



BRILL



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VISUAL COSMOPOLITANISM AND CREATIVE TRANSLATION: ARTISTIC CONVERSATIONS WITH RENAISSANCE ITALY IN MEHMED II'S CONSTANTINOPLE

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/*Ḳoṣṭanṭiniyye* 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 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 (*Ḳoṣṭanṭiniyye*), 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-autonomous 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 Angioiello 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* (conscripting 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 *kuls* (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 *kuls*, 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

Mehmed II’s intimate circle featured the sons of defeated rulers, among whom Angioiello 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

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 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 'Arabshah (d. 1496) ranked this ten-cubit-wide "curtain" with lifelike natu-

realistic 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 medallion portraits appropriated two media 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 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.



Fig. 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.



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

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 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 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 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 panegyric 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 himself 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

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



Fig. 3. *Alexander Riding to Jerusalem*, ca. 1460. From the *İskandernâme* of Ahmedi. Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Cod. Or. XC [=57], fol. 256r. (Photo: courtesy of Serpil Bağcı)

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*,

şāhib-ķirān): “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 ‘Ali 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* (*İskandernâme*) 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 aspiration 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 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

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 “*Mogoliyya*” (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 Greco-Roman heritage being revived by humanists in the Latin West, partly due to translations from Arabic and Hebrew.³⁹ The hitherto unstudied 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 *Īskandarnāma* from Greek into Turkish,” as well as an “*Īskandarnāma* 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 *Īskandarnāma* 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 (Peloponnese) 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 “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 Propylaea, 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

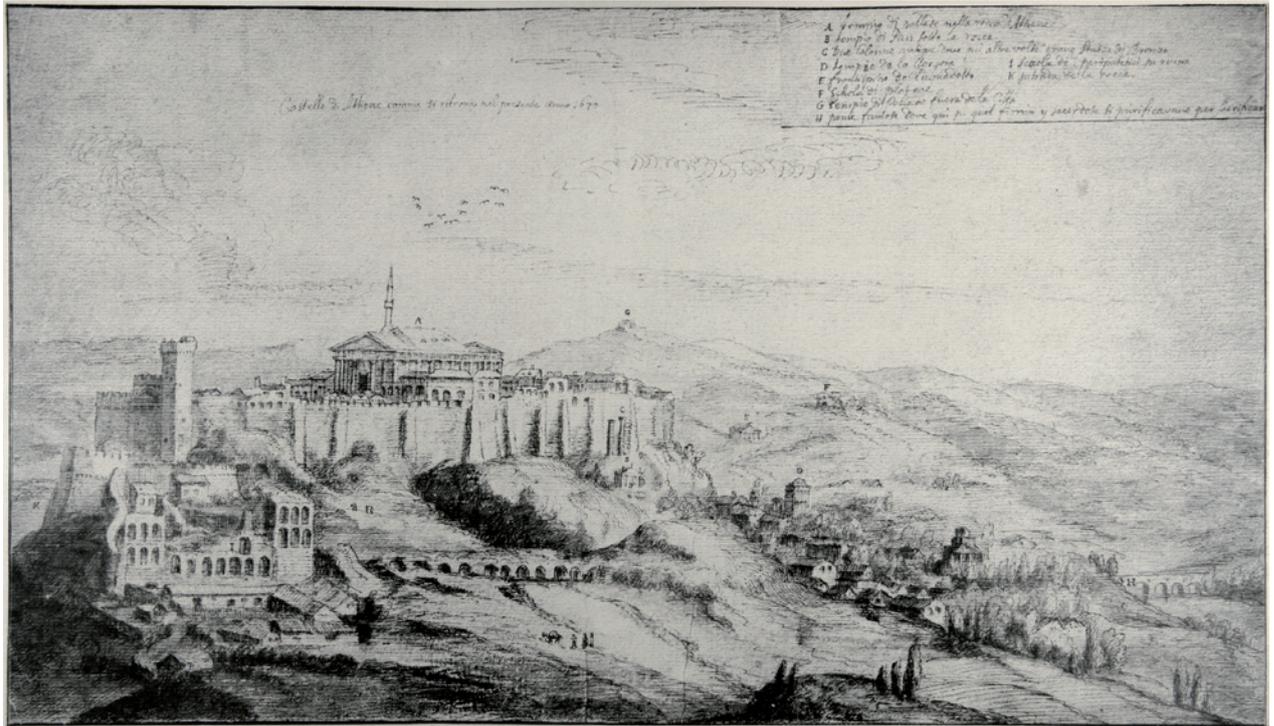


Fig. 4. Anonymous Italian view of the “Castle of Athens” in 1670: sites include (A) the Parthenon as a mosque, (F) “the school of Plato,” and (I) “the school of the Peripatetics [Aristotelians] in ruins.” Drawing on paper. Kunstmuseum, Bonn. (After Henri Omont, *Athènes au XVIIe siècle* [Paris, 1898],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

as one of the former territories of the “Empire of Constantinople,” which was “rightfully his.”⁴³

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 Teuceri of Virgil’s *Aeneid*) as descendants 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 panegyric poems in Greek in praise of Mehmed’s humanistic virtues, including his understanding of

Greek, thanks to which 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 penname ‘*Avnī* (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 chancery 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, chancery 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 Worshipers 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 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 inter-confessional 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” (*familiars*) 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

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 Haghia 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 (*Ayaşofya*), 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

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 copy of this letter, reports that it was presented to the



Fig. 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)



Fig. 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)

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 Lami'i (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

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 riyāsathā min qabl al-tawārikh* (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

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 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 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 form-

ing 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

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



a



b

Fig. 7, a and 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)

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 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” (*Ḳayser-i Rūm/İskender*) and the “Persian [Aqqoyunlu] Chosroes-cum-Darius” (*Kisrā-yi 'Acem/Dārā*), spurred on by competing claims for “global dominion” (*cihāngīrlīk*).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 (*capello alla grechescha*), replete with pearls of great value.”⁸⁷ The enigmatic engraving certainly intends to represent the sultan, despite its often-noted similarity to Pisanello's medal of John VIII Palaiologos wearing his characteristic imperial *capello* (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

Later Florentine images depict Alexander the Great with a dragon helmet instead of an Orientalizing imperial *capello* 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 merchants 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 deperson-



Fig. 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)



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

alized “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 titlature, 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

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 tenta-



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

tively dated to the 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 titlature: “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

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

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 *sultānīs* 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, 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 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 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 panegyric treatise in Turkish verse, combining an encomium of Mehmed II with that of his mosque complex, which may have echoed the sixth-century ekphrasis 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 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]" (*Ayaşofya kārñamesi resminde bir ulu cāmī' bünyād itdi ki, cemī'-i şanāyi'-i Ayaşofyaya cāmī' olduğından ğayrı, taşarrūfāt-ı müte'ahhurin üzre nev'-i şive-i taze ve hüsn-i bī-endāze bulup, nūrāniyetde mu'cize-i yed-i beyzāsı zāhirdür*). 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 Meh-

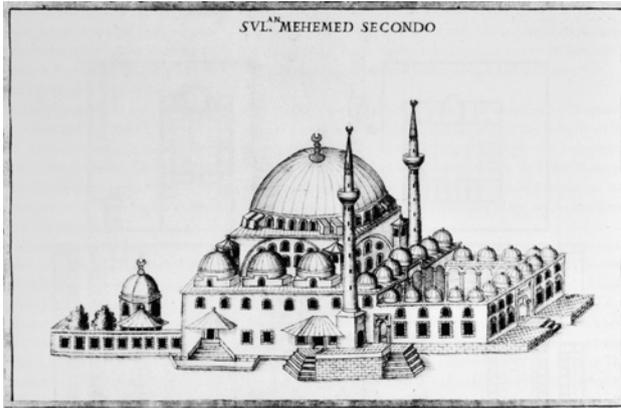


Fig. 11. Francesco Scarella, funerary mosque of Mehmed II in Istanbul, 1686. Ink drawing on paper. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 8627. (Photo: courtesy of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek)

med'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. 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" (*'ilm wa 'irfān*). With its record number of eight madrasas (which came to be known as *Semāniyye* after the "eight paradises") and its endowed library, the sultan's mosque complex resurrected the memory of

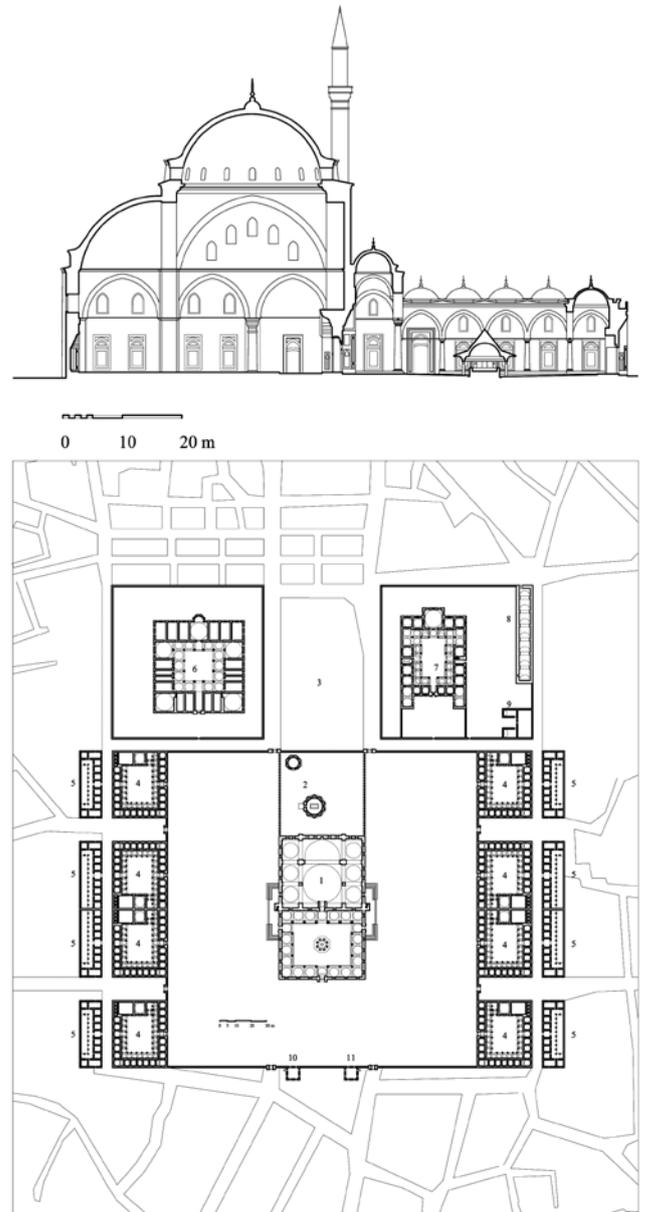


Fig. 12. Reconstruction plan of the mosque complex of Mehmed II in Istanbul, with a hypothetical cross-section of the mosque: (1) mosque, (2) mausolea of Mehmed II and Gülbahar Hatun, (3) formal garden, (4) madrasas, (5) preparatory schools, (6) hospital, (7) guesthouse, (8) caravansaray, (9) hospice,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



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

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 cur-

rently 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 com-

manding 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 feature 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 “Bursatype”), 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

According to Angiolello, who provides our only eyewitness account of Gentile Bellini’s visit, the sultan was particularly delighted by paintings and gardens (*si dilettaua de’ giardini et haveua 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 Constantinople, 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, 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 Constantino-ple 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 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" (*Koṣṭantinīyye*). 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 canon 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

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 Oṣmānī*). He adds that the towers of the outer fortress surrounding this garden were constructed in the "Turkish" (*türki*) 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 *de*pentor." 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



Fig. 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.



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



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

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 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.

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 guard-house for the whole region,” dotted with “fortifications in the hills.” Scutari (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.” 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 titlature 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 Imperatoris* is missing from the earlier, undated medal of 1478, which describes him as the “Ottoman Sultan Mehmed, Emperor of the Turks” (*Turcorum Imperator*).¹³⁹ 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 six-



Fig. 17, a–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)

teenth-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 dip-

lomatic 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



Fig. 17, c–d.

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 “Venetian,” 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 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



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

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 medallion 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 humanist 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 Comynes, 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

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 *firingi* manner contested the presumption that artistic innovations associated with the humanist project of



Fig. 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)



Fig. 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)

recovering Roman antiquity were the exclusive preserve of Christian Europe. As the true inheritor of Byzantium/Constantinople—where the Eastern Roman 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 medallion 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 cosmopolitan-



Fig. 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)

ism 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

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



Fig. 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)

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 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 conventions of royal portraiture, reflecting a desire to develop an Ottoman pictorial manner that injects a new realism into the Turco-Per-

sianate 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'azzin ki az ustādān-i mashūr-i firang-ast"). 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 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 (*müteferrika*) or an intimate (*muṣāhib*, *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 *müteferrika* corps, to which some of the sultan's intimates belonged, included painters (*depentori*) 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



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

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 *müteferrika* corps. I would like to suggest that the first half of the title he was given can be seen as the equivalent of *müteferrika*, while the second half corresponds to the rank of intimate (*muṣāhib*, *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 commen-



a

Fig. 24, a and 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)



b

Fig. 24b.

dation refers to the painter as “one of the most select and intimate members of the household,” and Angiolo reports that the sultan urged Bellini to speak freely with him. Since the artist had already been knighted as “*equus 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 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 por-

traiture 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

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 Angiolo’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



Fig. 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)

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 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 ğariba va tabarrukāt-i badī'yya mithl-i muraqqa'āt*). 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" (*cebeḥānesi ve ḥazīnesi ve bākī 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 (*ğulām*) trainees were donated to Baba Nakkaş in order to “acclimatize the elegant mode of design of greater Iran (*tarz-ı nāzik-i kalem-i ‘Acem*) within the clime of *Rūm* (Ottoman lands).” It is revealing to note that this initiative parallels 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 Kuşci. However, Mehmed was unsuccessful in his attempt to lure the Naqshbandi poet-scholar ‘Abd 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

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 Tanırdı 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



Fig. 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)

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 (*naqqāš*) of Sultan Mehmed” implies that he was no longer employed in Bayezid II’s court. The striking resemblance of the Ottoman-style wide colored, 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 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 medallion portraits of himself from Italian artists.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the new sultan perpetuated in many respects 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 ambassa-



Fig. 27, a–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)



b



c

Fig. 27b–c.

dor'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 likenesses 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

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 taşvırleri*), most likely silver-plated Byzantine icons, along with a "European figural tapestry" (*firengi muşavver 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 attempt to procure the ser-

vices 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" (*taşvır-i firengi, 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 Isma'il 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 "*fathnāma*" (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

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 (Freducci), 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 Süleyman 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 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 panegyric 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*).

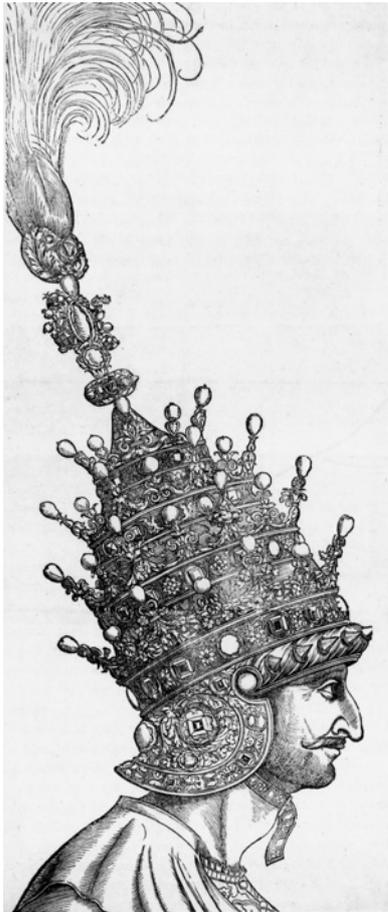


Fig. 28. Anonymous Venetian woodcut, *Portrait of Sultan Süleyman*, 1532. London, British Museum, P&D 1845.8-19.1726. (After W. Stirling Maxwell, *Examples of the Engraved Portraiture of the Sixteenth Century* [London, 1872])

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 superim-

posed 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 Alessandro 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 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 longlasting 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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NOTES

Author's note: This article is an expanded version of a keynote lecture I delivered at two international conferences, one in Boston, the other in London, in conjunction with an exhibition at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the National Gallery: Caroline Campbell, Alan Chong et al., *Bellini and the East* (exhibition catalogue) (Boston and London, 2005–6). I am grateful to the conference organizers, Alan Chong and Anna Contadini, for having invited me. Due to the delay in the publication of the joint conference proceedings, I have opted to update my article (submitted in 2007) with new bibliographic references and to publish it in this volume of *Muqarnas*.

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,” *Bysantiniska 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 ‘Abd 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.
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” (*kızıl elma*), see Lellouch and Yerasimos, *Les traditions apocalyptiques*. Rome is identified as the “*kızıl 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 Muhammets 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: Klâsik Dönem Sanatı ve Mimarlığı üzerine Denemeler*, ed. Mehmet Saçlıoğlu and Gülsün Tanyeli (Istanbul, 1993), 157-88.
6. As early as the tenth century, al-Mas'udi mentions that the Greeks referred to Constantinople as "Stanbûlin"; for historical names of the city whose present-day official name is Istanbul, see Halil İnalçık, *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*; İnalçık, "Istanbul"; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*. For references to the "firengi" 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 İnalçık, *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 *kul* 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 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’qūb 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.
 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: Courty Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353*, ed. 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; Aḥmad 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 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 plaisir 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 plaisirance”: 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. Borchartt, *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 ‘Arabshāh, *Tamerlane*, 216–17. An inventory of the Inner Treasury of the Topkapı Palace dated 1505 cites a “European figural tapestry” (*firengi muşavver 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.
 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 Âli reports that the "figural painter (*muşavvir*)" Sinan Beg, who grew up in the palace of Mehmed II, was "the pupil of the European (*efrenci*) named Mastori Pavli, who was one of the European masters (*firenk üstâdlarından*) raised and nurtured in Venice and became outstanding among the painters (*nakķkâşân*) in his field; and the aforementioned Pavli, in turn, was the pupil of the skilled designer (*ressâm*) named Damiyan." Sinan Beg, the "best of the Ottoman painters (*nakķkâşân-i Rûm*) in portraiture (*şebih yazma*)," had a pupil named Şiblizade Ahmed, who was from Bursa; see Mustafa Âli, *Menâkıb-i Hünerverân*, 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 Âli'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 Illusstrissimo Signor*," who should be treated well because he was favored by the sultan (p. 331); "*Sinambei...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 Sa'ati" (*şâhibü'l-kabr el-merhûm el-mağfür el-şâ'id el-şehîd nakķkâş-ı Sultân Mehemmed Sinân Beg ibn Sa'âtî*). 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" (*şâhib el-kubbe el-sultânîyye*) and interprets the patronymic "ibn Sa'ati" as "son of the clockmaker," but it could also mean "son of the timekeeper": see J. M. Rog-ers, "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).
 22. 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.
 23. 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 (Fiervanti), 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.

- 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.
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 Medalion 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.
26. For the crown prince's naval raids and Kaşifi's Persian chronicle, see İnalçık, *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, *Tavārikh-i Āl-i 'Osmān*, which was commissioned by the sultan from Mevlana Şehdi and modeled on Firdawsī's *Shāhnāma*, is lost. The poet composed ten thousand couplets but died before completing it: see Gönül Tekin, "Fatih Devri Türk Edebiyatı," in *İstanbul Armağan: 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 'Ali b. Muzaffar al-Tusi, who lived in the Ottoman Empire for twenty-one years and adopted the penname Ma'ālī (or Mu'ālī), see Robert Anhegger, "Mu'ālī'nin Hünkarnāmesi," *Tarih Dergisi* 1 (1949): 145–66; Refet Yalçın Balata, "Hünkarnāma (Tavārikh-i Āl-i Osmān) Mīr Sayyīd 'Alī b. Muzaffar-i Ma'ālī" (Ph.D. diss., Istanbul University, 1992).
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 "Ja'qūb 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, *Forschun-*

- gen und Funde im Serai, mit einem Verzeichnis der nichtislamischen Handschriften im Topkapı 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, Bertrand 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: Târih-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.
36. The final updated version of Ahmedi's *İskendernâme* was presented to Bayezid I's son and successor, Süleyman Çelebi (d. 1411). One of the two illustrated manuscripts is in Venice, Bibliotheca Marciana (Cod. Or. XC [=57]): see E. J. Grube, "The Date of the Venice Iskandar-nâme," *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-nâme' by Aḥmedi," *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).
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.
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 Pal-

- ace Library,” *İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi Kütüphaneçilik Dergisi* 3 (1992): 5–66; İsmail Erünsal, “A Brief Survey of the Development of Turkish Library Catalogues,” in *M. Uğur Derman Festschrift*, ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul, 2000), 271–83. In 2004, thanks to the help of Andrés Riedlmayer, I obtained a microfilm of this manuscript from Hungary, Magyar Tudományos Akademia Künyvtara Keleti Gyűjtement, 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*. 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.” The first page of the inventory has two chronograms providing the date 959 (1552), but the exclusion of Ottoman chronicles written for rulers after Bayezid II shows that it is a copy of the original catalogue compiled in 908 (1502–3) by the scholar ‘Atufi (Hayreddin Hızır b. Mahmud b. Ömer-i Kastamonî [d. 1541]), 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 focuses on its history books and related topics: Miklós Maróth, “The Library of Sultan Bayazıt 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: *Kitâb al-aḥwâl wa al-akḥbâr al-İskandariyya wa akḥbâr ḥukamâ’ zamân al-İskandar al-mazbûr fî al-tawârîkh*. 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 (Ms. Fatih 5323, and Ayasofya 4260), see Mario Grignaschi, “Les *Rasâ’il ‘Aristâtâlîsa ilâ-l-İskandar* 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.
 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 celui 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” (*lo’nperto 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.
 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 simi-

- larly remarks, "Fortunate are you who happened upon a minstrel such as Homer": see Pseudo-Callisthenes, *The Romance of Alexander the Great*, trans. Albert Murgdich 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.
 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 Teucry, 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 anti-type 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 Teucric 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 Aydin 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 Bayraktar, "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.
 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 recen-

- sion 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 manuscrit 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 Millennial 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 İlmî 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 *İskandarnâme* 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 kitâb yamsîtûs al-wathanî fi madhâhib ‘abadat al-aşnâm*, and *Tarjama kitâb yamsîtûs al-wathanî tarjamat thâniyatan fi madhâhib ‘abadat al-aşnâm*. 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 manuscrit 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.
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 *protoves-tiarios* (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 Bîcân (d. ca. 1466), *Dürr-i Mekkün*, ed. A. Demirtaş (Istanbul, 2009), fols. 84v–87v.
 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 Arisotelians 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 Münşeat 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 Lami’i is cited in Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, 508; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, 391n16. This Naqshbandi poet was the grandson of the painter ‘Ali 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.

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 İnalçık, "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 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 Mehmed 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 quadragesimum 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 Phocaea); his Jewish physician, Jacopo of Gaeta, the Jewish "Salomone Cifutti" (from Turkish "Çifit," 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, "Bau-

- planung 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 Mi'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.
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 *'ameldâr*, 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 ettesoriero* (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, *tughras* 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 (*inzierno*); 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 Mehmed II," 23–24.
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.
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 Finoc-

- chi Ghersi, "Bessarione e la basilica romana dei Santi XII Apostoli," in Fiacadori, *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.
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 (*kayşer*):" 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.
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 *capello*, 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.
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 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 İnalçık, "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. 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.
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, moustachioed 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 associ-

- ated 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-İslâm Vesikalari,” *İstanbul Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1 (1955): 42–57; in the Dubrovnik documents, Mehmed’s titlature 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.
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 Selongey in 1460. For earlier dates proposed in former studies, see Thuasne, *Gentile Bellini*, 131n (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 Ma'ālī, written ca. 1474 and titled *Khunkār-nāma*, Mehmed II is referred to as “Shah of the Shahs of the World and Emperor” (*shāhanshāh-i jahān va khunkār-khān*): see Balata, “Hunkār-nāma.” 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 *cavaliere* 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.
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 Şükru'llah, *Behcetü'ttevârîh*, in *Osmanlı Tarihleri I*, ed. N. Atsız (Istanbul, 1947), 37–76. Another chronicle ending with Mehmed II's reign, Enveri's Turkish *Düstürnâme*, 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-Feth / Abü'l-Fath*).
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, paralleling 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.
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; Hubert 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.
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-jāmi' al-jadid / yeni cāmi'*) in the various versions of Mehmed II's *waqfiyya*: see, for example, Öz, *Zwei Stiftungsurkunden*, 12, 14.

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, Konstantinopolis, 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 panegyric treatise as *Risāla fī madḥ Meḥemmed Khān ṭāb tharāhu wa madḥ al-jāmi' al-jadīd bi'l-turkiyya al-manzūma* (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.
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 Mi'mârîsinde 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.
116. The Arabic inscriptions are recorded in Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi'mârîsinde 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 traité*, 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*.
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.
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 sultani 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.
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," *Istanbul 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 Beccati, *La Colonna coelide 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 Grémois (exhibition catalogue) (Paris, 2001), 66–70, pls. XII–XXXIII; a similar series of drawings is preserved in Princeton University (pp. 67–68). Beccati argues that Bellini could have obtained special permission from Mehmed II to record the reliefs *in situ*: see Beccati, *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 Beccati's explanation and concludes that Bellini's authorship of the original drawings is not unreasonable: see Goguel in Auzépy and Grémois, *Byzance retrouvée*, 68.
123. Bayezid II's dream is mentioned in Lokman b. Seyyid Hüseyin, *Hünernâme*, 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 Theodosio I a Costantinopoli," *Milioni* 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 Byzan-

- tine 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 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, *Büldlexikon*, 388; Barsanti, “Il Foro di Theodosio,” 9, 14; Goguel’s entry in Auzépy and Grémois, *Byzance retrouvée*, 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,” *Istanbul 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. Stichel, “Das Coliseo de Spiriti: ein Phantom. Ein Beitrag zur Erklärung der Stadtansicht vom Vavassore-Typus,” *Istanbul 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 watertank, are also seen in a painting in Lokman's *Hünernâme* (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, "Fâtiḥ 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 canons 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, canons, 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.
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 bazaari 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 quatità, 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.
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 'Ala 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." 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* (Istan-

- bul, 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.
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, Sienna, 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 ‘Iskendernâme als politische Zweckschrift aus der Zeit von Süleymân 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 carnosio, 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.
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 Gnadbrieff 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 III [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: SULTANUS MOHAMMETH 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 “Contantinople” 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 also equates the terms Byzantium and Constantinople: “Scripta in Constantinopoli in solio Celsitudinis nostre Bisantii”: reproduced in Babinger, “Ein vorgeblicher Gnad-brief 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.
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), 57115. The banner donated by Mehmed II to his Dulkadirid vassal featured a heraldic "golden crescent" (*mâhçe-i zerrîn*): 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*, 105–11184; 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 Sienna, 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.
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 East*, 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 Gentilis 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.
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 Commines*, 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 Commines. 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 Commines*, 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" (*Mehmed Boiuc*): see Spandouyn, *Petit traicté*, 314.
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 (*Szittyá* 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."
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.
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.
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.
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. Andoloro and Raby interpreted “*ibn-i mu’azzin*” 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.
166. The *Seated Scribe* and seven drawings, attributed by Andoloro 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 Mehmeds 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 penname Suzi, who dedicated a manuscript to Bayezid II, see Aysin Yoltar-Yıldırım, “A 1498–99 *Khusraw va Shūrīn*: 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 *Şehnâme-i Melik-i Ümmi* (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.
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 Mehmeds 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.
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 derivativeness 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: "Volsse 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 Mehmeds 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).
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 pageboy 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 Türân-zemînden gelen misâfirinüñ ba'zuları resm-i şerîfin nakkâşlara çekdirüp diyârlarına îletdükde...*):" see Lokman b. Seyyid Hüseyin, *Hünernâme*, 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 hajj soon thereafter came to Istanbul to discuss the architectural symbolism of the painting with the Timurid scholar Ali Kuşçu (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 'Ali-Sher Nava'i, 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, *Münşeâtü's-selâtin*, 2 vols. (Istanbul 1264–65 [1847–49]), 1:276–78.
179. The captured princes were Yusuf Beg (Yusufche Mirza), Zaynal Beg, 'Omar 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 notation, see Feridun Ahmed, *Münşeâtü's-selâtin*, 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, *Münşeâtü's-selâtin*, 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 Aqqoyunlu: Clan, Confederation, Empire* (Minneapolis, 1976), 127–37.
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 ('Acem), where he had previously joined the Naqshbandi order, Mehmed II gave him slave-servant apprentices to train (*taraf-ı şehriyâriden birkaç gülâm in'âm olunup tarz-ı nâzik-i kalem-i 'Acem iklîm-i Rûmda şâyî' olmağışın ta'lîm olunmaların murâd 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 Kuşçu 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 *Rûmî* style that was clearly distinguished from the 'Acemî tradition: see Necipoğlu, "L'idée de décor," 10–23. For an English translation of the work commissioned from Jami by Mehmed II, see Jāmī, *The Precious Pearl (al-Durrah al-fākhirah), Together with His Glosses and the Commentary of 'Abd 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 Taşköprülüzâde (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, Ya'qub, resumed cordial diplomatic relations with Bayezid II: see Woods, *The Aqqoyunlu*, 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.
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.
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), 11–25. 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 janisaries 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.
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 Shūrīn*," 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 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 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 Bâyezîd'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," 56 n. 14. 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 Maximilian 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.
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 Linardo 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. Beyazîd 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 Isma'îl I and congratulated Selim I's victory in Çaldıran: see Selâhatin 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 "künstliche 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 Çalderân 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 Studi 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.
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 Gülrü Necipoğlu, "The Dome of the Rock as Palimpsest: 'Abd 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).
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 Comunale, 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 *bailos* 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.
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 *Süleymännâme* 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 *İskendernâme* translated from Latin into Ottoman Turkish for Sultan Süleyman by his court interpreter, Tercüman Mahmud, is published in Hazai, “Ein ‘İskendernâme.” 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. 41–16). 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 Millenium: 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,” *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* 54, 3 (2003): 105–49.
197. Cited in Necipoğlu, “Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power,” 409n34.
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 chancery 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’likizāde’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.