatise on calligraphy by Muhammad b.

16 Serin, Hat Sanatı, I, 569-74.

17 Ibn Khaldun, *Tercüme-i Mukaddime-i İbn Haldûn*, trans. Pîrîzâde Mehmed Sâhib Efendi (Istanbul, 1275/1858) II, 42.

18 al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al A'shā*, III,13.

19 David James, *Qur'ans of the Mamluks* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1988).

Hasan al-Tayyibi written in the school of Ibn al-Bawwab (Topkapı Palace Library, Koğuşlar, 882) – all of which show how the art of calligraphy developed both in theory and practice in Egypt.[20]

The Mamluk calligraphers of Egypt continued to follow the Baghdad school. Their lineage of masters begins with Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi, who taught al-Wali al-Ajami, who taught 'Afif, who taught his son Şeyh Imad al-din (regarded as the Ibn al-Bawwab of his time), who taught Shams al-din b. Abu Ruqayba (Rakibe), the market inspector of Fustat, who taught Ebu Ali Muhammad b. Ahmed al-Zaftawi.[21] After Nur al-din Wasimi's pupil Ibn al-Saigh (d. 1441), the lineage of Egyptian calligraphers adopted the style of the Şeyh Hamdullah school. Ibn al-Saigh, a contemporary of Şeyh Hamdullah, is the first teacher known to have given a diploma (*ijazet*) consisting of a graduating pupil's masterpiece with his signature.[22]

As a result of this pre-eminence in the fields of scholarship and art, Egypt became a centre that attracted scholars and artists. Many people from other parts of the Islamic world travelled to Cairo to study the Islamic sciences and calligraphy, either returning to their homeland after completing their studies or settling in the city. Some renowned calligraphers of Turkish origin are known to have worked and taught pupils in Cairo during the Mamluk period. According to *Tuḥfe-i Ḫaṭṭāṭīn* they included Ali b. Süleyman b. Ali (d. 1309),[23] Ahmed b. İbrahim (d. 1343),[24] who was known as Ibn al-Turkmani, Ghazi b. Qutlubogha al-Turki (d. 1375),[25] who was known as the Şeyhü'l-Küttab of the Yaqut style, and Emir Yelboğa (d. 1439),[26] who served in various posts during the reign of Barquq.

Beautiful examples of Yaqut style Koran calligraphy continued to be produced up to the Ottoman period – in Iran by the Great Seljuks, by the Anatolian Seljuks, and by the Mamluks, Jalayrids, Qaraqoyunlus, Aqqoyunlus, Timurids and Safavids. During these periods *muhaqqaq* and *rayḥān* were the most commonly used scripts, but there are also many examples of Korans written in *thuluth* and *naskh*. Generally speaking the names of the surahs, the numbers of the verses and texts showing the place of revelation were written in ornate *kūfic* or *tawqī'* script hands. The pages of a Koran dated 1186 (Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, nr. 1438) written in the style of Ibn al-Bawwab by the calligrapher Abdurrahman b. Ebu Bekr (Zerrin Kalem) each have one line of *muhaqqaq* followed by short lines of *rayḥān*, another line of *muhaqqaq* in the centre, again followed by short lines of *rayhān*, and a final line of *muhaqqaq*. When *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts were added to this layout used by the Yaqut school of calligraphers, a zenith of artistic beauty and exuberance was attained. A work by Ruzbihan Muhammad Shirazi dating from the mid-sixteenth century in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (nr. 1558) and a Koran by Ahmed Karahisari (Topkapı Palace Library, HS. 5), the last representative of the Yaqut school, are among the loveliest examples of this style of calligraphy, illumination and page format.

20 Nihad M. Çetin, "İslâm Hat Sanatının Doğuşu ve Gelişmesi" in *İslâm Kültür Mirasında Hat Sanatı,* ed. M. Uğur Derman (Istanbul: IRCICA, 1992), 28-29.

21 al-Qalqashandi, *Ṣubḥ al A'shā*, III, 14.

22 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 253.

23 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 316.

24 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 72.

25 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 354.

26 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 588.

Establishment of the Ottoman Calligraphy School

Şeyh Hamdullah and His Contemporaries

After the Ottomans emerged as a powerful state, Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1451-81), who was both conqueror and artist, invited eminent scholars and artists from around the Islamic world to Istanbul, with attractive offers of prospects and rewards, so turning his palace into an academy of science and art.[27] By means of this patronage he established the guild of palace artists and craftsmen called the *ehl-i hiref* and organised a palace art studio, which gathered their knowledge, art, culture and experience into a single institution. So Istanbul, like Baghdad, Cairo and Herat in earlier times, gradually became Islam's leading cultural and artistic centre, showing the way forward, training artists and producing the finest works of art.

These steps in the field of art prepared the ground for innovation and stylistic experimentation in calligraphy, as in every branch of the Islamic arts. The foundations of the Ottoman school of calligraphy, which was to remain influential over the next five centuries and up to the present day, were laid during the reign of Sultan Mehmed II. In this environment, where artists were given every kind of assistance, support and encouragement, the *asātiza-i Rūm* (Anatolian masters) excelled in the *aqlām-ı sitta* and *jalī thuluth*; and their fame spread through the Islamic world. The calligraphers who played a role in the establishment of a new school of calligraphy that reflected Ottoman tastes include Yahya Sufi of Edirne, who flourished during the

27 *Fatih Mehmed II Vakfiyeleri* (Ankara: Vakıflar Umum Müdürlüğü, 1938), 36; Ahmed Refik, "Fatih Devrine Ait Vesikalar," *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*, 49: 62 (1 Nisan 1335): 1-23.

reign of Mehmed II and was known particularly for his *jalī thuluth*, Ali b. Yahya Sufi, Hayreddin Mar'aşi in the *aqlām-ı sitta*, Şeyh Hamdullah and his contemporaries Celal, Cemal, Muhyiddin, and Abdullah Amasi, who trained in the Amasya school, and the renowned calligrapher of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, Ahmed Şemseddin Karahisarī, who was the shining star of calligraphy (fig. 1).[28]

The cities that were sources and schools for the quests for style in the art of calligraphy were Amasya, where heirs to the Ottoman throne were sent as governors, accompanied by some of the most acclaimed legal clerics and artists, and to some extent Edirne and Bursa. The scholars and artists who trained in these cities carried their knowledge and artistic skills to Istanbul and made important contributions during the early period of the Ottoman state.[29] In particular prince Bayezid (the future Bayezid II, r. 1481-1512) gathered many illustrious scholars and artists who emigrated from Iran and Central Asia, including musicians, poets, calligraphers and sufis, at his court during the 26 years he spent serving as governor of Amasya before succeeding his father Mehmed II to the throne. He became their patron, gave them rewards, and actively participated in their activities. This support and encouragement by the şehzade had a profound influence on Amasya's cultural and artistic life; here scholars engaged in elevated discussion and artists in exuberant gatherings.

Şeyh Hamdullah (d. 1520) and his school

The great Ottoman calligrapher Hamdullah b. Mustafa Dede, a genius whose reputation has never waned, was born in Amasya, the cradle of excellent scholarship and Ottoman calligraphy. He was described by titles such as *ḳuṭbu'l-ḫaṭṭāṭīn* (pole of calligraphers), *şeyḫü'r-rāmiyān* (sheikh of archers), *ḳibletü'l-küttāb* (Qibla of calligraphers) and *sheikh* (leader). Under the guidance of the eminent scholars, artists and patrons of this city, he became a genius of calligraphy and presented this gift to humanity. His father was Mustafa Dede, *sheikh* of the Suhrawardiyya sufi order, who had migrated from Bukhara to Amasya, where he won the respect of Şehzade Bayezid and illuminated his milieu with his knowledge and wisdom.[30]

28 Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Fatih Devri Hattatları ve Hat Sanatı,* (Istanbul: Fetih Cemiyeti, 1953), 56; Muhittin Serin, *Hattat Şeyh Hamdullah* (Istanbul: Kubbealtı Neşriyatı, 2007), 17-18.

29 İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Saray Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1945), 43; Aydın Taneri, *Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kuruluş Döneminde Hükümdarlık Kurumunun Gelişmesi ve Saray Hayatı Teşkilâtı* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi DTCF Yayınları, 1978), 148-49.

30 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe,* 186; Nefeszade, *Gülzar-ı Savab*, 52; Suyolcuzade, *Devhatü'l-Küttab*, 8; Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 27.

1

1. Colophon of the Koran copied by Cemal Amasi, contemporary calligrapher of Şeyh Hamdullah from Amasya. Istanbul, Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T. 97, fol. 468r.

Şeyh Hamdullah was known by the citizens of Amasya as a great man who was a friend of Hızır (a figure in Islamic legend said to have found the water of life), and some incidents in his life became legendary and were widely related with religious fervour.

In his *Gülzār-ı Şavāb* Nefeszade İbrahim gives the following description of Şeyh Hamdullah's birth:[31]

When the Şeyh's father Mustafa Dede came of the age to marry in Amasya, a beloved servant of God advised, "You should marry the daughter of a poor woman without family living in such and such a neighbourhood. Do not hesitate to ask for her hand and marry at once." Upon this spiritual sign, Mustafa Dede took his advice and married the fatherless girl. When he encountered that esteemed personage some time later he asked what was the meaning of this advice. Upon which the saintly old man lifted up his hands and declared, "You took my advice and married that virtuous and excellent woman's daughter. May God on High grant you a good child, whose knowledge, fine qualities and skill may be renowned in every city, whose name be remembered auspiciously over the centuries until the Judgement Day, and let his name be Hamdullah." After this prayer uttered by one who understands the unknown, Hamdullah, the future genius of calligraphy, was born. So the prayer and insight of the beloved servant of God came true. From then on the name of Şeyh Hamdullah was to be remembered for ever, as the saint asked in his prayer, and the new age that he ushered in and the Korans he wrote were regarded with respect and admiration.

Şeyh Hamdullah studied under the famous scholars and artists of Amasya, receiving the education and spiritual training typical of the age. During the 26 years that the future Bayezid II governed Amasya, many renowned clerical scholars, poets and artists from around the Islamic world came to Amasya, making important contributions to the academic and artistic life of the city. The scholars and artists of Amasya who were eminent in the various branches of religious studies, philosophy, medicine, Islamic mysticism, poetry, music and calligraphy became a source and school for Istanbul. So at a time when the Ottoman state was establishing administrative, political and economic stability, and when innovative movements were beginning in the fields of scholarship and the fine arts, Şeyh Hamdullah entered scholarly and artistic circles and received his education. According to biographical accounts, Hamdullah studied religion and literature under Hatib Kasım, who also taught prince Bayezid, and became well versed in Arabic, Persian and Turkish language and literature. While studying religious and literary disciplines, Hamdullah became interest-

31 Nefeszade, *Gülzar-ı Savab*, 48.

2

2. Illuminated sarlawh of the Koran copied in *naskh* script by Hayreddin Mar'aşi, teacher of Şeyh Hamdullah. Dallas Museum of Art, K.1.2014.1391, fol. 2r.

ed in calligraphy and studied the *aqlām-ı sitta* under Hayreddin Mar'aşi,[32] who followed the Yaqut school (fig. 2). He received his spiritual education from his father, Şeyh Mustafa Dede, who granted him the right to serve as sheikh of a sufi lodge, hence his honorific title of "Sheikh".

As a calligrapher who applied the Yaqut style during the stage of his religious and artistic career in Amasya, Şeyh Hamdullah was described as Yaqut-ı Thānī (the Second Yaqut). He became a close friend of prince Bayezid, whom he probably met at gatherings held by his father. Bayezid appointed him as his calligraphy teacher and received his diploma from him.[33] Şeyh Hamdullah's fame began to spread while still in Amasya, and a wide circle of calligraphers gathered around him. During these years he copied some works in the Yaqut style for Sultan Mehmed II's personal library. Surviving examples of these are *Kitābu Ḥuneyn b. İṣhaḳ fī'l-Mesā'il ve Ecvibetihā fī't-ṭıbb* (Topkapı Palace Library, III. Ahmed, 1996) and *Meṣāliḥu'l-Ebdān ve'l-Enfus* (Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya, 3740).[34] Together with translation, *Meṣāliḥu'l-Ebdān ve'l-Enfus* was published by the Manuscript Institution of Turkey in 2012 (fig. 3). Both books demonstrate his outstanding skill at writing in the Yaqut style during the early part of his career in Amasya. A Koran that he wrote at this time has not survived.

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32 Little is known about Hayreddin Mar'aşi's life. Ārifi writes in his article "Dulkadır Oğulları Hükümeti," *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*, 37 (1 Nisan 1332): 90, based on the writings of Diyarbekirli Emiri Efendi, that his real name was Hızır, his best-known cognomen was Hayreddin, and his father's name was Hatib. Confirmation of this is found in the colophon of a book copied by his son Yusuf in H. 950, reading "Yusuf b. Katip Hayreddin b. Hatib al-Amasī". Although Hüseyin Hüsameddin Efendi writes that as a young man he went to Amasya to pursue his education and studied the *aqlām-ı sitta* under Edirneli Yahya Sufi, from whom he received his diploma (Hüseyin Hüsameddin, *Amasya Tarihi* (author's hand) IX, 499-500), no confirmation of this claim could be found. Müstakimzade says (Müstakimzade,*Tuhfe,*199-200) that Hayreddin Mar'aşi was the pupil of Abdullah Sayrafi (d. 1344), but the chronology makes this impossible. Following the death of Şehzade Alaeddin Bey, Hayreddin Mar'aşi spent his time teaching students in Amasya until he died, probably at the end of the year 876 (1472). While Bayezid II was governor of Amasya, Hayreddin Mar'aşi established an extensive circle of calligraphers around him, and in time Amasya became the source and centre of the Ottoman school of calligraphy. Şeyh Hamdullah studied the *aqlām-ı sitta* in the Yakut style under Hayreddin Mar'aşi, who awarded his diploma. Muhyiddin Köseç and Seyyid İbrahim are other eminent students of Hayreddin Mar'aşi. No works by Hayreddin Mar'aşi are known to have been preserved in any museums or libraries. A news item claiming that a lost Koran by Hayreddin Halil Mar'aşi is in the Dallas Art Museum in the United States of America was published on 19 July 2020 by Murat Bardakçı under the headline "A Koran that has been lost for 572 years that could change the history of our calligraphy has been found" (https//www.habertürk.com/yazarlar/murat bardakçı 274 86 25).

33 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe,* 185; Habibullah Fezaili, *Atlas-ı Hat,* 321.

34 A. Süheyl Ünver, *Fatih Devri Hattatlarından Amasyalı Hamdullah Efendi ve Tıp Tarihimizdeki Yeri* (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi, Tıp Tarihi Enstitüsü, 1953), 23-27.

3

3. Illuminated frontispiece of *Meşāliḥu'l-Ebdān ve'l Enfüs* written by Şeyh Hamdullah in Yaqut style for Sultan Mehmed II., Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Ayasofya 3740, fol. 1v.

Soon after Sultan Bayezid II travelled from Amasya to Istanbul to ascend the throne (1481), he invited Şeyh Hamdullah to Istanbul and appointed him as royal scribe and as calligraphy teacher to palace officials. He allocated a room close to the palace harem to use as a scriptorium for writing Korans. In return for his services at the palace Şeyh Hamdullah received not only a daily wage of 30 *akçe* but in addition was allocated the revenues of two villages in Üsküdar and the revenue of one village to pay his paper polishers. From this time onwards Şeyh Hamdullah mainly used the title "Scribe to Sultan Bayezid Han" in the colophons of his works.[35]

Among the Muallim Cevdet manuscripts in Istanbul Municipality's Atatürk Library is a register of gifts presented by Sultan Bayezid II to scholars and artists during the years H 909-917, and on pages 31 and 289 of this register are entries referring to Korans written by Şeyh Hamdullah and presented to the sultan. These record that Şeyh Hamdullah received 7000 *akçe* for two Korans he wrote for the sultan, the same sum for another Koran, and 10,000 each for two other Korans, as well as many gifts of clothing and fabrics.[36] When these are compared with the other entries in this register, it is seen that these gifts were the largest that anyone received, reflecting the heights Şeyh Hamdullah had attained in the field of calligraphy at that time, the esteem in which he was held by the sultan, and Sultan Bayezid II's generous patronage of the arts.[37]

Sultan Bayezid II's keen interest in scholarship, art and above all the art of calligraphy may have been the catalyst for releasing the creative power of a genius like Şeyh Hamdullah. During a conversation one day Bayezid said to Şeyh Hamdullah, "You have not seen what Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Musta'simi wrote so meticulously. It would be well if a different style were to be invented." Then he took seven examples of *qiṭ'a* by Yaqut from his treasury and gave them to Hamdullah to examine. In this way Sultan Bayezid II explained to Şeyh Hamdullah that it was appropriate and desirable to invent a new style of calligraphy in keeping with Ottoman tastes that differed from the style of Yaqut, and ask him to make the radical changes needed to devise an innovative style.

In response to the sultan's wishes, Şeyh Hamdullah made several retreats of forty days each around the year 1485 to ponder at length on the writing of Yaqut and Abdullah Sayrafi. In the course of this demanding process of examination and research, he defined the most beautiful and pure shapes

35 Hüseyin Hüsameddin, *Amasya Tarihi,* IX, 232; Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 32.

36 *Defter-i Müsveddāt-ı 'İnāmāt ve Taṣadduḳāt ve Teşrīfāt ve Ġayrih,* Istanbul Municipality Atatürk Library, Muallim Cevdet, no. 70, fols. 31, 289.

37 Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 37.

4

4. Illuminated sarlawh of the Koran copied in *naskh* script by Şeyh Hamdullah, Istanbul, Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, T 402, fols. 2r-3v.

for every part of every letter of the six traditional scripts and calculated their standard measurements. In the Şeyh style the lines of the letters are regular and very slightly slanted to the left, so lending rhythm to the writing, while the words are similarly set at an angle that makes the writing flow. The resulting script had an animation and movement lacking in Yaqut's style, whose letters and words sat firmly on the line and seemed subdued and lifeless in comparison. Hamdullah also made alterations in the pen nib for the different scripts, and the slanting cut of the nib added fresh beauty to the *aqlām-ı sitta*, and in particular gave *naskh* new charm, delightful grace and refinement (fig. 4).

So Şeyh Hamdullah closely examined the dots, letters and words that had come to maturity in the writing of Yaqut, and with imaginative vision,

talent and powerful insight succeeded in creating original new versions of the *aqlām-ı sitta*, above all *thuluth* and *naskh*. These were the work of genius.

The number of books in the palace library founded by Sultan Mehmed II rose to 5700 with additions made by Sultan Bayezid II. The library is known to have consisted of many Korans as well as a very diverse collection of exquisitely produced manuscript works on religion, literature and art.[38] Şeyh Hamdullah passed most of his time at the palace and probably had the opportunity to examine the books and calligraphic albums in this library, which would have enhanced both his knowledge and artistic tastes. These books now in Topkapı Palace Library included a Koran in the Yaqut format written by Ahmed b. Mahmud b. Muhammad and bearing the stamp of Sultan Bayezid II (Koğuşlar, 16), a Koran written in Shiraz during the Aqqoyunlu period (Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, 509), a Koran in *naskh* script copied in Shiraz in 1480 during the same period, and other Korans and calligraphic albums written in the Yaqut style during the Timurid and Safavid periods by contemporaries of Hamdullah, such as Shams al-Din Baysunghuri and Muhammad b. Sultanshah al-Haravi (fig. 5).

This great artist's efforts and tribulations in the course of devising a new style is described in the following words by Müstakimzade:[39] "While examining calligraphic works by the great masters of the past and the renowned Yaqut, Şeyh Hamdullah could see the distinctive style he sought in his mind, but was unable to reproduce it physically. While overcome by distress, the Lord Khidr (may greetings be upon him) appeared to him and assisted in practising the new style. After this encounter, relief flowed through his being. Thus within a brief time and with a little effort, he was able to produce the style of writing that had existed in his imagination, and was a welcome gift to himself and a divine gift."

With the coming of the innovations in calligraphy pioneered by Şeyh Hamdullah, the Yaqut style that had prevailed for one and a half centuries went into decline from the beginning of the sixteenth century – except in Iran – and from then on the art of calligraphy in the Ottoman lands entered a new era.

Şeyh Hamdullah wrote Korans and *qiṭ'a*s in the *aqlām-ı sitta* scripts in his scriptorium near the palace harem. He had justly earned the sultan's special esteem and been rewarded by him. However, the close and longstanding friendship between himself and the sultan was a source of resentment for others, particularly the clerical legists. Sultan Bayezid II sensed this bad feeling and brought the scholars of the period together with Şeyh Hamdullah.

38 İsmail Erünsal, *Osmanlı Vakıf Kütüphâneleri* (Istanbul: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008), 93-94.

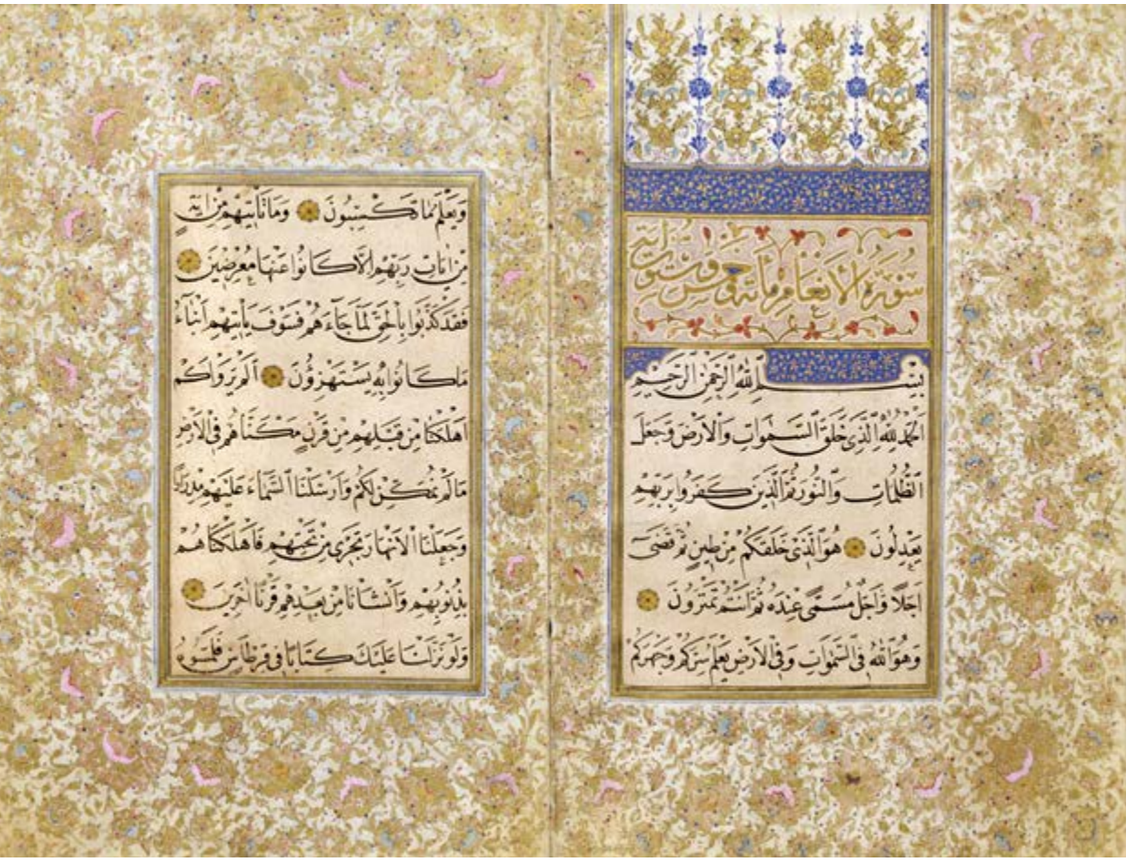
39 Müstakimzade, *Tuhfe*, 186.

5

5. Illuminated sarlawh of the Koran copied in *naskh* script by Şeyh Hamdullah. Istanbul University Library, AY 6662, fols. 2r-3v.

Then he showed the Koran written by Şeyh Hamdullah to each one of the legists at the gathering. They were so overwhelmed at the sight that their objections were silenced and Sultan Bayezid II said to them: "No previous ruler has had a calligrapher of such excellence and a scribe who gave such incalculable happiness". So he expressed the joy he felt because the "pole of calligraphy" and inspirational master had appeared during his own time. Then he carefully placed all the books and commentaries written by the legists who were present at the gathering one on top of the other on the book stand in front of him, picked up the Koran written by Şeyh Hamdullah and asked the legists: "Is it proper to place this book on top of the others or below them?" They replied, "How can it be proper to place books or any other thing on the Glorious Koran?" So Sultan Bayezid II humorously silenced the legists and

6



6. First page of *En'am-ı Şerif* copied in *naskh* script by Şeyh Hamdullah. Istanbul University Library, AY 6641, fols 1r-2v.

in reference to Şeyh Hamdullah declared, "This person has many attributes worthy of respect. No other has improved the writing of the Koran to such a degree. Why should we seat him below you?" In this way the sultan, who valued skill so highly, made his religious scholars accept a truth without offending them (fig. 6).[40]

The school and some of its characteristics

With the Şeyh Hamdullah school all the *aqlām-ı sitta* scripts attained maturity and the loveliest examples of calligraphy in the new style was found in Korans, Koran sections, calligraphic albums, *qiṭ'a* and books. The most

40 Nefeszade, *Gülzar-ı Savab*, 51.

7

7. *Tawqī'*, *riqā'*, *muhaqqaq*, *rayḥān*, *thuluth*, and *naskh* scripts from the scroll of the "Six Scripts" by Şeyh Hamdullah. Topkapı Palace Library, EH. 2086.See also page 181, fig. 20, article by Zeren Tanındı.

8

8. Two calligraphic compositions in *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts from an album by Şeyh Hamdullah. Istanbul University Library, AYY 6687, 1st and 2nd *qiṭ'as*.

beautiful of all examples showing the development of these six scripts are calligraphic albums by Şeyh Hamdullah in the Topkapı Palace Library (EH. 2083, 2084, 2086) (fig. 7).

Hamdullah Efendi's career is divided into two periods, one spent in Amasya and the other in Istanbul. His early work, in which the Yaqut style dominates, was written in Amasya, and the work in his own style in Istanbul. Examples of the former are preserved at the Topkapı Palace Library (III. Ahmed, no. 1996) and the Süleymaniye Library (Ayasofya, 3740). Comparison of these with a Koran by Yaqut in the Istanbul University Library (Istanbul University Library, AY 6680) clearly shows a resemblance where the style of *naskh* is concerned. However, when a Koran dating from Şeyh Hamdullah's mature period in the Istanbul University Library (Istanbul University Library, AY 6662) and other examples are compared with his early work, the innovations he brought about in *naskh* script are clearly discernible.

With the coming of the Şeyh Hamdullah school, *naskh* script became astonishingly beautiful and easy to read, which is why it came to be the most widely preferred script for books and Korans. Writing the Koran text in the new style of *naskh* ensured continuity in this school, as well as ease of reading, and the Yaqut format that combined *muhaqqaq, rayḥān* or the *aqlām-ı sitta* on the same page was abandoned by the Ottomans. In addition, the page layout and spaces between lines attained their most aesthetic proportions, resulting in gracefulness, simplicity, continuity and charm in the calligraphy of Korans.

Most of the calligraphic works by Şeyh Hamdullah consist of albums and *qiṭ'as*. He developed the format of *qiṭ'as* written in *thuluth* and *naskh*, set inside frames with rectangular illuminated panels in the spaces next to the short lines, and in shapes and proportions that reflected Ottoman taste. All later calligraphers followed in his footsteps, copying the dimensions, shapes, textual features and even the colour of paper used for *qiṭ'as* by Şeyh Hamdullah (fig. 8).

In time the Ottoman calligraphy school went on to use *muhaqqaq* and *rayḥān* (fig. 9) in calligraphic albums and *qiṭ'as*, *muhaqqaq* to write the *Basmala* (the formula *bismillāhirraḥmānirraḥīm*, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful"), *tawqī'* for albums and the surah headings of Korans, and *riqā'* for diplomas of all kinds, including those for calligraphy, colophons, epilogues and *waqf* endowment records, becoming known as *ḫaṭṭ-i icāza*.

With the exception of Ahmed Şemseddin Karahisari, who is regarded as the "sun of calligraphy" during the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, the Yaqut style was abandoned after the spread of the Şeyh Hamdullah school, as every calligrapher endeavoured to follow the latter.

9. Two calligraphic compositions in muhaqqaq and *rayḥān* scripts from an album by Şeyh Hamdullah. Istanbul University Library, AY 6485, 3rd and 6th *qiṭ'as*.

Those who succeeded in mastering the style were praised with the words, "He wrote like the Şeyh".

Just a glance at works by Şeyh Hamdullah in *naskh* script is enough to appreciate its liveliness and the harmony and unity between the elements of the whole. While in the Yaqut style the words seem to push one another away, in the Şeyh Hamdullah style the letters are in rapport with one another and the words of each line seem to form a single entity.

In the Yaqut school, the structures, forms and proportions of the letters of *thuluth*, like those of *naskh*, are defined. However, the hesitation and uncertainty about the proportions of the letters were resolved by the Şeyh Hamdullah school, which gave the letters their classical proportions. Moreover, the lack of unity in the lines and page format of *thuluth*, its incoherence and looseness, were eradicated by changing the stance of the letters in the Şeyh Hamdullah school. The following couplet was written in praise of the Şeyh Hamdullah style:[41]

When the calligraphy of Hamdi son of Şeyh appeared
The calligraphy of Yaqut was certainly abandoned in the world

His last years and death

Sometimes, moved by inner yearning, Şeyh Hamdullah withdrew to solitude at Akbaba or his residence in Alemdağı, to spend his days in recitation of litanies in praise of God and worship. Usually he was called from this world that opened onto eternity by an invitation to the palace by Sultan Bayezid II.

At the age of 88 he began to suffer from a trembling disease, yet despite this his hand never shook. He wore two or three-layered spectacles, yet his writing was as firm and beautiful as in his youth. In the colophon of a Koran that he wrote towards the end of his life he declared, "Hamdullah, known as Son of Şeyh, who always gives thanks to God and offers prayers and greetings to His prophet, wrote this at the advanced age of 89, when his hair had turned white and his head trembled."

Upon the death of Bayezid II, he was succeeded by his son Yavuz Sultan Selim (r. 1512-20), during whose reign Şeyh Hamdullah spent eight years in retreat from public life, teaching his students and enlightening his followers who came to him for spiritual guidance.

Following the death of Yavuz Sultan Selim, his son Sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520-66) invited his grandfather's friend Şeyh Hamdullah to the palace, where he welcomed him with affection and respect. During their conversation the sultan asked Şeyh Hamdullah to write a Koran, but the calligrapher excused himself on account of his great age and recommended Muhyiddin Amasi instead. Sultan Süleyman then presented Şeyh Hamdullah with a sa-

41 Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 36-37.

ble-lined robe, gave him refreshments, and after Hamdullah had given his blessing bade him farewell as he departed for his home in Üsküdar.

Müstakimzade recorded that Şeyh Hamdullah died about two or three months after his audience with the sultan and wrote the following chronogram:

Şeyh Hamdullah was pole to calligraphers, star of calligraphy
At the departure of the guest of God, the tongue spoke the date

Calculating the gematrical values of this chronogram gives the date 926 (1520), so Şeyh Hamdullah journeyed to his eternal scriptorium when he was over 90 years old.

Şeyh Hamdullah's funeral service was conducted at Ayasofya Mosque by Şeyhülislam Zenbilli Ali Efendi, who was also from Amasya. In accordance with his last wishes he was buried in Karacaahmed Cemetery next to Ali b. Yahya el-Sufi. Many renowned calligraphers of later times were buried in this place, known as Şeyh Sofası (Hall of the Sheikh).

The inscription for Şeyh Hamdullah's tombstone was written in 1701 by Şahin Ağa, palace calligrapher to Sultan Mustafa II (r. 1695-1703). It writes, *Reʾīsü'l-ḫaṭṭāṭīn Ḥamdullāh el-maʿrūf bi-ibniʾş-Şeyḫ raḥmetullāhi ʿaleyh*. The year 927 seen on the stone today does not appear in a photograph taken around a century ago and was evidently added later.

His archery and other interests

From written sources we know that Şeyh Hamdullah had other skills and accomplishments besides calligraphy. He was one of the swordless heroes of Ottoman civilisation. As well as calligraphy he was one of the notable archers of his time. His skill at archery, an art developed by the Turks, was famed during his years in Amasya, when he often went hunting and practised shooting with the future Bayezid II. Şeyh Hamdullah continued to hunt and engage in the sport of archery in Istanbul, and held a record for distance shooting. He won the love and respect of archers, and due to his achievements Bayezid II appointed him sheikh of the Archers' Lodge at the Archery Field in Istanbul, as successor to Mahmud and Hamza Dede, who had previously served in this post. In addition to archery Şeyh Hamdullah was an excellent swimmer and tailor. Treatises on archery relate that he frequently swam across the Bosphorus from Üsküdar to Sarayburnu, and that he made a kaftan with invisible seams for Sultan Bayezid II, demonstrating his astonishing skill at sewing clothes.

His students, works and followers

Şeyh Hamdullah was the centre of a large community of calligraphers that included sultans, şehzades, statesmen, scholars, sheikhs and poets, and his influence lasted for centuries. Research has identified 43 of his students. Undoubtedly there must have been more whose names were not recorded. Those among them who made a name in diverse areas include some of the most important figures of cultural and artistic life in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. While some of these became famous calligraphers, who wrote in the Şeyh Hamdullah style, others took lessons in the art of calligraphy from him purely for pleasure and as a recreational activity aside from their main occupations.

Şeyh Hamdullah's son Mustafa Dede and his son-in-law Şükrullah Halife are the foremost representatives of the Şeyh school who studied under Şeyh Hamdullah. Other prominent students who studied the *aqlām-ı sitta* under Şeyh Hamdullah and received their diplomas from him include Sultan Bayezid II, prince Korkut, Mehmed Handan, Ali b. Mustafa, Behram b. Abdullah, Hüseyin Şah, Cafer Çelebi, Mehmed b. Ramazan, Receb b. Mustafa, Mehmed b. Sadi, Mahmud Defteri and Mustafa b. Nasuh.

Followers of the Şeyh school after Mustafa Dede and Şükrullah Halife include Derviş Mehmed (d. 1593), Hasan Üsküdari (d. 1614-15), Halid Erzurumi (d. 1630-31), Derviş Ali (d. 1673-74), Ramazan b. İsmail (d. 1680), Mustafa Suyolcuzade (d. 1685-86), Sheikh el-Thani Hafız Osman (d. 1698-99), Seyyid Abdullah (d. 1731), Şekerzade Seyyid Mehmed (d. 1753), Hoca Mehmed Rasim (d. 1755-56), Kazasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi (d. 1876), Kayışzade Hāfız Osman (d. 1894), Hasan Rıza Efendi (d. 1920) and Mehmed Şevki (d. 1887). They are just some of the thousands of masters and their students who spread the Şeyh Hamdullah style in the Ottoman lands, developed and further refined it, and introduced new variations. The influence of his style still continues today.

According to Müstakimzade, Şeyh Hamdullah's contributions to our scholarship and art consist of 47 small and large Korans, one *Meşāriḳ-i Şerīf*, nearly a thousand compilations of surahs such as the *Enʿām, Kehf* and *Nebe'*, and large numbers of *qiṭʿa* and calligraphic albums in scroll form. He wrote large-scale inscriptions in *jalī thuluth* for the Bayezid mosques in Istanbul and Edirne, some as construction inscriptions that were carved on stone, and construction inscriptions for the Firuz Agha and Davud Pasha mosques in Istanbul.

Most of Şeyh Hamdullah's surviving works are preserved in Topkapı Palace, the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, the Istanbul University Library,

the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library and private collections. As far as I have been able to establish these consist of thirty three Korans, fifty *Enʿām-ı Şerif* and Koran sections, one hundred twenty one calligraphy albums and *qiṭʿa* s, eight scholarly works and six prayer books.[42] The texts in his calligraphic albums include Arabic prayers, verses from the Koran, hadith and adages by Islamic judges and Ali.

Among these, his albums written in the *aqlām-ı sitta*, in which he has written the name of each script above or beside the *qiṭʿas*, are of particular importance for teaching about his style, although it can be difficult to distinguish between imitations of Şeyh Hamdullah's writing, whether copied as calligraphic exercises or for commercial gain.

There are also works by Şeyh Hamdullah in eminent libraries and museum collections in Europe and America. They include a calligraphic album in the British Library (Or. 11925), whose writing, binding and illumination make it one of the most beautiful of all his works. This album measures 29.2 x 22.5 cm and consists of 14 *qiṭʿa*s, of which a *Basmala* in *muhaqqaq* and the first *qiṭʿa* consisting of verse 162 of the Bakara surah are not in the Şeyh Hamdullah style and must be the work of later calligraphers. The other *qiṭʿa*s in *thuluth* and *naskh*, with illuminated panels filling the spaces next to the short lines, are his work and bear his colophon. The album was illuminated and bound in the eighteenth century. In the same library is the second section of a Koran with a colophon giving the calligrapher as Şeyh Hamdullah (Or. 15570), although a single glance suffices to see that this is not his work. There is a beautiful Enʿām surah written in combinations of *thuluth* and *naskh, muhaqqaq* and *naskh*, with a colophon by Şeyh Hamdullah in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (The Koran, M. S. 1512), and in the same library there is a calligraphic album of ten *qiṭʿa* s written in *thuluth* and *naskh* with panels next to the short lines (T. 426).

Şeyh Hamdullah and his contemporaries Abdullah, Celaleddin, Cemal, and Muhyiddin Amasi, Mustafa Dede, Ahmed Karahisari and Bursalı Şerbetçizade İbrahim Efendi were regarded as the *asātiza-i Rūm*, the seven great masters of calligraphy in Anatolia. These artists made significant contributions to the formation of the Ottoman school of calligraphy, and each of them created a wide circle of calligraphers around them, through their works and the pupils they trained. Like the seven masters (*asātiza-i sebʿa*) that included Yaqut b. Abdullah al-Mustaʿsimi, they were the seven great masters of Anatolia.

42 For further details, see: Muhittin Serin, *Hattat Şeyh Hamdullah*, 47-75.

While the Ottoman calligraphy school introduced radical innovations that influenced the Islamic world, in fifteenth-century Iran *taʿlīq* underwent improvement and changes that led to the creation of *nastaʿlīq*, an artistic script with new forms, measures and simplicity that soothed the soul. This script hand spread across political boundaries, won the admiration of Muslim artists, and after *thuluth* and *naskh* became one of the principal Islamic scripts. The western style of *nastaʿlīq* attained its aesthetic pinnacle during the Aqqoyunlu period, and the eastern style during the Timurid period, particularly during the reign of Husayn Bayqara (d. 1506). A fine form of *nastaʿlīq* was used in daily life and in literary works, poetry anthologies and *dīwān*s (collections of poetry by a single author), including masterpieces that rank among the most beautiful works of art in the world. Şeyh Hamdullah's contemporary Sultan Ali Mashadi, who worked in the palace library of Sultan Husayn Bayqara, Molla Jami and Ali Shir Nevai, immortalised *nastaʿlīq* in their works. A copy of *Ḫamsa-i Navāʾī* in the British Royal Collection of Islamic Manuscripts in London (RCIN 1005032), many *qiṭʿa*s in albums in the same collection, and *nastaʿlīq qiṭʿa*s in the Şah Mahmud Calligraphic Album in Istanbul University Library are examples of the exquisite beauty achieved in writing *nastaʿlīq*.[43] The western *nastaʿlīq* style of the Aqqoyunlu period is represented by its most eminent calligrapher Abdurrahim-i Khwarizmi, who was a contemporary of Şeyh Hamdullah. A copy of the *Tevḥīdnāme li'ş-Şeyḫ ʿAṭṭār* in Topkapı Palace Library (Revan, 1042), which is illuminated and illustrated with miniature paintings, is a superb example of Abdurrahim-i Khwarizmi's beautiful *nastaʿlīq* hand, which he wrote in Tabriz.

The eastern *nastaʿlīq* style of Khorasan reached its highest level of proportion and harmony through the aesthetic taste and genius of calligraphers like Muhammad Nur, who followed in the path of Sultan Ali Mashadi, Muhammad Handan, Mir Ali Herevi (d. 1544), Şah Mahmud Nisaburi (d. 1564), Baba Şah Isfahani (d. 1587) and the greatest of all *nastaʿlīq* masters Mir İmad Haseni (d. 1615).

Ottoman political alliances and close relations with the cultural and artistic circles of Iran, Azerbaijan, the Aqqoyunlu and Qaraqoyunlu states, and the artists who migrated to Istanbul from these regions, laid the foundations for the spread of *nastaʿlīq* script to that city. It is thought that Şeyh Hamdullah took an interest in these art movements and knew *nastaʿlīq*. This assumption is strengthened by a compilation of poems by Jami in the British Library in London (Or. 15579), which is written in *nastaʿlīq* and bears Şeyh Hamdullah's colophon.

43 Muhammad Isa Waley, "Islamic manuscripts in the British Royal collection: A Concise catalogue," *Manuscripts of the Middle East,* vol. 6 (Leiden, 1994) 14, 15.

Cross-Cultural Artistic Encounters in the Eastern Mediterranean
A PIMo COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AROUND THE EXHIBITION TITLED "ŞEYH HAMDULLAH ON THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH" AT THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM, ISTANBUL

Ayşe Aldemir

Şeyh Hamdullah and His Contemporaries at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum contains a group of exceptional calligraphic works bearing the colophons of Şeyh Hamdullah (d. 1520), who was one of the greatest Ottoman calligraphers, and the next generation of calligraphers who followed the "Şeyh" style. Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) was keenly interested in the arts of the book and a patron of the arts, and Şeyh Hamdullah was foremost among the artists whom he became acquainted with in Amasya, where he served as governor before his accession to the throne.

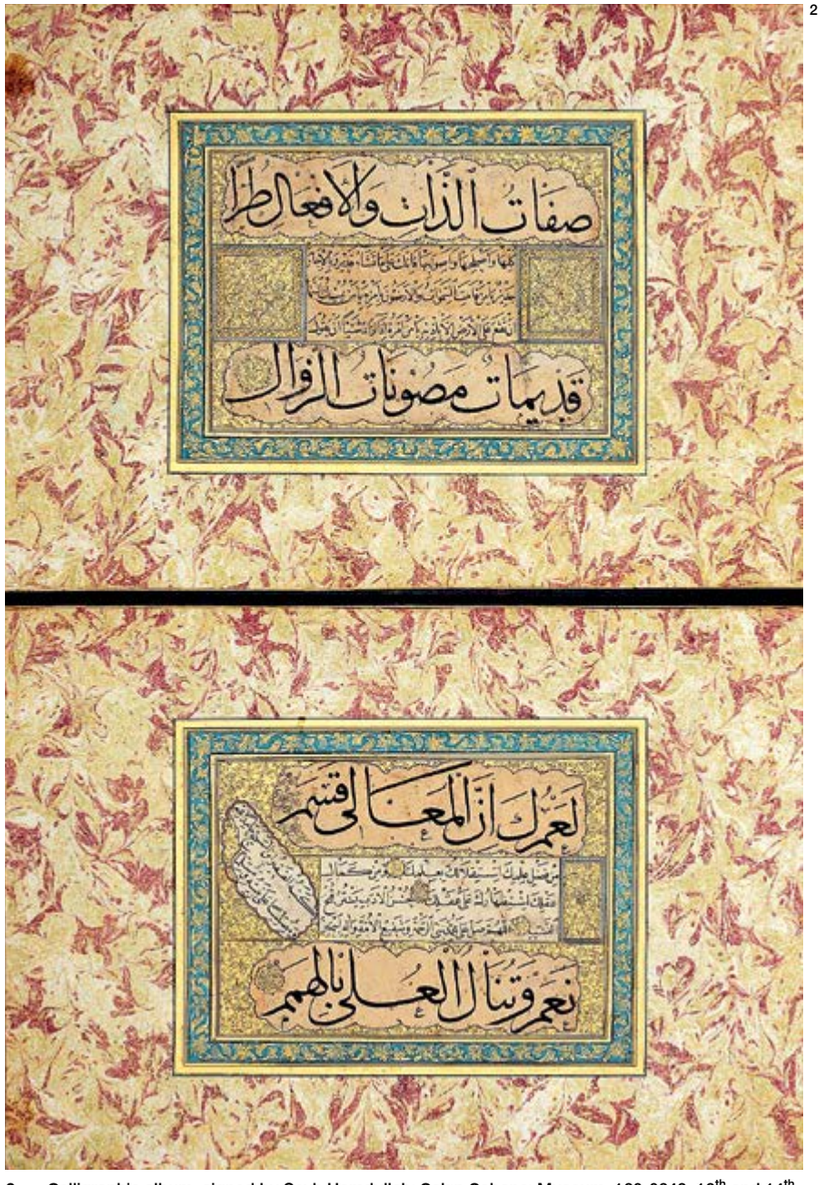
Single pages of *qiṭʿa* and other calligraphic compositions by Şeyh Hamdullah were carefully preserved in albums called *muraqqaʿ* from the time they were written. These examples of his work demonstrate the new rules he defined; particularly the shapes of the letters and other stylistic features of the *thuluth* and *naskh* script hands. One of the *muraqqaʿ* albums in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum contains four *qiṭʿa* bearing the colophon of this renowned calligrapher.[1] These *qiṭʿas* consist of hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad on the subject of the next world, virtue and vice, written on pages to which margins of marbled paper have been invisibly attached using the *vassale (waṣṣāla)* technique. The pages are joined top to bottom to form a folding album, which is bound in brown leather. Three of these compositions are written in the format one line of *thuluth* followed by three lines of *naskh*. The last *qiṭʿa* consists of one line of *thuluth* followed by four lines of *naskh* and the calligrapher has written his signature on the last line: "The humble Ibnu'ş-Şeyḫ wrote this" (fig. 1).

Another *muraqqaʿ* album by Şeyh Hamdullah in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum contains fourteen *qiṭʿa*.[2] In the eighteenth century invisibly joined margins of marbled paper in diverse colours were attached to the pages on which these calligraphic compositions were written; they were illuminated in the style of the same period and bound into an album. All the *qiṭʿas* consist

1 Sakıp Sabancı Museum,120-0045; Zeren Tanındı and Ayşe Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection of the Arts of the Book and Calligraphy* (Istanbul: Sakıp Sabancı Müzesi, 2012), 328-29.

2 Sakıp Sabancı Museum,120-0243; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 196-97.

1. Two *qiṭ'as* from a *muraqqa'*, signed by Şeyh Hamdullah; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 120-0045, 1st and 2nd *qiṭ'as.*



2. Calligraphic album, signed by Şeyh Hamdullah; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 120-0243, 13th and 14th *qiṭ'as.*

of hadiths by the Prophet Muhammad written in various formats; some consisting of one line of *thuluth* followed by five lines of *naskh* and a final line of *thuluth*, and others of one line of *thuluth* followed by four, five, six or seven lines of *naskh*.[3] Next to the lines of *naskh* of the final *qiṭʿa* the calligrapher has written an Arabic colophon reading, "Written by the humble Ibnu'ş-Şeyḫ, giving thanks to God and praying to the Prophet" (fig. 2).

Three more *qiṭʿa* by Şeyh Hamdullah, written in the format one line of *thuluth* followed by three lines of *naskh*, are contained in another album, where the calligrapher's colophon next to the last *qiṭʿa* reads, "The humble Ibnu'ş-Şeyḫ wrote this."[4] Margins of gold sprinkled paper were later added to the pages by the invisible *vassale* technique, and they were bound with covers in the *chār-gūsha* style, consisting of leather edges around a central field of paper – in this case paper with stippled marbling.

An Enʿām surah with a colophon by Şeyh Hamdullah is also in the collection.[5] The manuscript consists of 24 folios and the Arabic colophon at the end reads, "This was written by the frailest of all worthless scribes, the most piteous of the humble, Hamdullah known as Ibnu'ş-Şeyḫ. He wrote it giving thanks to Almighty God and delivering prayers to His Prophet Muhammad and his virtuous family." The book was illuminated and rebound at a later date.[6]

One group of works in the collection are attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah, despite lacking colophons. It was a longstanding tradition for later master calligraphers to write notes on the last pages or endpapers of manuscripts without colophons identifying the calligrapher or confirming an earlier identification. This tradition continued into the mid-twentieth century.[7] These notes were sometimes written by one calligrapher or sometimes by a committee of several leading calligraphers, in their own handwriting, and sometimes dated.

On the last page of an Enʿām surah attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum are notes written by leading calligraphers of the first half of the nineteenth century: Ömer Vasfi (d. 1824), Mahmud Celaleddin (d. 1829), Kebecizade Mehmed Vasfi (d. 1831) and Ebubekir Raşid (d. 1856).[8] The note in the most prominent position on the page is that by Ömer Vasfi, a teacher at the Palace School, so we can assume that he was the first to be asked his opinion. Below his fairly long note he has written the date 1824.[9] Kebecizade not only attributes the manuscript to Şeyh Hamdullah in his note, but also states that it is one of his early works.

A Koran attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah in the collection was also presented to a group of five noted calligraphers of the same period for authentication:[10] Kazasker Mustafa İzzet (d. 1876), Mehmed Hulusi (d. 1874), Mehmed Şevki (d. 1887), Abdullah Zühdi (d. 1874) and Mehmed Şefik (d. 1880). Mehmed Şefik wrote, "As our master, chief of scholars and superior, Mustafa İzzet, has confirmed, so do I give my confirmation" and wrote the date 1287 (1870-71). From this note, we know that the book was first shown to the master calligrapher Kazasker Mustafa İzzet for his opinion, and that the act of giving an expert opinion was known at this time as *taṣdīḳ* (confirmation) (fig. 3).

There is also an Enʿām surah attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah in the collection which has a note of attribution written by Mehmed Şevki next to the last lines of the text, and explaining that this manuscript dates from the middle period of Şeyh Hamdullah's career.[11]

Evidently Kazasker Mustafa İzzet and Mehmed Şevki were frequently asked to undertake such identification in the nineteenth century. The same was true for Chief of the Calligraphers (*reisü'l-hattatin*) Ahmed Kamil Akdik (d. 1941) in the twentieth century. A *qiṭʿa* in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum has been attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah by Ahmed Kamil Akdik,[12] who wrote, "This is the calligraphy of the esteemed Şeyh Hamdullah Efendi" on the back. The calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah has written the words "O my God! I take refuge from anxieties in you" in *thuluth* next to the *qiṭʿa* and a hadith reading, "The Prophet of God –May God's prayers and greetings be upon him – commanded thus: Those of you who pray often to me will have many houris in heaven", is written in *naskh* next to the two lines below. A frame of green marbled silver speckled paper surrounds the *qiṭʿa* (fig. 4).

3 For similar muraqqaʿ albums with marbled paper margins and illuminations dating from the eighteenth century see: Topkapı Palace Library, GY 269; Muhittin Serin, *Hattat Şeyh Hamdullah* (Istanbul: Kubbealtı Neşriyatı, 2007), 136-141 and Istanbul University Library, AY 6485.

4 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 120-0360.

5 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 101-0283.

6 A similar manuscript consisting of the Kehf surah and with Hamdullah's colophon is Topkapı Palace Library, EH. 303; Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 122.

7 Article 28 of the regulations of the School of Calligraphy states that in order to identify the calligrapher in doubtful cases, teachers at the school may be appointed as expert witnesses. In this way the old tradition of authentication became an official process during the Turkish Republic period.

8 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 101-0296.

9 Ömer Vasfi presumably wrote the note just before his death in 1824.

10 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 100-0280.

11 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 101-0358.

12 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 110-0457; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 326-27.

3. Koran, attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah by Kazasker Mustafa İzzet, Mehmed Hulusi, Mehmed Şevki, Abdullah Zühdi, and Mehmed Şefik; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 100-0280, fol. 544v.

4. Calligraphic composition, attributed to Şeyh Hamdullah by Kamil Akdik; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 110-0457.

A Koran without either a colophon or note of attribution that was recorded in the museum's first inventory as the work of Şeyh Hamdullah[13] bears the stamps of Pertevniyal Valide Sultan (d. 1883), mother of Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861-76), on fols. 1r and 244v.

The calligraphy of an En'ām surah dating from around 1500 in the collection is reminiscent of the style of the calligrapher Abdullah Amasi (d. after 1500),[14] who was a pupil of Şeyh Hamdullah's maternal uncle Celaleddin Amasi (d. 1488). The writing resembles Amasi's format in the *muhaqqaq* and *naskh* script hands,[15] consisting of one line of *muhaqqaq* and three lines of *naskh* arranged alternately, and the illuminated panel on the first page dates from the early sixteenth century (fig. 5-6).

A prayer book in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum collection was written by Hüseyin Şah (flourished *ca.* 1557), one of the young calligraphers of the

13 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 100-0270.

14 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 101-0336; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, Sakıp *Sabancı Museum Collection*, 2012, pp. 41-42.

15 Abdullah Amasī's Vasiyetnāme, written in the muhaqqaq, *thuluth* and *naskh* hands is in Topkapı Palace Library; YY. no. 946; Serin, *Hattat Şeyh*, 22.

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6

5. Illuminated frontispiece of *En'ām-ı Şerif*; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 101-0336, fols. 2v-3r.

6. *Naṣru'l-La'ālī li-'Aliyyi'l-'Ālī*, signed by Abdullah Amasī, a contemporary calligrapher of Şeyh Hamdullah from Amasya; Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, Murakkaat, 10, fols. 1v-2r.

7

7. Prayer book, signed by Hüseyin Şah; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 103-0361, fols. 1v-2r.

next generation who wrote in the style of Şeyh Hamdullah.[16] The manuscript is undated but it is thought that Hüseyin Şah wrote it following the death of Şeyh Hamdullah, who was his teacher in Amasya, and whom he followed to Istanbul (fig. 7). In the colophon of the book, Hüseyin Şah describes himself as the *ghulām* (serving boy) of Şeyh Hamdullah. The bibliophiles who owned the book in the second half of the nineteenth century, long before it was acquired by the museum, can be identified from two seal impressions on folio 1r. The first belongs to someone called Tahsin Hasan and the second to his son Osman b. Tahsin Hasan.[17]

One of the people who were in the same artistic circle as Şeyh Hamdullah was Sultan Bayezid II's son Şehzade Korkut (d. 1513), who served as

16 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 103-0361; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 108-109.

17 There are two other works in the collection that came from this family's library; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 190-0017 and 101-0052. One of the stamps is dated 1888-89.

8

8. ***Ḳaṣāyid-i Efṣahī der-Medḥ-i Sulṭān Bāyezīd*; Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 190-0318, fols. 1r-2v.**

governor of Manisa and Antalya. Korkut was a calligrapher and is thought to have studied under Şeyh Hamdullah. The only Koran known to be the work of Şehzade Korkut is in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum.[18] Dating from around 1500, the illuminated opening spread of the manuscript has lappets projecting into the margin, making it the forerunner of this type of design, which became widespread in the first half of the sixteenth century.[19]

Another Koran in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum also dates from around 1500 but the identity of its calligrapher is unknown.[20] However, the illumination is the work of a master, probably the same palace artist who illuminated a group of books written by Şeyh Hamdullah. An exquisite manuscript in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum collection consists of poems in the *qasida* form in praise of Şeyh Hamdullah's patron Sultan Bayezid II written in Persian by the poet Efsahi (fig. 8). This copy is in *nasta'līq* script that is probably the work of a master calligrapher employed at the Ottoman palace art studio around 1495, and it is illuminated by a skilled artist.[21]

These manuscripts and calligraphic compositions in the Sakıp Sabancı Museum are outstanding examples of Ottoman arts of the book. Written by Şeyh Hamdullah and contemporary calligraphers, and decorated by master illuminators, they reflect the flourishing artistic milieu of the reign of Sultan Bayezid II.

18 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 100-0279; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 194-95.

19 Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection,* 194.

20 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 100-0269; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 192-93.

21 Sakıp Sabancı Museum, 190-0318; Tanındı and Aldemir Kilercik, *Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection*, 190-91.

Afterword

Rosita D'Amora
Salento University, Leader of the PIMo Work Group "Things in Motion"

The essays in this beautifully illustrated volume are a true celebration of the Ottoman arts of the book. They take us on a wonderful journey through how Koranic verses, poetry, official documents, and calligraphic albums were transformed into works of art: skillfully handcrafted books with magnificently ornamented leather bindings, decorated papers, impressive illustrations, and masterly calligraphic script of which each page is a masterpiece.

This volume was inspired by two events organised and hosted by the Sakıp Sabancı Museum in Istanbul. In December 2020, the museum opened an exhibition titled *Şeyh Hamdullah on the 500th Anniversary of His Death*. This exhibition celebrated Şeyh Hamdullah, the great Ottoman master of Islamic calligraphy, by displaying his most valuable works as well as those by other calligraphers in his milieu, most of which are currently in the superb collection of calligraphy and the arts of the book at the museum. This collection, assembled from the 1980s onwards and representing the original core of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum's permanent collection, consists of over 600 works by famous calligraphers, illuminated Korans and manuscripts, as well as official documents bearing the tughra (calligraphic monogram) of the Ottoman sultans, all produced from the end of the four-

teenth century to the twentieth century. The works by Şeyh Hamdullah, who brought the art of Islamic calligraphy, which the Ottomans inherited after eight centuries of continuous development, to its highest peak in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, are the highlights of this collection and of the exhibition.

A year later, in September 2021, a conference titled *Paper and Things: Material Mobility between East and West*, took place within the scope of the activities of the COST Action *People in Motion (PIMo): Entangled Histories of Displacement across the Mediterranean (1492-1923)*, locally organised by Tülay Artan and graciously hosted by Nazan Ölçer, the director of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum. The conference aimed to explore the materiality and mobility of paper and its connectivity across cultural, linguistic, and political borders, as well as the conditions for its production, distribution, utilisation, and restoration. The conference was also accompanied by a visit to the restoration atelier of the Süleymaniye Manuscript Library, guided by Nil Baydar, the director of the Book Hospital and Archive Department at the Manuscript Institution of Turkey. There could not have been two more appropriate places in Istanbul to celebrate paper and books, their making and use, their circulation and restoration. The present volume is deeply influenced by the research and discussions that emerged over the course of both the exhibition and the conference.

Şeyh Hamdullah lived and worked during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512), the son of Sultan Mehmed II, conqueror of the Ottoman capital. Born sometime between 1426 and 1436, the calligrapher grew up in Amasya, a flourishing cultural centre throughout the fifteenth century. It was there that he started acquiring a reputation as an exceptional calligrapher, copying several manuscripts for the personal library of Mehmed II. It was also there that he met the crown prince Bayezid II, who served as a bey in Amasya for many years, and was a patron of artists and scientists, as well as a skilled calligrapher and poet himself. The prince invited Şeyh Hamdullah first to join his circle in Amasya and then, when he ascended to the throne in 1481, to follow him to Constantinople, where the calligrapher worked until his death in 1520.

Gülru Necipoğlu's seminal article "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversation with Renaissance in Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople" – originally published in 2012 in the journal *Muqarnas* – is the perfect introduction to the lively cultural milieu of the time and the fundamental role of patronage. It sets the stage by showcasing the web of interaction between artists, their work, and their connections to the Ottoman court throughout the fifteenth century and within the extended geography of the Mediterranean basin.

The article by Zeren Tanındı, "Decoration on Paper in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: 1400-1520", invites readers on a journey through the pages of several illustrated manuscripts. Presenting us with works on paper created by accomplished artists working between the fourteenth and the early fifteenth centuries in Islamic artistic centres and at the Ottoman court, the article demonstrates how fourteenth- and fifteenth-century consumers were not only reading the texts, but also drawing pleasure from examining their richly illustrated pages. Muhittin Serin's contribution "The Calligrapher Şeyh Hamdullah: His Forerunners, Contemporaries and Followers" focuses on the life and vast calligraphic production of the great master, tracing its evolution from the *aqlām-i sitta* ("six scripts") to the definition of new rules and creation of a complete innovative style, while Ayşe Aldemir's article "Şeyh Hamdullah and His Contemporaries at the Sakıp Sabancı Museum" presents us with the collection of extraordinary works bearing the colophon of Şeyh Hamdullah and other important calligraphers of his time at the museum.

This volume is an important contribution to the exploration of calligraphy as a shared cultural heritage in the Islamic world as well as the important role it had within Ottoman culture. It also demonstrates how the appreciation of art promoted the movement and migration of artists and the building of networks that continued to operate despite political boundaries and conflicts. This resulted in the creation of books that, through the artists producing them, their owners, and their readers, were in a state of constant motion.

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