

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND EUROPE: CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

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THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND EUROPE: CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS¹

Prof. Dr. Günsel Renda²

Although the Islamic world and Christian Europe had been in contact since the westward expansion of Islam, scholars in the past were interested in the political and economic history of the two worlds, wars and conflicts, diplomatic and commercial relations rather than interactions in art. Fortunately recent research has thrown light upon the cultural exchange between Europe and the Islamic world revealing the fact that Islamic and Western art interacted with each other over the centuries. This study covers mainly the cultural encounters between Europe and the Ottomans who had become immediate neighbours on the Balkans and the Mediterranean after the Ottoman state expanded into Central Europe.³ The two cultures met in different geographies under different conditions and through the centuries the rulers and art patrons as much as the political, diplomatic and trade relations had a great role in the cultural exchange. Different as the two artistic traditions may seem cultural contacts enriched each other's artistic and technical achievements, little affected by wars and conflicts of belief.⁴

Sultan Mehmed II is considered as one of the rare rulers who changed the course of world history but less known is his art patronage that left deep traces in the Western and Eastern world. Mehmed II, who was interested in ancient history and Western culture from an early age, was the first Ottoman ruler who had cultural relations with the West. - He enriched his library with a great number of scientific books written in various languages in the fields of geography, medicine, history and philosophy. Among these were Bibles and classical Greek works. Giorgios Amirutzes of Trabezond produced a world map for the sultan by making use of Ptolemy's *Geographike*.⁵ In the Topkapi Palace, there is a Latin copy of the *Geographike* and an Italian translation by Berlinghieri Fiorentino dedicated to Mehmed II (TSM GI84).

Italian and Catalan maps and portolans also reached the palace in this period.⁶ In addition to scientific books and maps Italian engravings depicting mythological and religious scenes found their way to the Sultan's library.⁷

¹ This article was first published in the *Cultural Contacts in Building a Universal Civilisation: Islamic Contributions*. Edited by Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu. Istanbul: IRCICA, 2005. This book can be obtained from IRCICA publication on their official website: www.ircica.org. We are grateful to Dr. Halit Eren, General Director of IRCICA for allowing publication.

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³ This article is based on the chapter by the author, Renda, G., "Europe and the Ottomans: Interactions in Art", in *Ottoman Civilization* (ed. H. Inalcik, G. Renda), Istanbul 2000, 1048-1089. Also see the chapter in the same book Inalcik, H., "Mutual Political and Cultural Influences between Europe and the Ottomans", 1090-1121.

⁴ The 1973 New York, 1983 Vienna and Munster, 1989 Berlin, 1995 Dresden exhibitions and their catalogues published constitute the most important sources on this subject: A. N. St. Clair, *The Image of the Turk in Europe* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973); *Die Turken vor Wien, Europa und die Entscheidung an der Donau 1638*. *Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien* (Vienna, 1983); *Osterreich und Osmanen*. *Osterreichisches Nationalbibliothek und Osterreichische Staatarchiv* (Vienna, 1983); *Niederbsterreich im Turkenjahr 1683*. *Osterreichisches Zinnfigurenmuseum im Scholl Pottenbrunn* (St. Polten, 1983); *Was von den Turken blieb* (Perchtoldsdorf, 1983); *Munster, Wien und die Türken 1683-1983* (Munster, 1983); *Europa und der Orient. 800-1900* (Berlin, 1989); *Im Lichte des Halbmonds. Das Abendland und der türkische Orient* (Dresden, 1995).

⁵ Important information is given about Mehmed II's library and the scientific circles in Istanbul. See J. Raby, "Mehmed the Conqueror's Greek Scriptorium", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983): 15-34.

⁶ The most interesting is a map of Venice /TSM HI829. For the maps that came to the palace in this period see *Istanbul Topkapi Sarayi*

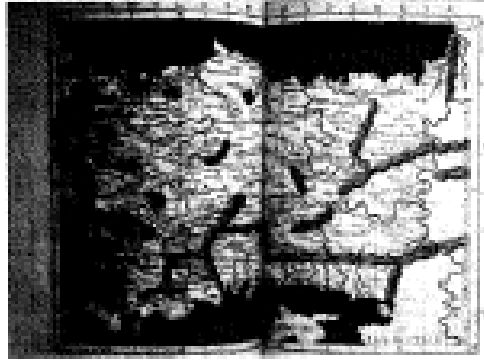


Figure 1. Map of Anatolia from Ptolemy's Geographike translated by Berlinghieri Fiorentino and dedicated to Mehmed II, Topkapi Palace Museum, G184.

Mehmed II's personality, politics and his interest in the Western world led to the spread of the image of the Turks in European art. The first portrait of the sultan produced in Europe has the inscription *El Turco* and it is based on the image of the Byzantine emperor Johannes Paleologus found on a medal struck on the occasion of the council that convened in Florence in 1438 with the purpose of uniting Eastern and Western churches.⁸



*Figure 2. Portrait of Mehmed II inscribed *El Turco*, shown in the attire of the Byzantine king Johannes Paleologus, ca. 1460, Topkapi Palace Museum H 2153.*

Mehmed II, who followed the developments in the Renaissance art and science, wanted to immortalize his own image with medals and portraits, like the Greek and Roman rulers and the Renaissance humanists whose portraits were objects of diplomatic and cultural exchange.⁹ He requested artists from several rulers in Italy.¹⁰ Sent by Ferdinand Ferrante II, the King of Naples, Costanzo da Ferrara, was the first Italian artist

Muzesi ve Venedik Correr Muzesi Koleksiyonlarındaki XIV-XVIII Yuzyl Portolan ve Deniz Haritalari. Portolani e Carte Nautiche XIV-XVIII Secolo dalle Collezioni del Museo Correr-Venezia Museo del Topkapi-Istanbul (Istanbul, 1994), Nos. 4, 6, 8.

⁷ J. Raby, "Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album", *Islamic Art 1* (1981): 42-49.

⁸ J. Raby, "Opening Gambits", in *the Sultan's Portrait* (Istanbul, 2000), 65.

⁹ L. Jardine and J. Brotton, *Global Interests. Renaissance Art between East and West* (New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 2000), 23-25.

¹⁰ Mehmed II's patronage of the European artists is discussed in detail by J. Raby, "Opening Gambits", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 64-72.

who came to the Ottoman palace. This Venetian medallist stayed in Istanbul in the mid-1470s and struck medals with portraits of the Conqueror.¹¹ After the peace agreement made with Venice in 1479, political and cultural exchanges with the Venetians had increased. The sultan asked from the doge of Venice for a bronze caster who could make medals and a painter. Gentile Bellini came and worked for the sultan in Istanbul, struck a medal with the sultan's portrait and produced other portraits and city views. Moreover, it is thought that the Sultan sent this medal to Lorenzo dei Medici with whom he had good relations. Mehmed II had arrested in Istanbul the leader of the Pazzi uprising against the Medicis.¹²



Figure 3. Portrait of Mehmed II painted by Gentile Bellini, London National Gallery.

Bellini's most important work is the oil portrait that is now at the National Gallery in London. In this portrait, Bellini used the Renaissance portrait model but still followed an oriental iconography. According to recent research, the crowns on both sides of the arch in the portrait symbolize the Ottoman sultans preceding Mehmed II. The seventh crown that of the reigning Sultan Mehmed is found on the embroidered cover.¹³ The important point is that Mehmed II obtained what he wanted and the portrait medals he commissioned and their copies made in Europe provided for the spread of the image of the sultan in Europe.¹⁴

The activities of the European masters undoubtedly influenced the local artists working at the Conqueror's ateliers. A portrait of the sultan attributed to a local artist, Sinan Bey, shows how borrowings from Western painting were transformed into Islamic norms. Bellini as well as many other fifteenth and sixteenth century painters, led by the Venetian painters, used figures dressed in Turkish costumes in their paintings depicting scenes from the Bible. It is known that in this period the Ottoman fabrics and carpets were imported to

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹² J. Raby, "Opening Gambits", *the Sultan's Portrait*, 68.

¹³ M. Pedani-Fabris, "The Portrait of Mehmed II: Gentile Bellini. The Making of an Imperial Image", *Art Turc/Turkish Art, 10th International Congress of Turkish Art, Geneva, 17-23 Sept. 1995, Actes/Proceedings* (Geneva, 1999), 555-558.

¹⁴ Archpriest Matteo Bosso saw the medals with portraits of the Conqueror. Moreover, when he met Cem Sultan, the Conqueror's son in Rome, he stated that he wondered whether or not there was a resemblance. See J. Raby, "Opening Gambits", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 69, footnote 26.

Italy by Italian merchants. Moreover, fabrics similar to these were produced in some of the Italian cities.¹⁵ Turkish carpets depicted in fifteenth century European paintings are proof of their popularity.¹⁶

Mehmed II's successor, Sultan Bayezid II, did not seem to share his father's interest in European painting, but he was aware of the activities of Italy's masters and requested architectural and engineering services from some of them. Leonardo da Vinci wrote a letter to the sultan making a proposal for a floating bridge on the Golden Horn. In fact, the drawing of such a bridge project is found in Leonardo's notebooks.¹⁷ Michelangelo also prepared a model for the same bridge and he even considered coming to Istanbul.¹⁸ Sultan Bayezid II, unlike his father, did not have an interest in portraits. However, it is interesting to note the first series of Ottoman sultan portraits was produced in Europe during his reign. This series of portraits ending with Bayezid II, is attributed to Felix Petancius, who painted the portraits by relying on the information provided by the Hungarian Embassy delegation that came to Istanbul in 1495. In this series, in scroll form, portraits of the first seven Ottoman sultans up until Sultan Bayezid II are placed in medallions.¹⁹ Such examples prove the growing interest in Europe in the Ottoman sultan portraits after Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror.



Figure 4. Leonardo da Vinci's project for a bridge over the Golden Horn. *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, vol. 1, 387.

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent as far as Central Europe and the important role the Ottomans played in the European balance of power caused an increase in interest as well as anxiety towards Turkey and the Turks. Two different approaches towards the Ottomans were encountered in the sixteenth century European art and culture. The first group were the books and materials produced with the reaction and fear against the crushing, threatening power of the Turks. Prejudiced propaganda publications were prepared against the expansion policy of the Ottomans. In the newspapers and bulletins published in the Germanic countries there were

¹⁵ H. Inalcik, "Harîr (Silk): The Ottoman Empire", *Encyclopedia of Islam III* (Leiden and London, 1971), 211-218.

¹⁶ S. Yetkin, *Turkish Historical Carpets* (Istanbul, 1981), 47, 67, 71, 72.

¹⁷ Leonardo's project and this letter now kept in the Topkapi Palace were published by F. Babinger: "Vier Bauvorschl ge Lionardo da Vincis an Sultan Bajezid II (1502-3)". *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Gottingen I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, I (1952), 1-20; In the section describing the East of the Mediterranean in Leonardo's notebooks there are notes related to the Taurus Mountains, Cilicia and even the Bosphorus. However, it is not certain whether or not he ever went there himself. J. Richter, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (arranged and rendered into English and introduced by Edward Me Curdy), vol. 1 (New York, 1889), 215, 387.

¹⁸ Vasari, who wrote the biographies of the Renaissance masters towards the end of the sixteenth century, in his *Le Vite* indicates that Michelangelo planned to go to Istanbul; J. Raby, "Opening Gambits", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 72, footnote 46.

¹⁹ A scroll similar to this scroll at the Budapest National Library is in Madrid; see *The Sultan's Portrait*, Cat. No. 9.

pictures with a political content carrying negative images of the Turks.²⁰ The second group was composed of more objective publications and works of art that illustrated Ottoman country and culture.²¹ Several Europeans, who came to the Ottoman country with various political and diplomatic purposes, wrote books about the Ottoman Empire and had their books illustrated with paintings done by the artists who accompanied them or by the local artists they commissioned in Istanbul. In fact, travel books and illustrated books related to the Ottoman Empire became widespread in Europe after the period of Suleyman the Magnificent. Ottoman daily life and costumes and views of Istanbul, included in almost all of these, are documentary sources for the Ottoman Empire in this period. For example, Pieter Coecke van Aelst from Anvers, who came to the Ottoman capital in 1533 on behalf of the gobelin factory in Brussels to sell tapestries, stayed in Istanbul for a period of time and he made a series of drawings related to the Ottomans.²² Cosmographer Nicolas de Nicolay, who accompanied the French ambassador sent to Istanbul in 1553, also made numerous drawings documenting the Ottoman costumes and these paintings printed in his travel book in Lyon in 1568 became a documentary source for many artists in later years.²³ Melchior Lorichs from Flensburg, who came with the Ambassador Ogier Ghislain de Busbecq, sent by the Holy Roman Empire to the Ottoman court, produced the most realistic paintings depicting the period of Suleyman the Magnificent. Lorichs' Istanbul panorama and his drawings of various districts, streets, monuments in Istanbul and his costumes are important visual documents for the Ottoman Empire in this period.²⁴



Figure 5. Portrait of Suleyman the Magnificent by Melchior Lorichs, Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Suleyman the Magnificent is one of the Ottoman rulers most frequently portrayed in Europe. Undoubtedly, this is because of the significant role he played in European politics throughout his reign for forty-six years. Suleyman's alliance with Francois I, who was defeated by the Habsburgs in 1526 and his Hungarian

²⁰ J. Meyer zur Capellen and S. Bagci, "The Age of Magnificence" in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 96; also see footnote 6 in this article.

²¹ The costumes of Turkish women and men are included in the books by Abraham Bruyn and Jean-Jacques Boissard published in 1581. See C. D. Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought and Literature (1520-1660)* (Paris, 1938), 278; Three such books that were written and illustrated in the second half of the sixteenth century are at the Vienna National Library. Furthermore, similar examples are at the Mayer Memorial Museum in Jerusalem and the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

²² P. Coecke van Aelst, *Ces moeurs et fachons defaire de Turcs* (Antwerp ?, 1553).

²³ Nicolas de Nicolay, *Les quatres premiers livres de navigations et peregrinations orientates* (Lyon, 1568); For a new edition, see Nicolas de Nicolay, *Dans l'Empire de Soliman le Magnifique*, presente et annote par Marie-Christine Gomez-Geraud and Stephane Yerasimos (Paris, 1989).

²⁴ Lorichs wished to publish the pictures he drew in Istanbul in two different books, but his work could only be published in 1626 after his death: *Wolgerrissene und geschnittene Figuren in Kupfer und Holtz durch den Kunstreichen weitbermbten Melcher Lorck fur die Mahler Bildhauer unde Kunstliebenden an Tag gegeben, anno 1619*. The original of this publication did not last until the present, but copies have been produced. E. Fischer, *Melchior Lorck. Drawings from the Evelyn Collection, Stanor Park, England, and from the Department of Prints and Drawings* (Copenhagen: The Royal Museum of Fine Arts, 1962), 20-71; *Melchior Lorck in Turkey* (Copenhagen: The Royal Museum of

campaign against the Habsburgs is the most important political event of this period. In this manner, the Ottoman pressure on the Catholic Habsburgs facilitated the spread of Protestantism and Luther's success.²⁵ In fact, the portraits of the sultan became more widespread in Europe after his Mohacs campaign and the 1529 Vienna siege. As early as 1526, Albrecht Durer, drew the portrait of the Sultan. Tiziano, the Venetian artist, painted a bust portrait of Suleyman, and used images resembling the Sultan in some of his religious paintings copied from images that already existed. An interesting portrait, painted by Agostino Veneziano in 1535, depicts the sultan with a helmet decorated with precious jewels. This helmet, in the shape of a crown, was commissioned in 1532 to the Caorlini's, a Venetian jeweller family because Suleyman the Magnificent wanted to wear an imperial crown like the westerners to show his supremacy over the European rulers. In fact, sources indicate that the sultan wore this crown in a ceremony that was also attended by the Habsburg ambassadors in Nis before the 1532 campaign.²⁶ The conquests and personal life of the Sultan were the source of inspiration for many literary works, ballets and operas in Europe after the sixteenth century. Not only the sultan himself, but his wife Hurrem Sultan (Roxelana) and his Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha were also included in plays and librettos. Even Cervantes and Lope De Vega, two famous Spanish authors, wrote many plays about the Turks. Among these, Cervantes' *La Gran Sultana* and *El Trato de Constantinopl* are among the most important.



Figure 6. *The Port of Toulon, painted by Matrakci Nasuh, Suleymannâme, ca. 1545, Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1608.*

Suleyman the Magnificent's relations and political alliances established with France left deep marks on both sides. The Ottoman-French alliance mentioned above provided for the Ottomans expansion and sovereignty in the Mediterranean. The sea campaigns of the Ottomans initiated the Ottoman science of geography. Undoubtedly, the Ottomans were also using the Portuguese, Catalan and Italian maps that reached the Ottoman capital. In fact, Piri Reis, the famous cartographer of the period, made his world map, which is now lost except for a fragment, by using Christopher Columbus' map, and therefore, is an important product of the cultural exchange in the Mediterranean. He also wrote his *Kitab-i Bahriye* (Book of navigation) in this milieu. The city views in *Kitab-i Bahriye* are the forerunners of Ottoman topographical

Fine Arts, 1990).

²⁵ For the letter written to Suleyman the Magnificent by Francis Fs mother and the text of the correspondence on this subject see H. Inalcik, "Mutual Political and Cultural Influences between Europe and the Ottomans", *Ottoman Civilization*, 1062.

²⁶ O. Kurz, "A Golden Helmet made in Venice for Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent", *Gazette des Beaux arts* 74 (1969): 249-258; G. Necipoglu, "Suleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Habsburg Rivalry", *The Art Bulletin* 71/3 (September 1989): 401-427.

paintings that developed as a separate genre.²⁷ Matrakci Nasuh, the famous historian and miniature artist of Suleyman's period, while describing the Sultan's Hungarian campaign and Admiral Barbarossa's Mediterranean campaign, drew the different states in these campaigns, the cities, towns and ports and documented the topography of these regions. In other words, from then on images related to Europe were encountered in Ottoman painting. Haydar Reis (Nigari), another miniature artist in the same period, not only portrayed the sultans, but also painted portraits of King Charles V and King Francois I, the two leading European rulers.²⁸



Figure 7. Portrait of François painted by Ottoman artist Nigari, ca. 1540's, Boston Fogg Museum 85. 214.

Nigari as an artist close to the palace circles, must have seen some European engravings in the palace, as he used the form of busts and 3/4 profile. In fact, it is believed that a series of Ottoman sultan portraits painted by Nigari reached France during the Mediterranean campaign of Barbarossa in 1543. These portraits were given by Barbarossa to Virginio Orsini, the French admiral. Paolo Giovio, the Italian historian and collector, who collected the portraits of famous people of the period at his villa in Como, borrowed the sultans' portraits from him and had them copied by Tobias Stimmer, the Swiss artist, and the woodcut prints were published in Giovio's book *Elogia Virorum Bellica Virtute Illustrum*.²⁹

The trade privileges granted by Sultan Suleyman to the European countries increased the cultural relations in both directions. Trade increased with France, England and Holland, as well as Venice. While the Ottomans purchased weapons and armaments from Europe, the Ottoman carpets, fabrics, ceramics, marbled paper and leather bindings found customers in Europe. In a short period of time, local ateliers were formed in Europe to copy the Ottoman carpets and ceramics. It is sufficient to look at the works of

²⁷ For maps and atlases of European origin at the Topkapi Palace see A. Deismann, *Forschungen und Funde im Serai mit einem Verzeichnis der nicht-islamischen Handschriften im Topkapi Serai in Istanbul* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1933); E. H. van de Waal, "Manuscript Maps in the Topkapi Saray Library in Istanbul", *Imago Mundi* 23 (1969): 81-89; For the sixteenth century Ottoman cartography and topographic port portrayals see G. Renda, "Representations of Towns and Sea Charts of the Sixteenth Century and their Relation to Mediterranean Cartography", *Solimon le Magnifique et son temps. Actes du Colloque. Paris, 7-10 Mars 1990* (Paris, 1992), 279-298.

²⁸ These portraits, which were in the Binney collection at one time, are presently at the Fogg Museum in Boston. E. Binney, *Turkish Treasures from the Collection of Edwin Binney*, 3d ed. (Portland, Oregon, 1979), 25.

²⁹ For detailed information about the portraits in the Giovio collection see L. Klinger and J. Raby, "Barbarossa and Sinan. A Portrait of Two Ottoman Corsairs from the Collection of Paolo Giovio", *Venezia e l'Oriente Vicino. Atti del primo congresso internazionale sull'arte Islamica 9-12 XII 1986*, ed. E. Grube (Venice, 1989), 47-59; F. Berksoy, "Paolo Giovio'nun Dogu Ilgisi ve Osmanli Sultan Portreleri" (Paolo Giovio's interest in the Orient and the Ottoman sultan portraits), *Aptullah Kuran icin Yazilar/Essays in Honour of Aptullah Kuran*, eds. C. Kafescioglu and L. Thys-Senocak (Istanbul, 1999), 143-160; in addition, for the connections between the Nigari and Giovio series see J. Raby, "From Europe to Istanbul", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 141-150.

the sixteenth century painters such as Hans Holbein or Lorenzo Lotto, to observe to what an extent the Ottoman carpets had become widespread. Moreover, the carpets depicted in these paintings have caused the Ottoman carpets to be classified as Holbein, Memling or Lotto carpets. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Usak carpets were produced in England and Belgium under the name of Turkish carpets.³⁰ Copies of the Iznik ceramics were made in centers such as Liguria and Padua in Italy.³¹

An interesting example of the cultural exchange with Europe is the order placed by the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha through the Venetian *balio* in Istanbul, during the reign of Sultan Murad III Sokollu, who must have seen the illustrated dynastic histories in Europe, wished to have a manuscript similar to these produced and commissioned the official court poet of the period and the renown miniature artist Nakkas Osman, to prepare a book containing the information related to all the Ottoman sultans illustrated with their portraits. He thought that it would be proper to refer to sultan portraits in Europe for the images of the earlier sultans. Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, who heard that such a series existed in Venice, asked the Venetian *balio* to have these brought to Istanbul. These oil portraits produced in the Veronese workshop, reached Istanbul in 1579 and most of them are still kept at the Topkapi Palace Museum.³² Osman, used this series and also referred to certain historical texts, studied the authentic costumes of the previous sultans kept at the palace or in their mausoleum and then drew the portraits of the twelve Ottoman sultans from Sultan Osman through Sultan Murad III. Osman did not use the bust form in these portraits.



Figure 8. Portrait of Sultan Süleyman painted by painter Osman, 1579, *Kiyafat al-insaniya fi shemâil al-Osmaniya*, Topkapi Palace Museum H 1563.

The sultans sit with their knees bent, holding a handkerchief or a flower in their hands in the Eastern tradition. However, their common feature with the European portraits is the 3/4 profile model. In this manuscript, painter Osman formed the iconography for sultan portraits that was used for centuries in Ottoman miniature painting. In fact, this manuscript, the *Semâilname* is the Islamicized version of the illustrated Western biographical histories.

³⁰ S. Yetkin, *Turkish Historical Carpets* (Istanbul, 1981), 79; the examples found in some English collections prove that these carpets were produced in England as well. See J. Mills, *Carpets in Pictures. Themes and Painters in the National Gallery* (London, 1975); J. Mills, "The Turkish Carpet in the Paintings of Western Europe", *Turkish Carpets from the 13th-18th Centuries. Exhibition held at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts* (Istanbul, 26 September-12 November 1996), 38-44.

³¹ J. Raby, "The European Connection", *Iznik, The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey*, eds. N. Atasoy and J. Raby (London, 1989), 264-268

³² For the Veronese series portraits see *The Sultan's Portrait*, 150-163.

With the increase in the diplomatic relations with Europe a more realistic Turkish image appeared in the European art of the seventeenth century. This is especially reflected by those paintings made by the artists accompanying the European embassy delegations to the Ottoman court. The Austrian artists who came with the embassy delegation sent to Sultan Murad IV by the Austrian King Ferdinand in 1628 under the leadership of Ludwig Kuefstein, depicted receptions and audiences attended by the ambassador. These paintings are exhibited at the chateau belonging to the Kuefstein family at Grillenstein and at the Perchtoldsdorf Museum in Vienna.³³ In 1641, the French ambassador Jean de la Haye was sent to Istanbul to renew the capitulations. George de la Chapelle, an artist accompanying him, painted mostly the women in the Ottoman Empire and printed them in 1648 in his book called *Receuil de divers portraits de principales dames de la Porte du grand turc*.³⁴ In the background of George de la Chapelle's figures are scenery from Istanbul documenting various districts of the city.³⁵ Paintings depicting the sultan, viziers and the dignitaries painted by the painter in the service of Claes Ralamb, who was sent as ambassador to Sultan Mehmed IV in 1657, are at the Nordiska Museet in Stockholm.³⁶

The ambassadors sent by the Ottomans to the European capital cities also had a share in the cultural relations with the Europeans. The visits of the Ottoman embassy delegations to Europe aroused great interest. Suleyman Aga, sent in 1669 by Sultan Mehmed IV to King Louis XIV, was so influential and after this, Turkish costumes started to be worn at masked balls organized at the court. Moliere added a Turkish ceremony to the play called *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* and Suleyman Aga was depicted as a comical character.³⁷ It is said that Suleyman Aga was accommodated at a palace decorated in the Ottoman style and here the visitors were offered delicious meals and coffee. This played a role in the affectation for coffee in France. Coffee started to be used in Europe as of the seventeenth century. Sources indicate that it reached Venice around 1615 and the first coffeehouse there was opened in 1630.³⁸ After a short while it became widespread in London as well. It is believed that coffee became popular in Vienna after the 1683 campaign and that the first coffeehouse there was opened by Count Kolschitzky, a translator of Polish origin. However, coffee must have been known in 1665 during the visit of Ambassador Kara Mehmed Aga to Vienna.³⁹ The embassy delegation of Kara Mehmed Aga had a great impact on music. The European composers occasionally used the melodies of the military band music. The *Seyahatname* (Travel Book) by Evliya Celebi, who accompanied Kara Mehmed Aga to Europe, is considered to be the first book written by a Turk related to Europe. From then on, the Ottomans started to become better acquainted with Europe and

³³ The scenes at the Perchtoldsdorf Museum have been published: K. Těpely, *Die Kaiserliche Grossbotschaft an Sultan Murad IV in Jahre 1638. Des Freiherrn Hans Ludwig von Kuefsteins Fahrt zur Hohen Pforte* (Vienna, 1976); In addition, they were published in the 1983 exhibition catalogue, *Was von den Turken blieb*; a portion of the Kuefstein collection was also exhibited in London in 1988. The paintings in the catalogue of this exhibition were attributed to the artists named Frans Hermann, Hans Gemminter and Valentin Mueller; *At the Sublime Porte. Ambassadors to the Ottoman Empire 1550-1800* (London: Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox, 1988).

³⁴ *The Sultan's Portrait*, Cat. No. 79; C. D. Rouillard, *the Turk in French History, Thought and Literature (1520-1660)* (Paris, 1938), 283-285.

³⁵ For a catalogue of the collection see *Begegnung swischen Orient und Okzident*, Landesmuseum Ptuj, 1992; *The Sultan's Portrait*, Cat. Nos. 81, 98, 99.

³⁶ Some of these paintings were in the Islamic exhibition held in Sweden in 1985: *Islam. Art and Culture*, Statens Historiska Museum (Stockholm, 1985), 201, 203; K. Adahl, "The Ralamb Paintings and the von Celsing Collection at Bibi Manor. Turkish Motifs from the 17th and 18th centuries in Sweden", *Milletlerarsi Turk Sanatlan Kongresi/9th International Congress of Turkish Art*, vol. 1 (Ankara, 1995), 13-17, fig. III, 1-2.

³⁷ H. Desmet Gregoire says that the visit of Suleyman Aga started the Turkish fashion (a la turca): *Le Divan Magique. L'Orient turc en France au XVIIIe siecle* (Paris, 1980), 18-19.

³⁸ F. Braudel, *The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible* (New York, 1981), 256-259.

³⁹ H. E. Jacob, *Coffee: The Epic of a Commodity* (New York, 1935), 44, 46, 77.

took an interest in European culture and science. In fact, many science books of European origin were translated into Turkish in the seventeenth century. Katip Celebi translated the book called *Atlas Minor* written by Jean Bleau, the Dutch geographer. He also wrote the books called *Cihannuma*, which is an important geographical source, and also *Irsad'ul-Heyara ila Tarih'il Yunan ve'n-Nasara*, which is related to Greek and Christian history.⁴⁰

In the seventeenth century, a great number of European engravings and books came to the Ottoman palace (TSM H2135, 2148, 2153).⁴¹ Figures wearing European costumes are encountered in the albums prepared during the reign of Sultan Ahmed I at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Illustrated albums, especially those with costume studies, started to be produced in Istanbul in this period, in these albums, which the English called *Costume Book* and the Germans called *Trachtenbuch*, there was occasionally a short introductory text, but most of the time there were only brief captions in Italian, French or English. Most of these were works of local masters, although there are some painted by European artists.⁴²

The books about Turkey and the Turks becoming widespread in Europe were the sources for the Turkish motifs used by several seventeenth century European artists. For example, Peter Paul Rubens, the renowned Flemish artist, used such albums when drawing his Turkish costumes.⁴³ Rembrandt drew Turkish figures as well. After the Ottomans granted trade rights to the Dutch in 1612, Ottoman carpets, metals and ceramics reached Holland and Ottoman motifs started to be used in Dutch art. Tiles and ceramics with Ottoman motifs were produced in the Delft ceramic ateliers. The tulip was the most popular decorative motif. The botanist Clusius, a Dutchman working for the Austrian court in Vienna, grew tulips from the bulbs, which had been brought to Vienna by Ambassador Busbecq in the sixteenth century and took the bulbs to Holland. Books were written about this flower and the tulip became a part of daily life. In a short period of time, the passion for tulips, called *tulipomania*, made the flower a popular theme for Dutch painters.⁴⁴

The eighteenth century is a period of balance, more correctly, a balance of power in European history. Both the Ottomans and the Europeans accepted equal terms and consciously wished to acquaint themselves with the cultures of one another after the 1683 Vienna defeat. In Austria Turkish motifs were used in minor arts, architecture and in objects of daily life. This cultural interaction is best displayed by architect J. L. von Hildebrandt in Vienna at the Belvedere palace, which has corner domes looking like an Ottoman tent with tassels or in the towers resembling minarets at the Karlskirche built by the renowned Austrian architect J. B. F. von Erlach.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ For more detailed information on Katip Celebi and the interest of the Ottomans in Western science see B. Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe* (Toronto, 1982).

⁴¹ In particular, the engravings belonging to the seventeenth century Dutch school are in the majority. There is a Virgin Mary and Jesus painting signed by Georg Wyns in an album of Ottoman origin at the Metropolitan Museum (67.266.7.5 r).

⁴² There are few examples from the beginning of the seventeenth century. The Mundy album (1974-6-17-013) dated 1618 and a second album (1928-3-23-046) belonging to the 1620s are in the British Museum. Approximately 11 albums made between 1640-1660 have been documented. G. Renda, "17. Yuzyıldan Bir Grup Kiyafet Albumu" (A group of seventeenth century costume albums) in *17. Yuzyil Osmanli Kultur ve Sanati, 19-20 Mart 1998 Sempozyum Bildirileri* (Istanbul, 1998), 153-178.

⁴³ O. Kurz, "The Turkish Dresses in the Costume Book of Rubens", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 23 (1972), 275-290.

⁴⁴ For the Turkish motifs on the Dutch ceramics and tiles see *The Tulip. A Symbol of Two Nations*, eds. M. Roding and H. Theunissen (Utrecht and Istanbul, 1993).

The Ottomans, after the Vienna defeat, consciously opened up to the West for the first time, accepted the technical superiority of the West and sent ambassadors to the European countries for longer periods of time, not only for political dialogue, but also to provide information in the fields of technology, science and culture. In 1721 Sultan Ahmed HI sent Ambassador Mehmed Celebi to the court of King Louis XV in Paris. Besides his diplomatic duties, Mehmed Celebi observed the military and technological developments, participated in social and cultural activities and wrote a *sefaretname* upon his return to Istanbul.⁴⁶ Mehmed Celebi also brought from France books related to architecture, some plans and drawings. These engravings and drawings with explanations in Ottoman Turkish, especially some related to the Versailles palace and gardens, are now kept in the Topkapi Palace Museum. Sources indicate that when Mehmed Celebi was in France he also took an interest in music and attended the operas and concerts. Both the visits of Mehmed Efendi and his son Said Efendi, who was sent with the same mission twenty years later in 1742, aroused great interest in Paris with the gifts they presented, the costumes they wore and their manners. These visits caused the French to become more closely acquainted with the Turks.⁴⁷ Turkish themes became widespread in literature, stage arts, painting and decoration; especially novels, ballets and operas depicting Turkish characters in fantastic decors followed one after the other. It became the fashion to wear Turkish costumes at balls and to have portraits made in Turkish costumes. Turkish motifs were used even in furniture and porcelain. Thus, this Turkish vogue, which started in France in the eighteenth century and also spread into the other European centres, was called *Turquerie*.

The Turkish affectation was very widely spread in literature.⁴⁸ Voltaire wrote his book called *Essais sur les Moeurs*, describing the characteristics of different countries, right after the visit of Said Efendi. C. S. Favart treated the relation between Sultan Suleyman and Hurrem Sultan in his comedy called *Solimon II ou Les Trois Sultanes*. Moreover, sources indicate that Favart had costumes brought from the Ottoman Empire for his actress wife, who played the part of Roxelana. The first act of Rameau's four act opera, *Les Indes Galantes*, first staged in 1735, was called *Le Turc genereux*⁴⁹. Turkish characters and melodies spread towards the end of the century with Mozart's famous opera, *Die Entfuhrung aus dem Serail*. There is also an unfinished opera by Mozart called *Zaide*, which treats the subject of Sultan Suleyman. Haydn, like Mozart, and later composers such as Beethoven and Rossini also used Turkish melodies. Ottoman military band melodies are included in the orchestra section at the end of Beethoven's 9th symphony. Rossini composed an opera called *Il Turco in Italia*. Verdi, inspired by Lord Byron's *Corsair*, composed his opera *Il Corsaro*.

The real representatives of the *Turquerie* movement in European art are the European artists who came to Istanbul in the eighteenth century and lived there for a period of time. These painters, who are referred to as *Les peintres du Bosphore*, generally worked in the European embassy circles in Istanbul or illustrated the

⁴⁵ The exhibitions organized in Vienna in 1983 set forth in a clear manner the Ottoman-Austrian mutual cultural influence. See footnote 2.

⁴⁶ Yirmisekiz Mehmed Celebi's original *sefaretname* no longer exists, but there are many copies. A section of this *sefaretname* was published: *Yirmisekiz Mehmed Efendi Sefaretnamesi* (Istanbul, 1976); In addition, there is also the French translation of the *Sefaretname: Relation de l'ambassade de Mehmed Effendi a la cour de France en 1721 ecrite par lui mime et traduit par Julien Galland* (Constantinople and Paris, 1757);

⁴⁷ There are weapons ornamented with precious stones, caftans, carpets and fabrics among the gifts brought by the ambassadors. Desmet-Gregoire and M. G. Gocek have treated the Ottoman-French relations in the eighteenth century in the greatest detail: H. Desmet-Gregoire, *Le Divan Magique* (Paris, 1998); M. G. Gocek, *East Encounters West. France and the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (New York and Oxford, 1987); In addition, see P. Hughes, *Eighteenth Century France and the East* (London, 1981).

⁴⁸ For the Turkish affectation in literature see C. D. Rouillard, *The Turk in French History*; R. Bezombes, *L'exotisme dans l'art et la pensee* (Paris, 1953).

⁴⁹ O. Kurz, "Pictorial Records of Favart's Comedy 'les Trois Sultanes' ", *Etudes d'art francais offertes a Charles Sterling* (Paris, 1975), 311-

travel books written by the Europeans.⁵⁰ Among these, J. B. Vanmour from Valenciennes, who stayed the longest period of time in Istanbul, worked for various European ambassadors, such as the French Ambassador Marquis de Ferriol, the Dutch Ambassador Cornelius Calkoen. Vanmour, who depicted the receptions of the ambassadors, Turkish costumes and daily life, is known for his realistic paintings. In fact, commissioned by the French Ambassador Marquis de Ferriol, he had his costume paintings printed in 1714 with the title of *Receuil de Cent Estampes representant differentes nations de Levant*, which was a pattern book for Turkish motifs in the eighteenth and nineteenth century European porcelains. The paintings of Vanmour became the source of inspiration for many Turkish and foreign artists. More correctly, the activities of the artist in Istanbul, where he spent a great part of his life, constituted a painting school that can be called the Vanmour School.⁵¹

J. E. Liotard is another painter who was influential in the spread of the *Turquerie* vogue in European painting. Liotard was a Swiss painter who lived in Istanbul between 1738-1742 and who learned Turkish wore Turkish costumes and is known for his portrait and paintings that depict Turkish life in a realistic manner.⁵²

The new relations between the Ottomans and the Europeans in the eighteenth century brought many diplomats, merchants, travellers and artists to the Ottoman capital. With the growing interest in history and archaeology in this century, collecting antiques and curiosities had reached its height and many travellers came to the Ottoman Empire for research. Among these there were architects and painters. The market for travel accounts with engravings grew in Europe. Consequently, most of the artists working in embassy circles, even the ambassadors themselves often produced such illustrated books.⁵³ Baron Gudenus, a military draftsman, accompanying the Austrian ambassador Corfiz Ullfeld to Istanbul in 1740, drew a panorama of the city, which still is one of the most important documentary sources about Istanbul at that time and specifically its vernacular architecture.⁵⁴ Sir Robert Ainslie, the English Ambassador appointed to Istanbul between 1776-1794, was also an antique collector, and he had employed Luigi Mayer, an artist of Italian origin, to make drawings of the historical buildings. The French artist J. B. Hilair, who worked for the French Ambassador Count Choiseul Gouffier, painted scenery from various regions of the Empire in a trip he made with the ambassador in 1776. Most of his paintings were engraved in *Voyage pittoresque de la Grece*, the travel book published by Choiseul Gouffier between 1778-1782.⁵⁵ Hilair also made illustrations for *Tableau General de l'Empire Ottoman* written by Mouradgea D'Ohsson, an Armenian from Istanbul, who

317; for the Turkish costume of Mme. Favart in the role of Hurrem see F. M. Gocek, *East Encounters West*, picture on page 74.

⁵⁰ The best source for the European painters who worked in Istanbul in the eighteenth century is A. Boppe who had a diplomatic position in Istanbul at the beginning of the twentieth century: A. Boppe, *Les Peintres du Bosphore au dix-huitieme siecle* (Paris, 1911), 2nd ed., 1989. Following this book, the *Turquerie* exhibition held in Paris the same year introduced this current to Europe.

⁵¹ For the best source on this subject see R. van Lutterwelt, *De 'Turkse' schilderijen van J. B. Vanmour en zijn school* (Leiden and Istanbul, 1958); Some of Vanmour's paintings in the Rijksmuseum were exhibited in Istanbul and Ankara in 1978: *Les Peintures Turques de Jean Baptiste Vanmour. 1671-1737* (Ankara and Istanbul, 1978); the facsimile edition of *Receuil de Cent Estampes* was printed in Istanbul in 1979. The latest publication on the subject is: *Also An Eyewitness of the Tulip Era. Jean-Baptiste Vanmour* (E. Sint Nicolaas, D. Bull, G. Renda, G. irepoglu), Istanbul, 2003.

⁵² F. Fosca, *Liotard* (Paris, 1965); G. Renda, "Turk Ressami diye anilan Jean Etienne Liotard", *Sanat Dunyamiz*, 13 (1978): 12-21 (English summary); A. de Herdt, *Dessins de Liotard* (Geneva, 1992).

⁵³ The 1985 exhibition catalogue composed of his drawings is the best source: Cornelius Loos, *Tekningar fran en expedition till Fram're orienten, 1710-1711* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1985).

⁵⁴ Copies of the Istanbul panorama by Gudenus are at the Kungliga Bibliothek in Stockholm and the Atatürk Library in Istanbul. This panorama was printed in the book called *Collection des Habillements en Turquie dessines d'apres nature par le Baron de Budenus et dedies aux ambassadeurs qui sont et ont ete a Constantinople*.

⁵⁵ A. Boppe, *Les peintres de Bosphore*, 191, 212-228, 234-240, 274-277.

worked as a translator at the Swedish Embassy.⁵⁶ Architect A. I. Melling, who was invited by Sultan Selim III to Istanbul around the end of the century and spent approximately 20 years in Istanbul, drew the topographical views from various districts of Istanbul and they were later published in his book called *Voyage pittoresque et les rives du Bosphore*.⁵⁷ A. L. Castellan, was another architect who came to Istanbul with an engineering assignment in 1797 and published the paintings he did in Greece and the Ottoman Empire in his book *Lettres sur la Moree, l'Hellespont et Constantinople en 1811*. Besides these illustrated travel accounts, many costume books were also published in this century. Although there are some costume books illustrated by European painters, most of them were produced by local artists, as was the case in the previous centuries.⁵⁸



Figure 9. Swedish ambassador Ulric Celsing received by Sultan Mustafa III, anonymous, *Celsing Manor, Bibi, Sweden*.

The paintings about the Ottoman Empire that have found their way to Europe through diplomatic relations constitute another group. For example, the Gustav and Ulric Celsing brothers, who served as ambassadors in Istanbul between 1747-1779, took back many objects and paintings related to the Ottomans and displayed them in their mansions. Especially the collection of paintings, including the reception scenes, single figures with Ottoman costumes and landscapes, that were brought by the Celsing brothers are now kept at the Celsing manor in Bibi, Sweden, and are invaluable pictorial documents of the eighteenth century Ottoman world.⁵⁹ Another interesting example in Sweden is the portrait of Sultan Abdulhamid I placed on the wall of a hall added by King Gustav III in 1770 to the Gripsholm Chateau near Stockholm. The king, who wished to portray himself together with the great European rulers of the period, also included the Ottoman ruler.⁶⁰ The new diplomatic, trade and cultural relations established with the European countries in the eighteenth century left profound imprints in the Ottoman artistic milieu.⁶¹ Many books and objects of European origin reached the palace. Besides, various gifts, engravings, plans and architectural drawings

⁵⁶ For a new edition of D'Ohsson's book with chapters by S. Theolin, C.V. Findley, G. Renda, P. Mansel, V. Ciobanu, K. Beydilli, A. Temimi, R.V. Sellaoti, F. Ludwigs, see *The Torch of the Empire. Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson and the Tableau of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, Istanbul, 2003.

⁵⁷ The original of the Melling book was published in Paris in 1819. A facsimile edition was published in Istanbul in 1969.

⁵⁸ Such costume books are found in various museums and collections in the world. For a comprehensive list see N. Atasoy, "The Birth of Costumes Books and the Fenerci Mehmed Album", *Ottoman Costume Book: Fenerci Mehmed* (Istanbul, 1986).

⁵⁹ For a recent publication on the Celsing collection see: *Minnet av Konstantinopel. Den osmansk-turkiska 1700-talssamlingen pa Biby*, (K. Adahl, M. Ahlund, C. Brown, E. L. Karlsson, A. Karlsson, Ff. Kaberg, M. Laine, G. Renda), Stockholm, 2003.

⁶⁰ G. Renda, "Europe and the Ottomans", *Ottoman Civilization*, 1114.

were brought from France by ambassadors Mehmed Celebi and Said Efendi. Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha requested the French Ambassador Marquis de Bonnac to acquire from France engravings and architectural drawings, most of which were related to the Versailles Palace, have been influential in the buildings constructed during the Tulip Period. The Sadabad Palace, which started to be constructed at the Golden Horn in 1722, with its springs, fountains and cascades, could rival the French palaces. No doubt, the European influence on Ottoman architecture increased even more after the Tulip Period. However, the traces of the baroque and rococo styles prevalent in Europe appeared mainly in architectural decoration.



Figure 10. Portrait of Abdülhamid I on the walls of Gripsholm Castle, Sweden.

There were no major alterations in mosque architecture. More accurately, the plans did not change, but on the exterior facades, doors and windows, on the niches and mimbars in the interior, curving motifs in the baroque and rococo styles, seashells and cartouches are encountered. The Nuru-u Osmaniye Mosque (1748-1755) is the only example among the mosques, displaying this style, most often called the "Ottoman Baroque" with undulating multifoil arches, masses and cornices, high portals, capitals with baroque motifs and minarets with bulbous feet followed in the 19th century. This shows that Ottoman architects, rather than bringing a structural change to architecture, adopted new features in the decorative program. No doubt, a certain period of time was needed for any structural change in Ottoman architecture, which had such a long tradition. A period of transition was also needed for the Ottoman art of painting.⁶²

The new demands and tastes, which developed with the interest aroused in European art in the Ottoman palace circles, brought a new flavour to the art of painting. Undoubtedly, the European artists who established themselves in the Ottoman capital were influential in creating a new artistic milieu. Technique and content changed in painting.⁶³ Miniature paintings were gradually replaced by watercolour paintings and what is more important, perspective entered into miniatures. The subjects were also changed. The miniatures with historical themes were replaced by stories with a light content, scenes from daily life, landscapes, portraits and floral compositions.

⁶¹ B. Lewis, *The Muslim Discovery*, 168-169; F. M. Gocek, *East Encounters West*, 114.

⁶² For the European influences observed in Ottoman architecture see A. Kuran, "18th Century Ottoman Architecture", *Studies in 18th Century Islamic History*, eds. Th. Naff and R. Owen (Southern Illinois Univ., 1977), 163-189; G. Renda, "Europe and the Ottomans", *Europa und die Kunst des Islam 15. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, XXV. Internationaler Kongress fuer Kunstgeschichte-Ciha (Vienna, 4-10 September 1983), 9-32; F. Yenisehirlioglu, "Western Influences on Ottoman Architecture", *Das Osmanische Reich un Europa 1683 bis 1789* (Vienna, 1983), 153-178; D. Kuban, "Ottoman Architecture" in *Ottoman Civilization*, 626-697.

⁶³ For the developments in the eighteenth century art of painting see G. Renda, "Ottoman Painting and Sculpture" in *Ottoman Civilization*, 932-967.

Around the mid-eighteenth century, the architectural decorative program, changing with the introduction of the Western elements, paved the way for the development of a painting genre that can be called wall painting. The landscape paintings placed among baroque and rococo motifs replacing the traditional *kalemisi* (painted decoration) are marked by the use of certain Western painting techniques, such as perspective, light and shade. Documenting various districts and buildings in Istanbul, they seem to have followed the approach of the European artists who came to Istanbul in the eighteenth century. This new concept in painting, which also spread to the other regions of the Empire in a short period of time, shows that it was also adopted outside the capital city.

The most important development observed in the Ottoman painting in this century is the introduction of canvas paintings. All of the sultans who reigned during the second half of the eighteenth century had their portraits painted in oil on canvas. Moreover, starting with Sultan Selim III, the sultans distributed their own portraits. Sultan Selim III, who realized that the rulers in Europe exchanged their portraits as gifts, had his own portrait engraved and distributed it to the high dignitaries in the Empire, the European rulers and ambassadors.



Figure 11. Portrait of Selim III painted by Constantine Kapıdađlı and engraved in London, dated 1793, Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3689.

As a matter of fact, a copy of this portrait was sent to Napoleon. Both this portrait and a ring with Napoleon's portrait on it, sent to Sultan Selim III, are kept in the Topkapi Palace collection. Sultan Mahmud II, who succeeded Sultan Selim III, had medals made with his portrait showing him wearing a jacket, trousers and a fez, symbolizing the costume reform he realized. These were also produced for distribution.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ For portraits of Selim and Mahmud see G. Renda, "Propagating the Imperial Image: Tasvir-i Humayun 1800-1922", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 442-543; G. Renda, "Ottoman Painting and Sculpture" in *Ottoman Civilization*, 932-967.



Figure 12. Ring with portrait of Napoleon presented to Selim III, Topkapi Palace Museum 2/3699.

The Ottoman-European relations followed a different line in the nineteenth century. While further achievements were taking place in science and culture in the gradually industrializing Europe, the Ottoman Empire continued its significance as a profitable market for the Europeans. This was a period in which westernization in the Empire became institutionalized. The Ottomans, who had established permanent embassies in Europe after Sultan Selim HI, improved their diplomatic and commercial relations. Especially after the 1839 Tanzimat Firman (Noble Reform Script), it is observed that Europeans and non-Muslims became influential in commercial and cultural life in the Ottoman capital city and the major cities in the provinces. All the European styles were now adopted, both in architecture and in the art of painting. The palaces constructed in Istanbul one after the other such as the Dolmabahce, Beylerbeyi, Goksu, Ciragan and Yildiz, which the sultans wished to see as the symbols of westernization, are quite different from the traditional palaces. These buildings display an eclectic style, a blend of the neo-baroque, neo-classical or even neo-gothic styles in the nineteenth century European architecture.



Figure 13. Reception room in the Dolmabahce Palace, Istanbul 1853. (Figure taken from <http://www.wowturkey.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=6042&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=80>)

These palaces were composed of various quarters unified behind a long facade, like the palaces in Europe, and unlike the Topkapi Palace where pavilions are collected around courtyards. These palaces are marked by their monumental gates and intensive decoration on their facades. Their interiors are dazzling with gilded reliefs, carved wooden and carton-pierre decorations, panoramic wall paintings, European-made furniture and porcelains. The Ottoman elite, who adopted westernization, used the same styles and decorations in the mansions they built in the capital city and the provinces.⁶⁵ While westernization was

⁶⁵ For general information related to the nineteenth century palaces, D. Kuban, "Ottoman Architecture", 626-697 and G. Renda, "Ottoman painting and Sculpture", 932-979 in *Ottoman Civilization*.

becoming a lifestyle in the Ottoman palace circles and the elite class throughout the nineteenth century, for the Europeans, the exotic and novel lay in the East. This was reflected in the wave of orientalism, which spread in France, England, Germany, Austria and Italy. Actually, orientalism, which is a concept created by Europe nourished by imperialism and colonialism as a result of the industrial revolution, has manufactured an exotic, mystical, "Oriental" image filled with unknowns.⁶⁶ The "Oriental" image created by the heroes of the stories, novels or plays were most often an Ottoman image. Such images found in the works of authors such as Lord Byron and Victor Hugo in the first half of the nineteenth century also influenced other branches of art. For example, Byron, in his book called *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, narrates his hero's journey to the East. The oriental image created by Byron in this book is a strong but merciless, mysterious character for whom women become slaves. In fact, E. Delacroix, the famous French artist, who was inspired by Byron, in his painting called the *Death of Sardanapal* shows his hero together with the women of his harem who do not abandon him at the moment of disaster. Byron, who was a guest at Ali Pasha's palace in Yannina, assumed an attitude against the Ottomans after the murder of the Ottoman Pasha in 1822 and actually died during the Greek war of independence. Delacroix's painting called *Massacre in Chios* was also derived from Byron. It is evident that the romantic authors wanted to show the Ottomans as "oriental" and "different". Especially after the 1827 Navarino defeat, they saw the Ottomans as a state that had lost its political power. Victor Hugo, in his book called *Les Orientales*, exalts the Greek war of independence. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the European orientalists were disappointed at the Ottoman westernization, because the westernized Ottoman image did not fit the concept of the "Oriental" they had created. For example, G. de Nerval, in his book called *Voyage en Orient*, when he was describing that he saw Sultan Abdulmajid in European attire, almost criticized the sultan. When describing the streets of Istanbul he said that the oriental traces no longer remained in the westernized architecture.

The same approach is also observed in the art of painting.⁶⁷ These painters who depicted the orient following the orientalism in literature, created the same mysterious, dramatic, picturesque oriental image. Some of these artists who never visited the Ottoman Empire painted the orient they themselves imagined by making use of the illustrated travel books. The most favourite themes were the scenes of the oriental bath and the harem, which even if they travelled in the East would be unable to see. Some of the orientalist painters even delineated the topography to create a pictorial and dramatic effect. Well-known orientalist painters such as E. Delacroix, J. A. D. Ingres and others have attempted this. Moreover, H. Vernet, J. L. Gerome and L. Deutch, although they travelled in the Orient, presented exaggerated scenes and topographical images, because when they exhibited their paintings in the Paris Salon, the viewer was still seeking that "oriental" image manufactured by the West. In fact, these painters were forced to compete with the photographs that had become widespread in Europe.

⁶⁶ For treatment of the political and sociological factors in the formation of this concept in the nineteenth century in the most comprehensive manner see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1978).

⁶⁷ In recent years, numerous books or exhibition catalogues have been published on orientalism in European art. The following are the important ones: P. Jullian, *The Orientalists: European Painters of Eastern Scenes* (Oxford, 1977); M. Verrier, *The Orientalists* (New York and London, 1979); P. and V. Berko, *Peinture Orientaliste* (Brussels, 1982); L. Thornton, *The Orientalists. Painter-Travellers 1828-1908* (Paris, 1983); J. Sweetman, *Oriental Obsession* (Cambridge, 1988); S. Germaner and Z. Inankur, *Orientalism and Turkey* (Istanbul, 1989). In recent years many exhibitions have been held related to orientalist paintings. A part of the exhibition catalogues are given here; *Orientalist Painters of the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1978); *Travellers beyond the Grand Tour* (London, 1980); *Orientalism. The Near East in French Painting 1800-1880* (Rochester, 1982); *The Orientalists. Delacroix to Matisse. The Allure of North Africa and the Near East* (Washington, D.C., 1984); *Europa und der Orient* (Berlin, 1989); *Voyages and Visions. Nineteenth Century European Images of the Middle East* (London and Washington, D.C., 1995); B. Folsach, *By the Light of the Crescent Moon: Images of Near East in Danish Art and Literature, 1800-1875* (Copenhagen, 1996); C. Peltre, *Orientalism in Art* (New York, London, Paris, 1998); S. Germaner and Z. inankur, *Orientalists' Istanbul* (Istanbul, 2002).

On the other hand, there were European artists in the nineteenth century who came to the Ottoman Empire with a curiosity about history and archaeology and who documented what they saw with scholarly accurate drawings. They painted the orient, but they were not orientalists in the concept described above. Pasini and Zonaro who came to the Ottoman capital at different times painted realistic scenes from the Ottoman Empire. Especially inspired by the archaeological research started in Egypt by Napoleon, these artists came on scholarly journeys, made accurate topographical drawings and costume paintings. Artists like T. Allom and W. Bartlett, who both had started their careers as architects, worked together with the clergyman Robert Walsh at the British Embassy in 1836-1838 and they published the illustrated work *Constantinople and the Scenery of Seven Churches of Asia Minor*. Bartlett, when he came to Istanbul in 1835, made illustrations for the book called *The Beauties of the Bosphorous* that was published in 1839 by Julia Pardoe. The orientalist movement also influenced European architecture in the second half of the nineteenth century. Buildings were inspired by the Islamic architecture in an extensive geography from North Africa to India, with the Ottoman Empire in the lead. The participation of the Ottomans in the world exhibitions and fairs organized one after another in Europe and the United States had a role in this. Sultan Abdulaziz, who attended the 1867 Paris Universal Exposition, had Ottoman architectural drawings prepared for the Universal Exposition in 1873 in Vienna. The models of the Ottoman buildings were built at the fair grounds. These drawings and models were copied in many European countries. From then on, it was possible to find Turkish fountains in the parks and Turkish rooms in the homes.⁶⁸

In the Ottoman capital a large number of European architects and artists worked for the Ottoman sultans during the second half of the nineteenth century and they made projects for the Ottoman sultans who commissioned them, satisfying the demands and tastes of the sultans. Sultan Abdulaziz and Sultan Abdulhamid also formed a collection of European paintings at the palace. Moreover, Sultan Abdulhamid even established a museum⁶⁹ at the Yildiz Palace and displayed paintings. Operas of the European composers were staged at the Yildiz Palace theatre. The Ottoman palace and the Ottoman capital had become an important centre for European culture and art as well.



Figure 14. *Portrait of Sultan Abdulaziz painted by the French artist P.D. Guillemet, Topkapi Palace Museum, 17/943.*

⁶⁸ Z. Celik, *Displaying the Orient. Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1992).

⁶⁹ G. Renda, "Propagating the Imperial Image: Tasvir-i Humayun 1800-1922", *The Sultan's Portrait*, 442-469, Cat. No. 177.

A look at the European-Ottoman relations throughout the centuries clearly indicates that the cultural relations stayed firmly behind political and economic developments. Among the Islamic communities, the Turks have always had the closest relations with the Western Christian world. The way these relations were reflected in art and culture since the fifteenth century shows variations according to political alliances, victories and defeats, diplomatic relations, and even the personalities of the art patrons. While in the earlier years the Turkish image in Europe carried an exoticism brought by the unknown, for the Europeans in the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was a state administered by powerful rulers, having great political significance for Europe. In this connection, the powerful rulers of this empire, the pompous ceremonies of the Ottoman court and the elaborate Ottoman costumes were reflected in European art. No doubt, the unique topography and interesting monuments of Istanbul, the capital city of the empire, were drawn by almost every artist. However, during these centuries the European-Ottoman cultural relations preserved their unilateral character. More accurately, a profound European influence was not encountered in the Ottoman culture and art until the eighteenth century. However, after the eighteenth century, both the Ottomans and the Europeans attempted to become more closely acquainted with each other under equal terms and have been even more inspired from each other. The European influence penetrating into Turkish art in parallel with the *Turquerie* fashion developing in Europe is a concrete indicator of these relations. The political balances in the nineteenth century pushed the Ottomans into an intensive westernization and the European culture was much more influential. It is a fact that Ottoman-European cultural interactions developing throughout history have contributed a rich content to both European and Ottoman art and indicates that different cultures can create powerful syntheses.

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