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Image of the Modern Ottoman Sultan

Visibility, Identity, and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century

Alison Terndrup

BRILL

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For my parents



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Note on Language and Transcription

In this book, names of places (Istanbul, Belgrade, Bucharest) are given in their English spellings. English spellings are also used for foreign terms that appear in either the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* or the *Oxford English Dictionary* (pasha, sultan, ulema), while less familiar words are italicized. Names of people are given in the modern Turkish spelling without diacritics (Mehmed, Abdülhamid, Osman) except in the case of unusual names. Generally, first names and postnominal numbers are used when discussing members of the same dynasty (Mahmud II, Abdülaziz, Napoleon III).

Transcriptions from Ottoman Turkish use the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES) system with the additions of ḫ for خ and ġ for غ. For clarity, words have been transcribed as they would have been pronounced rather than spelled. However, some formulaic phrases have retained their older accepted spellings. Ottoman sources from the early part of the nineteenth century were originally unpunctuated, and punctuation and capitalisation that appears in those cases is my own unless otherwise noted.

Note on Web Sources

In the spirit of open scholarship, an effort has been made to include web addresses for accessible online source materials where they exist. Text documents hosted on commercial cites (Google Books, Sotheby's) and digital libraries (HathiTrust Digital Library, Internet Archive) include URLs with a "last accessed" date. Those with DOIs are considered more stable and do not.

Abbreviations

BM	The British Museum
BOA	Başkanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (Presidential Ottoman Archives)
FRBNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
IJMES	*International Journal of Middle East Studies*
KMM	Mevlana Müzesi, Konya (Mevlana Museum, Konya)
LCCN	Library of Congress Control Number
MGB	Музеј Града Београда (Belgrade City Museum)
MNAR	Muzeul Național de Artă al României (National Art Museum of Romania)
MNIR	Muzeul Național de Istorie a României (National History Museum of Romania)
RMK	Millî Saraylar Resim Müzesi Koleksiyonu (National Palaces Painting Museum Collection)
NYPL	New York Public Library
ÖNB	Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Austrian National Library)
RA	Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
RCIN	Royal Collection Identification Number
RMN	Réunion des Musées Nationaux
TSM	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi (Topkapı Palace Museum)
TSMK	Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi (Topkapı Palace Museum Library)
VAM	Victoria and Albert Museum

Introduction

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the image of the Ottoman sultan maintained a complex relationship with ideas surrounding the modernisation of the Empire.[1] This book investigates that relationship by situating the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* (imperial portrait)[2] within the wider programme of top-down modernisation movements initiated at the end of the eighteenth century under Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and culminating in the Tanzimat (Reorganisation) era (1839–76).[3] *Taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* (imperial portraits) appeared in a variety of forms and media – many new to the Ottoman context – including precious miniature-scale medallions, lithographs, oil-on-canvas paintings, and photographs. This study considers the use of new image-making technologies and aesthetic trends in the Ottoman context – primarily at the imperial court in Istanbul but also at the provincial courts of the Ottoman Balkans – as exemplary of this dynamic period in the history of Islamic art and visual culture.

Scholarly work aimed at defining the shifting diplomatic functions of the royal portrait, including studies by Mary Roberts and Günsel Renda, have considered the use of new forms by Ottoman and foreign artists in the service of the sultan.[4] My project builds on these studies by considering broader shifts in ceremonial and symbolic practices related to portraiture display.[5] I systematically consider these practices as meaningful elements in understanding the propagandistic function of these portraits and the identities of their intended audiences. Such a study engages with the recent rise in scholarly interest in portrait photography in the Qajar and Arab contexts, including the work of scholars such as Layla Diba, Ali Behdad, and Stephen Sheehi.[6] In doing so, my intention is to pull on threads of interest linking

1 For the development of the genre of sultans' portraits and its role in shaping Ottoman dynastic identity over six centuries, see Selmin Kangal (ed.), Julian Raby, Gülru Necipoğlu, Jurg Meyer zur Capellen, Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, and Banu Mahir, *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman* (Istanbul: İş Bankası, 2000). For legitimation ideology in the Ottoman Empire in the late nineteenth century, see Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire 1876–1909* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998).

2 I translate "*taṣvīr*" throughout this book as "portrait," but the word's meaning and usage shifts depending on the context. See pages 11–12.

3 For the major characteristics of modernisation during the Tanzimat period, see Halil İnalcık, *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu* (Istanbul: İş Bankası, 2011).

4 See, for example, Mary Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges: Ottomans, Orientalists, and Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015); Mary Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft and the 'Pencil of Nature': Photography, Painting, and Drawing at the Court of Sultan Abdülaziz," *Ars Orientalis* 43 (2013): 10–30; Günsel Renda, "Portraits: the last century," in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 442–542; Günsel Renda, "Selim III's Portraits and the European Connection," in *Turkish Art: 10th International Congress of Turkish Art/Art Turc: 10e Congrès international d'art turc* (Geneva: Fondation Max Van Berchem, 1999), 567–77; Günsel Renda, "Art and Diplomatic Relations: The Story of an Ottoman-British Project in London," in *Cultural Encounters and Cultural Differences, First International Hacettepe Conference* (Ankara: Hacettepe University, 1999), 227–38. For an overview of the relationship between developing iconographies and the shoring up of political power from Selim III to Mehmed V Reşad, see Edhem Eldem, "Pouvoir, modernité et visibilité : l'évolution de l'iconographie sultanienne à l'époque moderne," in *Le Corps du Leader : Construction et représentation dans les pays du Sud*, ed. Omar Carlier et Raphaëlle Nollez-Goldbach (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008): 171–202.

5 For Ottoman ceremonies in the nineteenth century, see Hakan Karateke, *Padişahım Çok Yaşa! Osmanlı Devletinin Son Yüz Yılında Merasimler* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2004).

6 See, for example, Layla Diba, "Qajar Photography and Its Relationship to Iranian Art: A Reassessment," *History of Photography* vol. 37, no. 1 (2013): 85–98; Ali Behdad, "The Power-ful Art of Qajar Photography: Orientalism and (Self)-Orientalizing in Nineteenth-Century Iran," *Iranian Studies* vol. 34, 1–4 (2001): 141–151; Stephen Sheehi, *The Arab Imago: A Social History of Portrait Photography, 1860–1910* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016). My thanks to the anonymous Reviewer #1 of this manuscript for suggesting the work of the aforementioned scholars.

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Islamic art history, Ottoman history, photography history, and Middle Eastern studies.

At the same time, this book breaks new ground in the field of Islamic art history by using the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* as a lens through which to view the complicated and overlapping concepts of visuality, viewership, and sultanic visibility.[7] My central thesis is that such an examination frames sultans' portraits as symbolic focal points for the expression of loyalist sentiment, factional division, and diplomatic relationships during a time of significant change in Ottoman domestic and foreign policy. That is to say that new relationships between the viewer-beholder and the proxy image of the sovereign (and later, the lack thereof) enter the sociopolitical stage at a critical point, during which the Ottoman official propaganda mechanism was concerned with both the encroachment of foreign imperial powers (primarily Austria, Russia, France, and Great Britain) and the threat of internal independence movements (in the Balkans and the Morea). This has significant implications for the conceptualisation of the intended audience of these works, suggesting that both Ottoman and non-Ottoman, domestic and foreign, as well as military and civilian viewers were targeted as members of overlapping networks of power relations on the expanded global political stage.[8]

1 Ottoman Modernisation and Global Trends

In earlier scholarship, Ottoman art of the nineteenth century had been discussed in terms of its distance from the so-called "classical" era of the sixteenth century. This view was shaped by the outdated notion of the decline paradigm – the idea that the production of Ottoman painting (and by extension the Empire itself) deteriorated into ruin after having reached its zenith.[9] Since then, art historians have done significant work in dismantling this prejudice. Günsel Renda has argued that shifts in media (from album-bound series to oil-on-canvas easel paintings) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were necessitated not by a decay in Ottoman visual culture, but by modernising shifts in the social realm.[10] She has argued that trends in sultans' portraiture over the last century of Ottoman rule served the active political purpose of "propagating" the imperial image within the empire and abroad, a sign that the Ottoman rulers still saw themselves as major players on the international stage. For example, upon receiving a *taṣvīr* of Napoleon Bonaparte (first consul 1799–1804; Emperor of the French 1804–14/15) as a diplomatic gift, Selim III reciprocated the gesture by commissioning his own portrait from the Greek-Ottoman artist Konstantin Kapıdağlı (active 1780s–1810) in 1793 (Fig. 1).[11] The portrait was later

7 The concept of ruler visibility used here builds directly on the definition proposed by Darin N. Stephanov in *Ruler Visibility and Popular Belonging in the Ottoman Empire, 1808–1908,* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019). Stephanov's definition combines direct (including the physical presence of the embodied sultan and the exposure of his person to the public gaze) and indirect (including symbolic markers such as the imperial monogram [*tuġra*] and architectural monuments) components. While Stephanov makes mention of sultans' portraiture, he does not conduct any visual analyses on surviving works. Furthermore, while Stephanov is interested in theorising the public gaze, he does not consider the effects of the viewer-subject relationship on the returned gaze, that is, the symbolic and psychological power of the visual representation of the sultan's gaze itself.

8 I am referring to discourses of power relations in the Foucauldian sense.

9 The Decline Narrative is generally framed as having started with military and territorial losses following the Ottomans' defeat during the second siege of Vienna (1689) and the loss of Ottoman Hungary to the Holy Roman Empire (1699). For key critical discussions of the decline paradigm, see Cemal Kafadar, "The Question of Ottoman Decline," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Review* 4, nos. 1–2 (1999): 30–75; Caroline Finkel, "'The Treacherous Cleverness of Hindsight': Myths of Ottoman Decay," in *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchange with the East*, ed. Gerald M. Maclean (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 148–74.

10 Renda, "Portraits: the last century."

11 TSMK A. 3689. The artist's name is also spelled using the French "Constantin Capou-Daghlé" and the Greek "Konstantinos Kyzikenos."



FIGURE 1 Kostantin Kapıdağlı, Luigi Schiavonetti, *Portrait of Selim III*, 1208 (1793)

translated into intaglio by Luigi Schiavonetti (1765–1810), a reproductive engraver working in London. Prints pulled from the Schiavonetti plates were then dispersed throughout Europe, ending up in Austrian, French, and British national collections by way of diplomatic networks.[12] Renda's approach ties the function of diplomatic portraiture exchange directly and securely to dynastic legitimation strategies. This book builds on Renda's findings with an eye to the complex intersections of political, religious, and ideological matrices into which images and portrait-objects were launched. Furthermore, it draws parallels to contemporaneous practices of exchange and display across Eurasian cultural realms. Analysing these parallels brings greater clarity to external diplomatic motivations while at the same time offering important correctives to the shared visual, cultural, and ceremonial paradigms that have previously remained characterised as belonging to the phenomenon of Westernisation alone.

In the broadest sense, the link between the image of the sovereign and top-down modernisation efforts fell in line with wider cosmopolitan trends present across the Eurasian and American spheres of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The fallout of the Napoleonic Wars (1803–15) and the rise of independence movements starting with the American (1776), French (1789), and Haitian (1791) revolutions created a crisis of legitimacy for absolute monarchs who had, up until this point, relied on dynastic and divine rights to maintain subject loyalty. Many rulers recast their images as enlightened military leaders following the successes of the Napoleonic model in France.[13] New technologies in print reproduction and transportation allowed these images of

12 Now among the painter's best-known and widely distributed works, copies of the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti portrait have ended up in Austrian, French, and British national collections. There are nearly 80 copies of the printed album in the Topkapı Palace (nos H. 2614–2694). Copies in foreign collections include FRBNF40256690 (Cabinet des Estampes N20006), ÖNB PORT_00034347_01, and ÖNB PORT_00034348_01 (formerly Porträtsammlung 35 33/1, 8–9a). Additional copies that are now available online include VAM SP.172, VAM SP.498, and RCT RCIN 618517.

13 For Napoleonic and other contemporary imperial styles developed at the art academies of Western Europe, see Rafael Cardoso Denis and Colin Trodd, *Art and the Academy in the Nineteenth Century* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000). For the British Royal Academy, see James Fenton, *School of Genius: A History of the Royal Academy of Arts* (London: Royal Academy of Arts and Salamander Press, 2006). For the French Academy, see Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Phaidon, 1971); June Hargrove (ed.), *The French Academy: Classicism and Its Antagonists* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990); Hannah Williams, *Académie Royale: A History in Portraits* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015).

modern sovereigns to be distributed through diplomatic channels – and later, on the commercial market – at an unprecedented rate and quantity. In this way, thematic paradigms – such as picturing the aggrandised subject conducting military drills or drafting legislative documents – and iconographic details – such as representing the sovereign in military uniform rather than wearing ostentatious monarchical trappings[14] – developed in conversation with the international Napoleonic model of elite military portraiture.

Examples of Napoleonic, Neoclassical, and Romantic styles, as well as the artists trained in their application, travelled to Istanbul from Western-European cultural capitals through diplomatic and commercial routes. Art historical scholarship has characterised the resulting cross-cultural interactions and the Ottoman use of adapted styles in sultans' portraiture as evidence of Westernisation.[15] However, as Wendy Shaw has argued, the overarching use of this term implies that there was a wholesale adoption – rather than the more accurate selective adaptation – of foreign styles within Ottoman visual culture.[16] As a solution, Shaw has proposed a "differential" Ottoman modernity in line with postcolonial theories, showing how the acknowledgement of the agency of Ottoman artists, patrons, and cultural trendsetters can forge new meanings for aesthetic forms.[17] While the image of the modern sultan took part in these developments, it simultaneously preserved an Ottoman Muslim identity that set it apart from the prevailing fashion. Untangling the unique from the ubiquitous and determining the function of those shifts is at the centre of the present study.

2 Incorporating New Models: Press and Place

This book tells its story through the visual evidence contained in paintings, prints, and photographs. The static image, however, is only part of that story. Using untapped and underutilised textual evidence from newspapers, archives, and

14 For the use of monarchical trappings in royal portraiture, see Philip Mansel, *Dressed to Rule: Royal and Court Costume from Louis XIV to Elizabeth II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

15 The term "Westernisation" is fraught with history and its use runs the risk of enforcing the dominant hegemony as it has been enshrined by established historiographical methods. This book uses the term with the acknowledgement that shared cultural phenomena, aesthetic trends, and fashions are inherently cross-cultural in nature and do not flow unilaterally from Western-European cultural capitals. Furthermore, the adoption of technologies – in particular, image-making technologies such as lithography, wood engraving, and photography – were often filtered through shared Eastern-European, Balkan, Russian, and Mediterranean routes of information exchange. This usage reflects the continued problematisation of the term – along with corollaries such as "Europeanisation," "modernisation," and sometimes, "secularisation"– in humanities dialogues. For this discussion in the field of Ottoman architectural history, see Shirine Hamadeh, "Westernization, Decadence, and the Turkish Baroque: Modern Constructions of the Eighteenth Century," in "Historiography and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the 'Lands of Rum,'" ed. Gülru Necipoğlu and Sibel Bozdoğan, *Muqarnas* special issue (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2007): 185–98; Shirine Hamadeh, "Expressions of Early Modernity in Ottoman Architecture and the Inevitable Question of Westernization," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63, no. 1 (March 2004): 32–51. See also Ahmet Ersoy, "Architecture and the Search for Ottoman Origins in the Tanzimat Period," in "Historiography and Ideology," 117–40. For earlier scholarship on the phenomenon of aesthetic Westernisation in late Ottoman painting, see Günsel Renda, *Batılılaşma Döneminde Türk Resim Sanatı 1700–1850* (Ankara: Türk Kurumu Basımevi, 1976); Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batıya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi* (Istanbul: Erol Kerim Aksoy Kültür, Eğitim, Spor ve Sağlık Vakfı Yayınları, 1995). For an argument in favour of "Europeanized" as a more precise way of identifying the adoption of foreign inventions such as photographic processes while maintaining a cross-cultural view, see Erin Hyde Nolan, "You Are What You Wear: Ottoman Costume Portraits in the *Elbise-i Osmaniyye*," *Ars Orientalis* 47 (2017): 178–209.

16 Wendy M.K. Shaw, *Ottoman Painting: Reflections of Western Art from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

17 Shaw, *Ottoman Painting*, 2.

travelogues, it highlights previously overlooked patterns of portrait presentation, activation, installation, gifting, and bestowal. For example, reports in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* (*Calendar of Events*) – the first state-sponsored official Ottoman newspaper to come out of Istanbul – show the spectacular pomp and remarkable consistency with which semi-public ceremonies were carried out (and reported upon) for the installations of portraits of Mahmud II (r. 1808–39) throughout Istanbul in the late 1830s. Each inauguration ceremony included a parade of military officials, a prayer led by a sheik, and the sounds of cannons, drill fire, and martial music. Throughout the ceremony, the sultan's image was treated with the same respect typically reserved for the person of the sultan himself, a reverence reflected in the textual descriptions that appear in official newspaper reports. Additionally, new evidence gleaned from recently digitized print ephemera and online auction records are examined against these patterns for the first time in this book. Drawing attention to patterns of display and the conditions of viewership sheds new light on the interconnected histories of portraiture, audience, and viewership, standing to develop current trends toward a more holistic understanding of Islamic art and visual histories.[18]

The relationships among portrait, spectacle, and text demonstrate the interconnected nature of visual components of official propaganda campaigns. "Propaganda" here is used in a general sense to refer to cultural material (such as images, music, architecture, and ceremonies) supporting ideologies of power. I am not suggesting here that sultans' portraits were the most significant or well-funded component of such campaigns, but rather that they formed one part of a larger picture having to do with the modernisation of the Empire. In the field of Ottoman imperial architecture, for example, Ünver Rüstem has demonstrated that Ottoman artists and patrons consciously adopted forms from Western-European Baroque models to suit their own ends.[19] He argues that the adaptation of these forms – refashioned for use in the Ottoman political context – signalled the empire's status as an active participant in a cosmopolitan, globally minded world order.[20] Tülay Artan has made adjacent contributions to the scholarly conversation regarding modernisation and the expression of power in the cultural lives of the Ottoman elite, particularly in her demonstration of the Bosphorus' transformation into a ceremonial axis – a site where royal ceremonies created the opportunity for members of the royal family to see and be seen.[21] By looking at material culture, collecting practices, and court rituals, Artan has argued that the reality of Western-looking cultural trends is more complicated and ambiguous than previously acknowledged. My analysis takes up this current trend in conceptualising modernisation as a complex shift in conversation with – rather than merely a one-way mode of influence from – Western-European forms. The circulation of images of the Ottoman sultan in the international press (including copies based on official portraits, but also unofficial and reportage images) is also considered, bringing up questions about the limits of imperial image control. Tracking these popular appropriations and "echoes" of the imperial portrait (as it appeared, for example, in medallion format worn as part of military uniform

18 The theoretical framework used in this book is based on the integrated methodologies proposed by Wendy Shaw in *What is "Islamic" Art? Between Religion and Perception* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019). See page 12.

19 Ünver Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque: The Architectural Refashioning of Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

20 Sibel Bozdoğan has argued for a similar conceptualisation of using imported elements without necessarily reproducing Western styles in the architectural culture of the Republican period. See Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 8.

21 Tülay Artan, "Architecture as a Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth-Century Bosphorus" (PhD diss., MIT, 1989); Artan, "Noble Women Who Changed the Face of the Bosphorus and the Palaces of the Sultanas," *Biannual Istanbul, '92* Selections (1992): 87–97.

by Ottoman-Balkan princes in their own portraits) requires that their characterisation as propaganda be treated in a more nuanced manner. By following the comparatively thin thread of imperial portraiture, we gain invaluable insight into the rich connections among art history, visual culture, and reform during a time of dynamic cultural and political development.

Applying the revisionist methodologies of Rüstem and Artan to imperially commissioned portraiture allows this book to push Renda's critical view of Westernising trends even further, arguing that the reception of portraits of sultans produced in Western-European centres in part encouraged a proliferation of sultanic visibility. I do this by clarifying what iconographic and compositional elements have been imported from Western-European sources and how they have been adapted to fit the localised ideological and political goals of modernisation and centralisation in the Ottoman context. Considering the portraits within this context, we find that the sultan and his propagandists (a loose use of the term by which I mean high-ranking officials in the Ottoman military-bureaucratic complex, members of the royal family, and court artists directly and indirectly involved in producing the sultan's image) were attempting to link the message of the sultan as a legitimate, modern military ruler with the idea that the reforms carried out at his behest were also legitimate and permissible under Ottoman-Islamic law and cultural mores.

3 Sultans' Portraits in Historical Perspective

While the depiction of the sultan shifted dramatically over the course of the nineteenth century, portraits of sultans had served an important role in the representation of the ruling dynasty of the Ottoman Empire for centuries.[22] Imperial



FIGURE 2 Gentile Bellini, *Portrait of Sultan Mehmet II*, 1480

portraiture has been intertwined with diplomatic engagement and cross-cultural interactions since the time of Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–46; 1451–81), who in the fifteenth century famously commissioned the Italian painter Gentile Bellini to paint his likeness (Fig. 2).[23] Mehmed II's commission was a unique early instance of naturalistic oil-on-canvas portraiture, an occurrence which would not be repeated until the late eighteenth century in the work of artists such as Konstantin Kapıdağlı. Mehmed II's successors instead

22 For a history of the genre of Ottoman sultans' portraiture, see Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*.

23 Mehmed II's portrait was famously done in multiple formats, including oil-on-canvas, gouache-on-paper, and cast bronze medallions. See Julian Raby, "From Europe to Istanbul," in Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*, 145–50; Elizabeth Rodini, "The Sultan's True Face? Gentile Bellini, Mehmet II, and the Values of Verisimilitude," in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450–1750* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011); Elizabeth Rodini, *Gentile Bellini's Portrait of Mehmed II: Lives and Afterlives of an Iconic Image* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2020).

preferred to commission works from Ottoman artists working in a codified style, utilising watercolour or gouache on sheets of paper that were often bound into manuscripts or albums.

During the reigns of Süleyman I (r. 1520–66) and Murad III (r. 1574–95), the genre of sultans' portraits crystallised into an effective form of elite propaganda that prioritised regal presentation, conventionalised poses, solemn expressions, and attention to sartorial details. Such portraits were often produced in series and bound into manuscripts of imperial genealogies, world histories, or dynastic biographies.[24] The serial repetition of poses, facial types, and costumes among portraits highlighted the continuity of the dynasty,[25] but the conventions of sultans' portraits remained open to outside aesthetic input.[26] Gülru Necipoğlu has demonstrated the existence of continual cultural exchange in the sixteenth century in her study of the Ottoman production of the 1579 *Şemā'ilnāme* (*Book of Dispositions*) (Fig. 3),[27] wherein she argues that the official court historian Seyyid Lokman (in office 1569–97) and the painter Nakkaş Osman (active 1565–85) adapted the portrait-*vita* model of the Italian Paolo Giovio's *Elogia* (1575) to combine visual and verbal portraiture.[28] The *Elogia* model was appealing as a template for the *Şemā'ilnāme*, according to Emine Fetvacı, because of shared physiognomic frameworks stemming from neo-Platonic precedents.[29] This was especially appropriate for the celebration of Murad III, whose reign was legitimised in this case through the linking of moral and physical traits. Attention to physiognomy, the ancient idea that the physical body mirrored the inner characteristics of a person, has appeared across genres of ruler portraiture in the Persianate, Islamic, and Italianate contexts for centuries, linking beauty with virtue and auspiciousness.[30] Therefore, when serial works of sultans' portraits such as the *Şemā'ilnāme* used codified depictions of beauty to emphasise the inherent positive qualities of sultans – while simultaneously emphasising the dynastic bloodline as the source of those qualities – they were drawing on a representation-referent relationship that could be legible across European and Persianate cultural spheres.[31]

By the seventeenth century, the production of eulogistic royal manuscripts waned, but cross-cultural aesthetics – products of mutual, multilateral exchange and parallel ideologies – remained

24 Serpil Bağcı, "From Adam to Mehmed III: Silsilenâme," in Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*, 188–201.

25 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Word and Image: The Serial Portraits of Ottoman Sultans in Comparative Perspective," in Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*, 22–59, 55.

26 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in a Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry," *The Art Bulletin* 71, no. 3 (September 1989): 401–27.

27 The full title of this work is *Ḳıyāfetü'l-insāniye fī şemā'ilü'l 'Oṣmāniye* (*Human Physiognomy and the Disposition of the Ottomans*).

28 Necipoğlu, "Word and Image," 55.

29 Emine Fetvacı, "From Print to Trace: An Ottoman Imperial Portrait Book and Its Western European Models," *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 2 (June 2013), 260.

30 For example, a medical compendium by Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Rāzī (ca. 1149–1209) served as an important treatise on physiognomy. See Emilie Savage-Smith, *Magic and Divination in Early Islam* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate /Variorum, 2004), xl–xliv.

31 Priscilla Soucek has demonstrated how these neo-Platonic precedents were shared across the fluid boundaries of early modern empires and how they fostered formal and stylistic affinities in "The Theory and Practice of Portraiture in the Persian Tradition," *Muqarnas* 17 (2000): 97–107. Extensive theorisation of the portrait has already been carried out in the field of Italian Renaissance studies, where Stephen Greenblatt first introduced the framework for theorising "self-fashioning." Harry Berger Jr. further developed this view by arguing that it is the act of posing, or the subject's awareness of supporting the "fiction of objectivity," that is the true subject of a portrait. Jodi Cranston's work on the "poetics of portraiture" complicates these concepts by addressing the dialogue between a sitter's inner essence and the interactive viewer. Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Harry Berger, Jr. *Fictions of the Pose: Rembrandt Against the Italian Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Jodi Cranston, *The Poetics of Portraiture in the Italian Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).



FIGURE 3 Nakkaş Osman, *Portrait of Sultan Selim I*, 1579



FIGURE 4 Levni, *Portrait of Sultan Ahmed III and His Son*, eighteenth century

present in Ottoman artistic productions. At the same time, single-sheet paintings and album-making gained popularity. David Roxburgh has shown how album compilation, which can include paintings, drawings, and calligraphic specimens, can demonstrate a patron's aesthetic understanding as a means of self-fashioning.[32] The album compiled by the courtier Kalender Pasha (d. 1616) for Ahmed I (r. 1603–1617), for example, shows how shared cultural dialogues surrounding the development of courtly identities continued to appear in this format.[33] In the first half of the eighteenth century, manuscript painting underwent a revival at court under the patronage of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) and his influential *ṣadrā'ẓam* (grand vizier), İbrahim Pasha (*c.*1662–1730). The court painter Abdülcelil Çelebi, known as Levni (*c.*1680s–1732), famously painted the sultanic portrait series *Kebīr Muṣavver Silsilenāme* (*Great Illustrated Genealogy*) by incorporating historical styles, including those represented by the *Şemā'ilnāme*, into his own updated aesthetic (Fig. 4).[34] Elements of Levni's style continued to be

32 David Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

33 Emine Fetvacı, *Album of the World Emperor: Cross-Cultural Collecting and the Art of Album-Making in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019).

34 Esin Atıl, *Levnî and the Surname: The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival* (Istanbul: Koçbank, 1999); Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda, and Zeren Tanındı, *Ottoman Painting* (Ankara: Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Banks Association of



FIGURE 5 Rafael Manas, *Portrait of Sultan Mustafa III*, second half of the eighteenth century

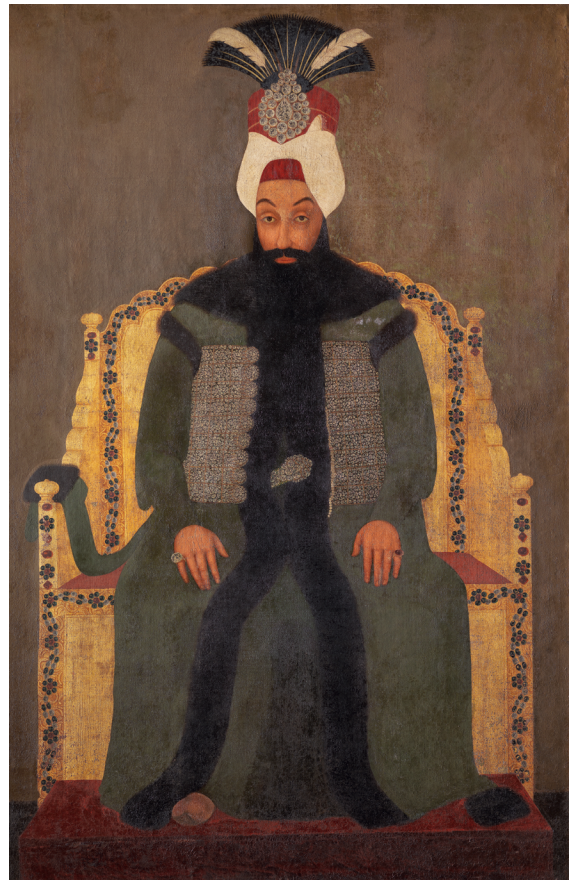

FIGURE 6 Rafael Manas or School of Rafael, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülhamid I*

emulated by other artists within and beyond the court, appearing in albums, series, and single-page works well into the mid-eighteenth century.

Eclectic and hybrid styles of sultans' portraiture were produced from the second half of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century.[35] Using new media and forms, local artists such as Rafael Manas (active *c.*1789–1806) painted large-scale, oil-on-canvas images of sultans Mustafa III (r. 1757–74) and Abdülhamid I (r. 1774–89) meant for display on palace walls (Figs. 5 and 6).[36] The reign of Abdülhamid I also saw the introduction of large-scale oil-on-canvas genealogical trees painted to look as if their branches were hung with medallion portraits of individual sultans

Turkey, 2010), first published as *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı yayınları, Türkiye Bankalar Birliği yayınları, 2006), 262–311; Gül İrepoğlu, *Levnî: Nakış, Şiir, Renk* (İstanbul: Kültür ve Bakanlığı Yayınları 1999); Stéphane Yerasimos, Doğan Kuban, Mertol Tulum and Ahmet Ertuğ (eds.), *'Surname': An Illustrated Account of Sultan Ahmed III's Festival of 1720* (Istanbul: Ertuğ & Kocabıyık, 2000).

35 Renda, *Batılılaşma*. Günsel Renda, "Searching for New Media in 18th Century Ottoman Painting," in *Arts, Women, and Scholars, Festscrift Hans Georg Majer*, vol. 2, ed. Sabine Prator and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul: Simurg, 2002), 464–65.

36 Rafael is also spelled Refail. For the work of the Ottoman-Armenian Manas family of artists, see Nurdan Küçükhasköylü, "Osmanlı Sarayında Ermeni Ressamlar: Manas Ailesi," *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* (June 2011): 165–81. An inscription on RMK Env. No. 121/18 states that it was brought from the palace of Şah Sultan, daughter of Mustafa III and half-sister to Selim III, where it was probably displayed on the wall. See Renda, "Searching for New Media," 464–65.



FIGURE 7
Artist unknown, *Genealogical Tree*, late eighteenth or early nineteenth century

from Osman I (r. 1299–1324), up through the current occupier of the Ottoman throne (Fig. 7).[37] A well-known painting attributed to Kapıdağlı shows the enthroned Selim III receiving members of his court during an official *bayram* (holiday) ceremony, demonstrating the artist's embracing of new commemorative functions for the display of wall-hanging works while incorporating the ideals of order and clarity typically associated with established courtly aesthetics (Fig. 8). Images of sultans and royal ceremonies had existed in courtly and commercial spheres since at least the sixteenth century, but new demands for all types of images – spurred on by increases in diplomatic exchange and a burgeoning commercial market fuelled by European travellers – grew the audience for sultans' portraits during the time of Abdülhamid I and Selim III. By the turn of the nineteenth century, many variations of the image of the Ottoman sultan – based on the model of

37 Günsel Renda, "Osmanlı Sultanlarının Soyağaçları," *P Dergisi* 2 (Summer 1996): 81–92. See also Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*, Cat. nos. 162, 163.



FIGURE 8 Kostantin Kapıdağlı (attributed), *Sultan Selim III's Ceremony*, *c.*1789

courtly counterparts, costume albums, or expected stereotypes – existed on the open market and proliferated on an unprecedented scale.

4 Likeness, Gaze, and Power

Throughout this book, I translate "*taṣvīr*" as "portrait." However, the term encompasses broader meanings across its usages in Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish. This is indicated in the definition given in Sir James Redhouse's *A Turkish and English Lexicon*, which begins by giving the verbal noun derived from the Arabic form:

> taṣvīr, vn. 1. A forming, a shaping, a giving shape and form. 2. A picturing the form of a thing in relief or outline, and either by graver or pencil. Hence, 3. s. (pl. taṣāvīr) An effigy, a likeness; a design, a picture. […] taṣvīr-i hümāyūn – s. The Sultan's portrait, sometimes conferred as a special mark of favor.[38]

The final part of the definition clearly shows how "*taṣvīr*" can be linked to "*hümāyūn*" (royal, imperial) via the Persian *eżāfe* construction, forming an Ottoman Turkish phrase with the specific meaning of "imperial portrait."

Yet "*taṣvīr*" alone does not automatically indicate the art-historical category of portraiture as it was developed in the Western-European context, being instead more broadly related to likeness and image in a metaphysical manner. For example, historical sources on Ottoman imperial manuscript painting use "*taṣvīr*" to refer to formal,

38 Sir James Redhouse, *A Turkish and English Lexicon* (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1987), 554.

codified images of sultans that did not depend on veristic relationships to their respective subjects. "*Taṣvīr*" is also linked to other Ottoman Turkish terms derived from the Arabic root ṣ-w-r, such as *mutaṣavvir* (which takes shape; imagined) and *ṣūret* (form, visage, portrait). By the late nineteenth century, in the Arabic context, "*taṣwīr*" would come to refer primarily to the taking of photographs. In this study, while the term is translated consistently as "portrait," it is applied across media – from manuscript paintings to oil paintings to prints as well as photographs – in a way that retains conceptual references to shaping and representing the imperial image.

I use "image" here in an expanded way, including portraiture (physical works of art depicting the sultan's visage), eulogistic textual descriptions (formulaic prayers and poems that describe the sultan's visage or presence), and the physical appearance of his person (that is, the sultan in the flesh as well as mentions of his ceremonial appearances in textual sources). The sultan's image engaged with nineteenth-century trends of increasing visibility while at the same time grappling with centuries of Ottoman precedent wherein sultanic power was reinforced by tight control over the sultan's image. In doing so, it operated within at least two modes of symbolic looking. The first of these is the "look" of the sultan as conveyed through image or text, which drew on established concepts of beauty and physiognomy already present in Ottoman-Islamic discourse. Such an appearance might be denoted in Ottoman sources by nouns such as *taṣvīr* or *ṣūret*, verbs like *göstermek* (to show), or adjectival compounds containing the Persian *-nümūn* (-showing). The second "look" of the sultan is activated by a viewer's engagement with the sultan's gaze and the perception of power that occurs through the exchange of glances. This relationship can appear through the use of nouns such as *naẓar* (a look), *temāşā* (a sitting or walking about to see and be seen; a spectacle), or *iltifāt* (inclining one's attentions towards), as well as verbs such as *bakmak* (to look at or pay attention to something) or *gözlemek* (to look at, eye, or watch for something).

The conceptualisation of the sultan's likeness used in this book integrates ideologies of power and kingship tied to Persianate and Ottoman-Islamic courtly traditions with theories of vision recently discussed within the field of Islamic art.[39] Doing so shows us how different strategies for the reception and use of royal portraiture were appropriated, adapted, and deployed in creating the image of the modern sultan in the nineteenth century. Wendy Shaw's recent work on theories of "seeing" in the context of Islamic art demonstrates the value of considering multiple senses in order to understand the relationship between viewer and image.[40] She argues that viewership is not merely a visual experience, but that phenomenological, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions come together in complex and shifting ways. This book considers Shaw's expanded model for understanding Islamic art while investigating the growing emphasis on visual media across international cultural centres such as Istanbul in the nineteenth century.

In the context of Arab photography, Stephen Sheehi calls for an expanded definition of *manẓar* (perspective) in order to draw attention to the assumptions and simplifications generated by the indiscriminate application of perspectival ideologies derived from the Renaissance.[41] Sheehi's view acknowledges that the *manẓar* of nineteenth-century photographers in the Arab context simultaneously built on centuries of Arabo-Islamic cultural knowledge while actively participating in modernising agendas of the time. The same holistic approaches may be applied in order to better understand the experience of viewing the Ottoman imperial portrait in spectacular courtly and diplomatic contexts. Their application is even

39 For recent examples and applications of Islamic visual theories, see the volume edited by Samer Akkach, *Naẓar: Vision, Belief, and Perception in Islamic Cultures* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

40 Shaw, *What Is "Islamic" Art?*

41 Stephen Sheehi, *The Arab Imago: A Social History of Portrait Photography, 1860–1910* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), xviii.

more significant for nineteenth-century works of portraiture wherein style, media, and display practices were likely to be impacted by trends originally popularised in the Western-European context.[42] The risk here is in the assumption that the adoption and adaptation of a Western "look" in the aesthetic sense brings with it a homogenising "look" in the ideological sense. Addressing that risk involves detailing how the shifts in the sultan's image in the nineteenth century were just as much about the modernisation of power relationships among human actors as they were about developments in the aesthetic realm. I am suggesting here that the emanation of the sultan's gaze held the possibility of looking at, connecting with, and surveying the viewer-beholder in a manner that supported the idea of the portrait's controversial role as proxy.

In this book, I apply this theorisation to the range of portraits and portrait-objects covered under the concept of the sultan's image. Attending to the interactive role of the gaze against the sudden increase in visibility of the sultan's image at the turn of the nineteenth century lays bare the risks involved in exchanging established modes of controlled visibility (including the occluded image) for sanctioned visibility augmented by ceremonial activation (multiple clear channels of vision). Did the sultan's image run the risk of losing its power in the possession of the viewer? Or did the sultan's image gain power through the selective adaptation of different modes used to control the viewer's gaze?

Just as the audience for sultans' portraits in dynastic albums was circumscribed in the period between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the visibility of the living body of the royal person was closely controlled. From the time of Murad II (r. 1421–44; 1446–51), the sultan followed a *ḳānūnnāme* (legal code) associated with Mehmed II, dictating that the sultan remain aloof during official ceremonial appearances such as processions and diplomatic audiences.[43] According to descriptions and images depicting the reception of diplomatic embassies, the sultan stayed seated on the throne during audiences, not moving or showing emotion, and only speaking through an intermediary.[44] The controlled visibility of the sultan's person was a strategy for maintaining distance between the ruler and his subjects, creating an aura of *heybet* (awe-inspiring majesty), a desirable quality for rulers in the Islamic monarchical tradition.[45] Further occlusion of the sultan's visibility in the late sixteenth century manifested itself in practices such as receiving audiences from behind a curtain, viewing public ceremonies from inside a shielded kiosk, and even listening in on those present at the *Dīvān-ı Hümāyūn* (Imperial Council) from behind a gilded window grille that blocked the sultan from view while allowing him

42 Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957). Kantorowicz's work represents a classic study on ruler legitimisation through the "doubled" body (one natural, one transcendent) in the Western-European context.

43 Gülru Necipoğlu, "Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Palaces," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 303–42; Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

44 For the sultan's limited visibility during ceremonies, see Suraiya Faroqhi, "Presenting the Sultans' Power, Glory and Piety: A Comparative Perspective," in *Prof. Dr. Mübahat Kütükoğlu'na armağan*, ed. Zeynep Tarım Ertuğ (Istanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 2006), 194; Sezer Tansuğ, *Şenlikname Düzeni* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 1993).

45 Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 172. Cemil Oktay has noted the use of the phrase "fraternizing with the public is a sign of moral bankruptcy [in a ruler]" (*istînās-i nās 'alāmet-i iflās*), in *Siyaset Bilimi İncelemeleri* (Istanbul: İş Bankası Yayınları, 2007), 223. Cited in M. İnanç Özekmekçi, "His Majesty's Painter Zonaro: A Professional Career Bound to Politics," in *The Relationship between Art and Politics in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire: Institutionalisation, Change and Continuity*, ed. Ayşegül Komsuoğlu, Hikmet Toker, and Federica Nardella (Istanbul: Istanbul University Press, 2021), 19–49, 22.



FIGURE 9
Artist unknown, *Gilded grille for the Sultan's Window*, early nineteenth century

to see into the room (Fig. 9).[46] Such a grille can be understood as a precursor to the proxy role of the official portrait, since it too stood in for the sultan's presence.[47]

The sultan himself appeared to the populace of the capital city during the *selāmlıḳ*, a ceremonial procession to Friday prayers, when members of the public had the opportunity to bring petitions to the sultan's attention via his representatives.[48] While interacting with the populace during the *selāmlıḳ*, the sultan could be seen enacting his role as a pious Islamic leader: the ultimate authority in civic, judiciary, and religious matters. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially during the reign of Ahmed III, courtly fashions for ostentatious parties, promenades, and Bosphorus-side architecture opened up new possibilities for the indirect expression of the royal presence.[49] It was under the reformist Selim III that the image of the sultan gained new publicity, both within the Ottoman Empire and abroad. Mahmud II took this newfound visibility to the extreme, participating

46 Pierce, *The Imperial Harem*, 172–77.

47 My thanks go to the anonymous Reviewer #2 of this manuscript for this insightful connection.

48 Ünver Rüstem has pointed out that the enduring appeal of the *selāmlıḳ* predated efforts to increase ceremonial splendour in the period following the sixteenth century. See Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 126–27.

49 For courtly fashions and external signs of mediated visibility in the eighteenth century, see Shirine Hamadeh, "Splash and Spectacle," *Muqarnas* 19 (2002): 123–48. See also Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); Artan, "Architecture as a Theatre of Life"; and Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*.



FIGURE 10 Auguste Trichon, *Arrival of the Sultan in Paris*, 1868

in new public ceremonies – including birthday and accession day celebrations – and even going on trips to the countryside to learn more about the conditions of his people (and to be seen doing so).[50] His son, Abdülaziz (r. 1861–76), was the first sultan to appear abroad, taking a well-publicised trip to London, Paris, and Vienna for the 1867 Universal Exposition (Fig. 10). The visibility of the sultan's person in public, mentions of his appearances in the international press, and the availability of portraits picturing his visage therefore expanded along roughly the same lines in the early-to-mid parts of the century.

5 Chapter Summaries

Each of the following four chapters focuses on the role of what I have defined as a strategic group of media-specific imperial portraiture: paintings and prints on paper support, small-scale portrait medallions in enamel or on ivory, large-scale oil-on-canvas works used during ceremonial inaugurations, medium-to-large scale oil-on-canvas works featuring the "embedded" image of the sultan, and images reproduced on a large scale through the illustrated press and photographic processes. These artworks are grouped according to how their form, media, and scale require specific viewing strategies from their intended audience. Monumental oil-on-canvas works, draped with decorative fabrics and initiated with official pomp and circumstance in front of large groups of Ottoman soldiers, for example, interacted with viewers differently than the fine, diamond-studded portrait-objects small enough to hold in

50 Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 6–36, 19. Cengiz Kırlı, "Surveillance and Constituting the Public in the Ottoman Empire," in *Publics, Politics, and Participation: Locating the Public Sphere in the Middle East and North Africa*, ed. Seteney Shami (New York: Social Science Research Council, 2009), 282–305, 292.

the palm of the viewer's hand and intended to be worn as part of the elite recipient's own regalia. This media-specific organisation, while running the risk of artificially separating works linked through their use of a common iconographic (and occasionally, photographic) model, demands that the reader look beyond the obvious characterisations and functions ascribed to the genre of the portrait.

Chapter 1 explores the multiple routes by which the sultan's image came to be produced, reproduced, and circulated through paintings and prints on paper support. Its chronological span is the widest of the four chapters, making it the ideal framework for examining the intersections between new techniques and established forms. In this chapter, I argue that it was in part the coexistence of various official (courtly) and nonofficial (commercial) portraits – dispersed through readily transportable and reproducible paintings and prints on paper – that facilitated the successful adaptation of foreign portrait conventions into the service of the Ottoman court. The purpose of this analysis is to demonstrate that sultans' portraits existed simultaneously in various forms that could be adapted to shifting audiences from multiple angles without ever committing a sudden, irrevocable "break" from established Ottoman aesthetic practices.

Chapter 2 is a case study of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, a small-scale, medallion-format imperial portrait awarded in the style of a military decoration in the 1830s and 40s.[51] I show how this portrait-object functioned in a manner new to the Ottoman context by evoking the memory of the sultan's physical and spiritual presence across spectrums of viewing practice, ranging from the prescribed, semi-public setting of the bestowal ceremony itself to more intimate forms of viewing. Turning to the Ottoman state-run newspaper, *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyi'* (*The Calendar of Events*), this chapter broadens the expected audience so as to include specific Ottoman and non-Ottoman awardees, as well as the Ottoman imperial agents who delivered the works in the name of the sultan.[52]

The examination of oil-on-canvas portraiture continues in Chapter 3, which focuses on large-scale, wall-hanging *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*. This chapter augments the formal analyses of this type of portraiture by considering the elaborate official ceremonies in which it played a key role. It starts with an investigation of common programmatic elements and hierarchical protocols frequently repeated in the elaborate portrait-inauguration ceremonies held for the display of portraits of Mahmud II. Then, it traces the diffusion and repetition of programmatic elements centring *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* in diplomatic receptions, balls, and soirees held in newly re-established Ottoman permanent foreign embassies abroad. I argue that these works played an important part in connecting elite actors across social networks, fostering martial and national pride, securing personal loyalty to the sultan, and impressing foreign diplomatic bodies through spectacle. I show how these spectacles – and their detailed reports in the burgeoning international press – enforced the visualisation of the sultan as the diplomatically engaged leader of a power that deserved membership in the Concert of Europe. Additionally, this chapter

51 Günsel Renda, "Osmanlılarda Portreli Nişanlar," *Uluslararası Sanat Tarihi Sempozyumu. Prof. Dr. Gönül Öney'e armağan, Izmir 10–13 October 2001* (Izmir: Ege Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Sanat Tarihi Bölümü, 2002), 491–502; Edhem Eldem, *Pride and Privilege: A History of Ottoman Orders, Medals and Decorations* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası, 2004), 126; Eldem, "Pouvoir, modernité et visibilité."

52 The publication of these names builds on Hakan Karateke's argument that the power of the written press was beginning to be used to shape public opinion, especially after the middle of the century. Karateke, "From Divine Ruler to Modern Monarch. The Ideal of the Ottoman Sultan in the Nineteenth Century," in ed. Jörn Leonhard and Ulrike von Hirschhausen, *Comparing Empires, Encounters and Transfers in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), 296–299.

shows how ceremonial augmentation, such as by processing, saluting, and eulogising the portrait, complemented its role as a proxy for the sultan.

Chapter 4 considers a group of mid-century Ottoman-Balkan portraits of the semi-autonomous princes of Serbia, Wallachia, and Moldavia, in which the sitters (who were appointed by Russia, but officially installed by Ottoman power) wear medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*. This second tier of propagandistic portraiture has never been associated with centralised portraiture patronage in the art historiography, even though affiliations with actors in southeastern Europe and the Balkans were essential to the preservation of the empire's territories and borders in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Framing the portraits as pictures-within-pictures, I show how the "dematerialised," "embedded" *nişān* had the power to associate local, semi-autonomous provincial actors at the courts of Belgrade, Bucharest, and Iași with the sovereign power of the sultan in Istanbul.

In the fifth chapter, I consider the role of photographic and reproductive print technologies in the adoption, adaptation, and integration of new modes of visuality in shaping imperial identity. Reflecting the themes of Chapter 1, this chapter picks up on the role of duplication and dissemination of sultanic portraiture after the invention of photography in 1839 and its increased availability within the Ottoman commercial market from the 1850s onwards. In this chapter, I argue that photographic portraits of the sultan continued to act as a site for amplifying the image of the modern ruler, even as it took on additional roles in the maintenance of the empire's dynastic and historical identities. Whereas the efficacy of the works discussed in earlier chapters depended in part on their restricted audience, elite bestowal, precious materiality, or time-bound ceremonial inaugurations, it was the serial reproduction and exponentially expanded audience for the photographic portrait and its appearance in the illustrated press (frequently though the use of the wood engraving technique) that increased the visibility of its referent (the sultan). These multiplications often had the effect of reframing images originally produced in a propagandistic context, distancing them from earlier intentions and pushing such images into popular use through reproduction in the press. Towards the end of the century, under Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909), another shift rendered unfettered visibility undesirable, resulting in a marked curbing of the sultan's image and bringing the era under examination in this book to an end. Keeping an eye to the continued reproduction of the sultan's portrait – even when the image was officially restricted – broadens our understanding of the ability of the commercial market to amplify the sultan's image and to augment the audience for royal portraiture up until the dawn of WWI.

6 Conclusion

The production, reproduction, dissemination, and ceremonial display of sultanic portraiture over the course of the nineteenth century reoriented the sultan's image in a manner that would be legible to an increasingly public and international audience. These audiences understood, to varying degrees, the role of sultans' portraits in supporting programmes of both reform and reaction within the greater processes of modernisation. Gaining a sense of this audience – comprised of networks spanning various cultural, political, and diplomatic spheres – can be achieved through an in-depth examination of how paintings, prints, photographs, and other visual objects reached and were presented to their viewers' gaze. Examining the underlying framework that connects physical works to the actors producing, delivering, receiving, or wearing them, as I show, leads to a fuller understanding of the history of the sultan's image in terms of both its echoes of the Ottoman dynastic tradition and its appropriation of ideals made popular across inter-imperial and international contexts.

CHAPTER 1

Dynamism, Diplomacy, and Distribution

In 1806, Sultan Selim III received a *taṣvīr* (portrait) of Napoleon Bonaparte as a diplomatic gift through the intermediary Abdürrahim Muhib Efendi, Ottoman Ambassador to Paris (1806–11).[1] Recognising the importance of portraiture exchange as a show of *dostluḳ ve ḫulūṣ* (friendship and sincerity) the sultan ordered that a *büyük levḥa* (large-format panel [portrait]) be made so that he could return the favour via General Sébastiani, French Ambassador to the Porte (1806–08).[2] A few months earlier, Muhib Efendi had taken the initiative to make one of Kapıdağlı's printed portraits of Selim III a gift for Napoleon, indicating that the Ottoman ambassador was already familiar with the diplomatic value of portraiture exchange.[3] In a letter to the Porte, Muhib wrote that the impromptu gift was so well-received that the emperor placed it in its own cabinet, remarking that "the image of His Excellency Sultan Selim is as beautiful as his inner character."[4] A well-rehearsed trope linking appearance with disposition, Napoleon's reaction alludes to shared ideas about the metaphysical qualities of naturalistic portraiture in their ability to reveal intentionality. In other words, the emperor, the sultan, and their intermediaries – General Sébastiani and Muhib Efendi, among the others in their respective retinues – engaged in a shared symbolic language to reinforce diplomatic goals.

This reciprocal exchange marked the renewal of friendly relations between the powers following the Napoleonic invasion of Ottoman Egypt and Syria (1798–1801), becoming a touchstone in the history of diplomatic gift-giving. It was not the first time that an Ottoman sultan commissioned his portrait to be given as a gift, and of course, the exchange of precious and beautiful items had long played a part in gift-giving practices at the Ottoman court.[5] However, the 1806 exchange was noteworthy in that it marked the start of what would become a new emphasis on the sultan's image as a political tool for engaging with foreign powers.[6]

The development of new aesthetic forms within the genre of sultanic portraiture was made possible through expanded networks of Ottoman and foreign actors, which connected the court to resources including new technologies in transportation, communication, and printmaking. For

1 BOA HAT 257/14805, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1221 (March 9, 1807). For a full translation, see Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 58. For Muhib Efendi's diplomatic mission, see Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, *Tārīḫ-i Cevdet* vol. VIII (Istanbul: Maṭbaʿa-yı ʿĀmire, 1292 [1874]) 54, 232; and vol. IX, 59–61. Gregorian dates are calculated using John Walker's Calendar Converter for Near East Historians, hosted at https://www.muqawwim.com/.

2 BOA HAT 257/14805, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1221 (March 9, 1807). "Porte" or "Sublime Porte" refers to the offices of the Ottoman central government in Istanbul.

3 BOA HAT 142/5881, 5 Rajab 1221 (September 18, 1806). Kapıdağlı is mentioned here as *"Ḳosṭanṭin-kārī"* and the portrait as *"bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn."* For a full transliteration, see Appendix 2 in Renda, "Searching for New Media," 464–65.

4 "*Sulṭān Selīm ḥażretleriniñ derūnları gibi taṣvīrleri daḫī güzeldir,*" BOA HAT 142/5881, 5 Rajab 1221 (September 18, 1806). The same document reports that "*mücevher ve taḥtında kendi taṣvīri olaraḳ bir ʿaded enfiye ḳuṭusu*" ("a snuffbox with his own bejewelled portrait under the lid") was sent from the emperor as a gift to the sultan. This probably refers to the only portrait of Napoleon that remains in the royal treasury today: a miniature portrait set in a diamond ring in its own wooden box, TSM 2/3699.

5 Muhib Efendi had of course brought along gifts on behalf of the sultan for his initial reception by the emperor at the Palais des Tuileries on June 5, 1806. These included a diamond aigrette, a fine box inset with diamonds and the *tuġra* of Selim III, and a number of finely caparisoned Arab horses. For the empress, a pearl necklace, perfumes, and rich fabrics were brought. *Gazette Nationale ou Le Moniteur Universel*, no. 157 (June 6, 1806), 756.

6 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 442.

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example, according to a *lāyiḥa* (memorandum), likely written by Yusuf Agah Efendi, Ottoman Ambassador to London (1793–97), a portrait of Selim III was designed by Kapıdağlı in Istanbul, but translated into an engraving by Schiavonetti in London. It was here that it was printed in black-and-white and colour versions and returned via the *Eflāḳ voyvodası* (Prince of Wallachia) to be distributed among Ottoman dignitaries and foreign rulers (Fig. 1).[7] The cross-cultural journey involved in its printed reproduction is also reflected in the formal, stylistic, and compositional aspects of the image. Kapıdağlı's half-length, three-quarter view portrait of Selim III follows the magisterial conventions expected of sultanic portraiture since the sixteenth century while also incorporating techniques of shading, modeling, and perspective in the Western-European aesthetic mode, reflecting a turn towards naturalism that had begun in the eighteenth century. The portrait is rendered so as to appear to be framed, draped with a curtain, and suspended in a window overlooking the Bosphorus. This window frames pieces of artillery and a view towards Tophane barracks, symbolizing the sultan's modernising military reforms along the lines of Western-European models, which would later become known as the *Niẓām-ı Cedīd* or New Order.[8] In this way, the portrait points to dynamism in both the aesthetic and political realms, despite the fact that it was participating in the long-established genre of sultans' portraits carried out at the behest of the Ottoman dynastic house.

The "*büyük levḥa*" that the sultan planned to send to Napoleon did not survive, but at least two prints claiming to have been copied from a "*tableau*" sent to Paris from Istanbul exist in European collections (Figs. 11 and 12). That the "*tableau*" used as a model was not the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti print initially gifted to the emperor by Muhib Efendi is evident from differences in the sultan's headgear and seated pose (it is clear that he is enthroned in the version published by Potrelle, whereas the version published by Bouquet simplifies the background). Both Parisian prints list the *chez* (address) of their respective publishers, where copies of the image representing "friendship and sincerity" could be purchased on the open market and viewed by anyone wealthy enough to purchase the picture.

Compositions similar to that of the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti print appear in Napoleonic examples as well, including an 1802 print by Charles François Gabriel Le Vachez (active 1789–1828), after a painting by Louis Boilly (1761–1845) showing a medallion portrait of Napoleon as First Consul set into a marble frame over a scene of a military review (Fig 13).[9] Both the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti and Boilly-Le Vachez portraits use similar framing devices to juxtapose the visage of a leader with a landscape vignette representing their respective abilities to command organised, modern, and well-equipped martial forces. The modern appearance of these representations was enforced by their engagement with new technologies and trends in printmaking, including a combination of the intaglio techniques of engraving and etching that became popular from the mid- to late eighteenth century. Developing print technologies and

7 TS.MA.e 255/47 (TSMA No: 570/1); TS.MA.e 255/48 (TSMA No: 570/2). For transcriptions of both documents, see Renda, "Searching for New Media," Appendices 1 and 3, 461–4, 465–7.

8 The term "*Niẓām-i Cedīd*" originally referred to the new branch of the Ottoman Military, but came to encompass political and bureaucratic reform as well. Stanford Shaw, "The Origins of Ottoman Military Reform: The Nizam-i Cedid Army of Sultan Selim III," *The Journal of Modern History* 37, no. 3 (September 1965): 168–84.

9 Both prints are of similar size and technique, incorporating engraved lines and etched or stippled areas of shading. Other copies include: FRBNF41090027; LCCN 2007685781, https://lccn.loc.gov/2007685781, last accessed June 26, 2023. The use of historical and martial vignettes was popular among other contemporaries; for example, a 1788 portrait of Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor (1741–90) is positioned over a landscape commemorating a military victory: NYPL b16492080, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-e315-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99, last accessed June 26, 2023.



FIGURE 11 Gregorius, Louis Charles Ruotte the Elder, Potrelle, *Portrait of Sultan Selim III*, 1807



FIGURE 12 Bouquet, *Portrait of Sultan Selim III*, 1761



FIGURE 13 Louis Boilly, Charles François Gabriel Le Vachez, *Portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 1802

a growing demand for portraits offered leaders across Eurasian and American spheres the opportunity to demonstrate their aesthetic competency and the reach of their knowledge networks on a global stage. For Selim III, the production of a print like the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti portrait demonstrated the sultan's ability to command large networks of actors between Istanbul, London, and Paris (including the semi-independent ruler of Wallachia, a challenging position that would become even more politically fraught in the next decades). In this chapter, I outline the ways in which the interrelated nature of diplomatic and commercial modes of production and circulation increased the visibility of the sultan on an international scale. I argue that the increased attention to the dissemination of the sultan's image from the turn of the nineteenth century onwards, in combination with the advent of new printmaking technologies, was not a unilateral journey, but a series of dynamic responses that coexisted for multiple audiences across Ottoman and international spheres.

This book examines the role of sultans' portraits as visual nodes within networks of power relationships. Exchanges between actors – Selim III and Napoleon, for example – as well as adoptions, adaptations, and remixes evidenced by the visual material – variations on the model used in the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti and Boilly-Le Vachez portraits, for example – make up the case studies that will be investigated along the way. The coexistence of various forms of portraiture on paper – dispersed through reproduction by manual and mechanical means – was in part responsible for the successful adaptation of new portrait conventions into the service of the Ottoman official imperial image. Recognising the nebulous networks involved in these coexisting processes represents an alternative to the idea of a sudden and irrevocable "break" in the history of the portraiture of Ottoman sultans. This conceptualisation demonstrates the role that the flexible coexistence of various versions of the sultan's portrait played in allowing multiple audiences to be receptive to the larger processes of adaptation and modernisation in the nineteenth century.

1 Paper Support and Design Dissemination

Beyond the Ottoman court, the transfer of visual information via designs on paper support had for a long time played a significant role in the exchange of cultural and aesthetic knowledge throughout the wider Perso-Islamic and Asian-Turkic worlds.[10] Paper models were easy to transport and store, and could be used as stencils. Examples of paper models bound into albums show us how images on paper operated as an intermediary in the transmission of motifs and compositions from at least the Ilkhanid period of the late fourteenth century in Iran. Paper was also a primary support for the written word as well, and, as David Roxburgh has argued, the combination of painted images with textual prefaces in albums of the Timurid period laid out the theoretical framework for text-image relationships in later Safavid, Mughal, and Ottoman album practices during the early modern period.[11]

Fluid boundaries and frequent exchange continued to foster the development of shared aesthetics between Timurid, Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal painting practices well into the sixteenth century. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, however, a distinctly Ottoman idiom crystallized within the genre of manuscript painting. As Emine Fetvacı has cogently demonstrated, while Ottoman art seemed on its surface to be less receptive to foreign models at this time, artistic exchange continued to thrive.[12] For example, Italian and other European models were incorporated as courtly artists continued to receive, adopt, and adapt foreign frameworks when they suited their needs. In the following centuries, this adoption and adaptation of foreign idioms continued to inform the production of Ottoman portraits by Ottoman and non-Ottoman artists at the court in Istanbul. From the mid-seventeenth century onwards, new developments in printmaking technologies allowed for a greater number of more finely modelled images to be produced. This included, for example, the mezzotint, aquatint, wood engraving, and lithographic processes, which in turn led to greater concentrations of

10 Linda Komaroff, "The Transmission and Dissemination of a New Visual Language," in *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256–1353*, ed. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni (New York: The Metropolitan Museum; New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), especially 184–195; Komaroff, *The Golden Disk of Heaven: Metalwork of Timurid Iran* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda, 1992) 13–14; David Roxburgh, "Persian Drawing, ca. 1400–1450: Materials and Creative Procedures," *Muqarnas* 19 (2002): 44–77; Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*; Adel Adamova, "Repetition of Composition in Manuscripts: The *Khamsa* of Nizami in Leningrad," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtelny (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 67–75.

11 For discussion of the notion that "albums functioned as storehouses of models and visual ideas," see Roxburgh, "Persian Drawing," 45.

12 Fetvacı, "From Print to Trace." See also Necipoğlu, "Süleyman the Magnificent."

images produced in Western-European capitals (in particular, London, Paris, and Vienna) across Ottoman courtly and commercial contexts.

2 Dynastic Representation during Political Volatility

Following the success of the Kapıdağlı-Schiavonetti print, Selim III commissioned a series of 28 dynastic portraits from Kapıdağlı to be reproduced by the London-based printmaker John Young. For the paintings, Kapıdağlı drew on Ottoman sources, including the *silsilenāme* (dynastic genealogy) format and the aesthetic conventions of earlier artists at the Ottoman court, such as Osman and Levni, reenforcing ideals of continuity and stability.[13] The serial nature of the portrait group is emphasized by the repetition of similar costumes, shared beauty standards, and the fact that most of them share the medallion-over-vignette composition (Fig. 14). For the historical details of the vignettes, Kapıdağlı must have referred to Ottoman historical texts, such as ʿOṣmānzāde Aḥmed Tāʾib's (d. 1724) *Ḥadīḳatü'l-Mülūk* (*The Garden of Princes*), which includes accounts of sultans' conquests, achievements, and personal lives.[14] In this way, the series is an excellent example of blending Ottoman and European techniques and source materials. Versions of the series continued to be reproduced on paper – in codices and scrolls, hand-painted or printed, and even in a *carte de visite* format printed by the Ottoman-Armenian photographic firm Abdullah Frères (Fig. 15) – throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century.[15]

Yet the final form of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* was not witnessed by the project's initial patron. Shortly after Selim III had approved the first images for private production, the streets of Istanbul erupted into chaos. On May 29, 1807, the janissaries, once an elite unit of the Ottoman military that had become an uncontrollable and ineffective force by the late eighteenth century, led an insurrection motivated by the (justified) fear that they would be replaced by the reformed troops of the sultan's *Niẓām-ı Cedīd*.[16] As the insurrectionists seized power, Selim III was forced to give up the throne to his cousin, Mustafa IV (r. May 29, 1807–July 28, 1808), one of only two remaining male heirs of the Ottoman dynasty. When news of the coup reached Bayraktar Mustafa Pasha (1765–1808), the loyalist *aʿyān* (local notable) of Rusçuk (modern Ruse, Bulgaria), he organised a counter-coup with the goal of putting Selim III back on the throne. Bayrakdar's Albanian troops successfully stormed Topkapı Palace, but not before Selim III was executed. With Bayraktar and

13 Serpil Bağcı, "From Adam to Mehmed III: Silsilenâme," in *The Sultan's Portrait*, 188–201. The scroll-format dynastic genealogy was still being produced and shown to foreign visitors in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. In his travelogue for English readers, the British admiral Adolphus Slade (who eventually became an admiral in the Ottoman Navy) recalls in typical Orientalizing terms his having been shown a genealogical scroll of sultans' portraits stored in the palace treasury. He finds it ironic that they are not more well-known, since "[Mahmud II] has been so highly panegyrized for having had the civilization to disregard the Koran, and have his likeness taken." Slade, *Records of Travels in Turkey, Greece &c: A Cruise in the Black Sea, with the Capitan Pasha, in the Years 1829, 1830, and 1831*, 2 vols. (London: Saunders and Otley, 1833), 1:469, https://books.google.com/books?id=D_EEAAAAYAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

14 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 444.

15 For the *carte de visite* format, see Mary Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges: Ottomans, Orientalists, and Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015), 33–35. Nebahat Avcıoğlu has recently demonstrated in detail how the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* was later augmented with photographic portraits of Abdülaziz, Murad V (r. May 30–August 31, 1876), and Abdülhamid II. See Avcıoğlu, "Immigrant Narratives: The Ottoman Sultan Portraits in Elisabeth Leitner's Family Photo Album of 1862–1873," *Muqarnas* 36 (December 2018): 1–36, https://doi.org./10.1163/22118993_03501P009.

16 Şükrü Hanioğlu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 53–54. For further justifications and motivations, see Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 56–63, 89–92.



FIGURE 14 Kostantin Kapıdağlı, John Young, W. Bulmer and Co., *Portrait of Sultan Selim III*, 1815



FIGURE 15 Abdullah Frères after Kapıdağlı-Young Series, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülhamid I*, *c.*1860–70

his supporters now holding a great deal of power, Mustafa IV was replaced by his half-brother, Prince Mahmud, on July 28, 1808. Shortly after ascending the throne, Sultan Mahmud II had Mustafa IV strangled, ensuring his position as the last surviving male heir of the House of Osman. In the aftermath of this volatile period, reform efforts were put on hold. While official portraits of the sultan continued to be produced at this time, they closely followed established courtly norms in style and format.

In 1815, by which time Mahmud II had been on the throne for several years but had not yet begun his major modernising reform programmes of the 1830s, the London-based printer John Young petitioned the Porte for permission to finish printing the series of dynastic portraits based on the designs of Kapıdağlı. Since he had already made a significant financial investment in making the plates for the series, Young asked for additional permissions to sell some of the albums commercially in order to recoup his costs.[17] Mary Roberts has demonstrated how these new circumstances reversed the private conditions of Selim III's original commission, which specified that no one was to see any prints or proofs and that the original plates would be sent back to the palace.[18] This specification allowed Selim III to control access to his sultanic image, reserving the privilege of viewership for worthy allies. Despite the technical possibilities for large-scale reproduction represented by the printmaking process, the exclusive nature of diplomatic gift-giving under which the original commission was conceived dictated that the distribution of the print run be limited to official

17 Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges*, 31.
18 Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges*, 23, 31.



FIGURE 16 Kostantin Kapıdağlı, John Young, W. Bulmer and Co., *Portrait of Sultan Mustafa IV*, 1815



FIGURE 17 Kostantin Kapıdağlı, John Young, W. Bulmer and Co., *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, 1815

recipients rather than exposing the sultan's image to a wider, more general audience.

Therefore, as Mahmud II agreed to grant Young the necessary publication permissions, he was also overriding the terms of restricted visibility stipulated by his second predecessor. When the series went to press for commercial audiences in London, it was given an introduction describing the secretive circumstances of the original commission, playing into Orientalist curiosities about the exotic "other" popular among Western-European audiences at the time.[19] By granting official permission for the Kapıdağlı-Young series to be published in a run that would be distributed to a foreign, commercial audience, Mahmud II was already participating – whether intentionally or not – in the bringing about of an unprecedented increase in ruler visibility.

It was through the *Kapıdağlı-Young* series (and its derivatives) that the genre of the sultan's portrait album, largely confined to courtly circles from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, experienced an increase in viewership across new contexts during the nineteenth century. Both commercial and courtly versions of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* were augmented to include images of Mustafa IV and Mahmud II in Kapıdağlı's style (Figs. 16 and 17). An 1829 lithograph published in London, based on a sketch by the French artist Achille Devéria (1800–57),[20] seems to have been

19 A great body of scholarly work concerning Edward Said's *Orientalism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1978) has been undertaken. For Orientalism in the context of display, see Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed*. For material culture in the colonial context, see Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, eds., *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture, and the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1998).

20 During his professional career, Devéria had access to works housed at the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Louvre, meaning that it is conceivable that he used an



FIGURE 18 Achille Déveria, Gihaut frères, Pieri Bénard, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, 1829

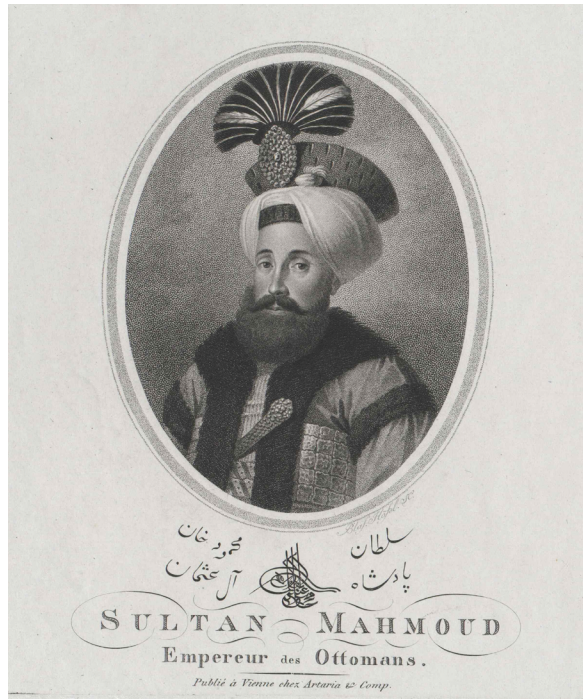

FIGURE 19 Blasius Höfel, Artaria und Compagnie, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1815–39



FIGURE 20
Meno Haas, Bibliographisches Institut, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, 1829



FIGURE 21
Hubert Clerget, Jean Alexandre Allais, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, 1828



FIGURE 22
Theodoor Soeterik, Johannes Paulus Houtman, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1828–39

modelled loosely after the last two images of the series (Fig. 18). In turn, the Devéria print served as a model for a proliferation of bust-format portraits of Mahmud II produced in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and Utrecht (Figs. 19–22). The images were of varying quality and many had multilingual captions, both indications that the viewership for such prints included a broad audience. Demand from foreign diplomatic channels, for example, was driven in part by interest in the intelligence that could be gleaned from a ruler's physical appearance, attire, and presentation. For the burgeoning commercial market in Europe, ownership could carry socio-cultural cachet and exotic appeal (especially in the case of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album*, the commercial edition of which included an account of the tantalizingly secret conditions of Sultan Selim III's initial commission).[21] Foreign interest, in combination with the continued desire to project a modernising image from the Ottoman centre, contributed to the sustained circulation of pictures of the sultan. As these networks of viewership and distribution created new confluences, new and surprising forms of the sultan's portrait began to appear.

3 The "Auspicious Event" and the Sultan's New Look

On June 15, 1826, Mahmud II declared the replacement of the janissary corps, inciting them to revolt yet again.[22] Having anticipated the uprising, a contingent of loyal officers, armed with modern, imported weapons, put down the rebellion, massacring thousands of janissaries in what became known euphemistically as the *Vaḳ'a-i Hayriye* ("Auspicious Event"). By its elimination of the single greatest political and martial force opposed to the sultan's reforms, this event would have far-reaching implications for the modernisation of the Ottoman Empire.

Almost immediately after the Auspicious Event, Mahmud II began to conduct military drills with his new troops, the *'Asākir-i Manṣūre-i Muḥammediyye* (the "Victorious Soldiers of Muhammad" or Mansure Army), "arranged in European order."[23] Sir Stratford Canning (later known as Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, 1786–1880), British Ambassador to the Porte, was among the European diplomats and military men on site. In a letter, he reported that the troops were dressed variously in tailored European jackets or looser, kaftan-like coats of Ottoman or Russian styles. The sultan himself "was dressed in the *Egyptian* fashion, armed with pistols and sabre, and on his head in place of the Imperial turban was a sort of Egyptian bonnet."[24] His description inadvertently acknowledges that while the sultan's new style of dress drew inspiration from Western-European forms, it was filtered through the intermediation of Ottoman actors. The introduction of the fez, in particular, is said to have been made on the part of *Ḳapūdān* (Grand Admiral) Koca Hüsrev Mehmed Pasha (1769–1855) after he saw it worn by the troops of Mehmed Ali Pasha (Viceroy of Egypt 1805–48) in North Africa.[25] While it is likely

official source for his copy of the portrait. However, he also had a flair for Romantic and Orientalist work.

21 Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges*, 23, 31.

22 Mustafa Gökçek, "Centralization During the Era of Mahmud II," *Osmanlı Araştırmaları /The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 21 (2001): 237–55. See also Uriel Heyd, "The Ottoman Ulema and Westernization in the Time of Selim III and Mahmud II," *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, 9 (1961): 63–96 and Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789–1922* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980).

23 Canning records the announcement of the official abolition of the janissaries as having occurred on June 17th and the exercises on June 20th. Stanley Lane-Poole, *Life of Sir Stratford Canning*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1888), 1:421, https://books.google.com/books?id=YjXSAAAAMAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

24 Stratford Canning to George Canning, June 20, 1826, quoted in Mansel, *Dressed to Rule*, 103.

25 According to Reşad Ekrem Koçu, it was originally planned that the troops would wear a traditional *šubara* (Serbian black wool cap). Reşad Ekrem Koçu, *Türk, Giyim, Kuşam ve Süsleme Sözlüğü* (Ankara: Sümerbank Yayınları, 1967), 113, 219. See also Charlotte

that the influential Hüsrev Pasha had a say in the introduction of the headgear into military service, the *Tunus fesi* (Tunis-made fez) had been worn within the empire since the mid-seventeenth century.[26] Additionally, some other elements of the new military uniform, such as trousers and berets, had been tested by certain battalions of Selim III's *Niẓām-ı Cedīd* before Mahmud II had even come to power.[27]

By 1828, a standardised version of the uniform, including *setre* (jacket), trousers, boots, and fez, was imposed upon the Mansure Army. These new uniforms functioned as a marker of loyalty to the person of the sultan as well as a highly visible way of distancing the new troops from the janissaries' reputation for disloyalty, corruption, and defeat.[28] The uniform, as a sartorial symbol, was linked with the powerful show of autocratic power that was the Auspicious Event, inextricably bound up in the sultan's martial leadership as a brutal, but effective, reformer.

In 1829, the mandate for the new uniform was extended to members of the central bureaucracy, where it took on the additional function of erasing established markers of rank and religious identity.[29] The uniform played a highly visual and symbolic role, clearly marking those who had been reformed and uniting them under the personal leadership of the sultan. Therefore, while the uniform clearly borrowed mixed European, Eurasian (particularly Russian), and North African forms, its function as part of the sultan's reform programme marked it as both particularly Ottoman and distinctly modern. These uniforms, the sartorial laws governing them, and associated markers of distinction (including medals and medallions) would come to have far-reaching implications for Ottoman identity at large and would become a flashpoint in the negotiations of power within provincial territories, particularly in the Balkan provinces.[30]

4 Difference as Progress: "Double Mahmuds"

Dynastic portrait albums featuring series of sultans' portraits in the Kapıdağlı style continued to be produced in printed, painted, and mixed forms throughout the nineteenth century. A mid-century example in the collection of the Mevlana Museum in Konya, likely completed during the rule of Abdülmecid (r. 1839–61), contains the usual formula of a consecutive series of Ottoman forebears painted in gouache on paper.[31] In the

Jirousek, "The Transition to Mass Fashion System Dress in the Later Ottoman Empire," in *Consumption Studies and the History of the Ottoman Empire, 1550–1922*, ed. Donald Quataert (New York: State University of New York Press, 2000), 201–41, and Patricia Baker, "The Fez in Turkey: A Symbol of Modernization?" *Costume* 20, no.1 (1986): 74–76. For more on the history of Ottoman sartorial reform, see Donald Quataert, "Clothing, Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720–1829," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 3 (August 1997): 403–25.

26 Youssef Ben Ismail, "A History of the Ottoman Fez before Mahmud II (ca. 1600–1800)," *Muqarnas* 38, no. 1 (2021): 155–83. For the ulema's sanctioning of the fez, see Seyfettin Erşahin, "Westernization, Mahmud II, and the Islamic Virtue Tradition," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* vol. 23, no. 2 (2006): 37–62, 39, doi: 10.35632/ajis.v23i2.439.

27 Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 60.

28 According to the *vaḳ'anüvīs* (also *veḳāyi'-nüvīs* or "the writer of events"; the official chronicler) Ahmed Lütfi Efendi (1816–1907), *"Asākir-i Manṣūre elbisesinin taḫfīfi ṣırada başlarına sefer ü ḥażarda munāsib bir şey giydirilmesi taṣavvur olunmuş idi"* ("the lightening of the Mansure Army's uniforms came to be envisioned as a suitable way of dressing the ranks in war and peace"). *Tārīḫ-i Lütfī*, 15 vols. (Istanbul: Maṭba'a-yı 'Āmire, 1290 [1873]) 1:255, https://books.google.com/books?id=rXToUHjzktEC, last accessed June 26, 2023.

29 Mansel, *Dressed to Rule*. For the decree, see Lütfi, *Tārīḫ-i Lütfī*, 15 vols. (Istanbul: Maṭba'a-yı 'Āmire, 1291 [1874]) 2:269, https://books.google.com/books?id=nVmwjMNYTAoC, last accessed June 26, 2023.

30 See Chapter 4.

31 As a unit, the album is dated ca. 1840–50 based on the inclusion of Abdülmecid's portrait, though some of the individual paintings may have been completed earlier. See Günsel Renda, *Padişah Portreleri. Mevlana Müzesi*



FIGURE 23 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840–50



FIGURE 24 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840–50

Konya album, however, this formula is complicated in a surprising way. As it reaches the 30th sultan of the Ottoman Empire, it seems to repeat itself; unlike his predecessors, Mahmud II is represented twice (Figs. 23 and 24). This doubling of the sultan – on two different, non-consecutive folios – is made even more extraordinary by the conspicuous sartorial differences between the two portraits. In the first image, the enthroned sultan wears a green kaftan and turban with a *ṣorġuç* (aigrette) of heron feathers fastened by a *çelenk* (diamond-studded decoration).[32] The album's second portrait of Mahmud II departs from this established sartorial convention by depicting the sultan in the modern military uniform, complete with trousers, mantle, and fez. The sultan remains enthroned and his new, tasselled headgear retains a version of the *ṣorġuç*, linking the two portraits. However, when viewed within the context of reform – military reorganisation in particular is suggested by the Ottoman Baroque-style Nusretiye Mosque (1823–26) and gun carriage (a reference to the nearby Ṭopḫāne barracks) in the background[33] – the sultan's mode of dress in the

Albümü (Konya: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Yayını, 1999), 87, 89, 91.

32 The terms *"ṣorġuç"* and *"çelenk"* are sometimes used interchangeably in scholarship on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. For more examples of historical costume in the Ottoman courtly context, see Nurhan Atasoy, *Portraits and Kaftans of the Ottoman Sultans* (New York: Assouline, 2013).

33 For more on the Nuṣretiye Mosque, see Ünver Rüstem, "Victory in the Making: The Symbolism of Istanbul's Nusretiye Mosque," in *Art, Trade and Culture in the Islamic World and Beyond: From the Fatimids to the Mughals. Studies Presented to Doris Behrens-Abouseif*

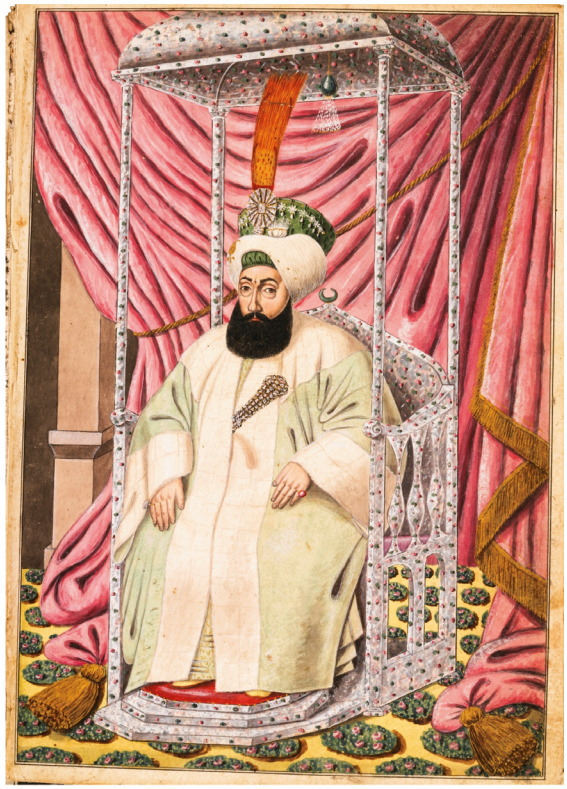

FIGURE 25 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840–50



FIGURE 26 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840–50

second portrait is directly linked to his dissolution of the janissaries, his position of active martial leadership, and his patronage of new arts and technologies.

The juxtaposition of the two Mahmud IIs in the Konya album is remarkable, but it is not unique. Günsel Renda has identified at least 17 similar cases in which albums of sultans' portraits contain two contrasting images of Mahmud II.[34] In each case, the double portraits serve as a link between the immediately preceding Selim III – who wears a kaftan and turban – and the immediately following Abdülmecid – who wears a modern military uniform and fez. Recently, yet another album of this type came to light when it was sold by the auction house Sotheby's and its images made public online. The two portraits of Mahmud II in the Sotheby's album (Figs. 25 and 26) are virtually identical to their counterparts in the Konya album in pose, dress, and expression, differing significantly only in the level of detail provided in the background. Both albums clearly share source material, indicating that a prototype was

(2016): 92–115. For the highly visible power of the Ottoman Baroque architectural style in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries more generally, see Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*.

34 Of these, Renda has highlighted three as deserving of special attention for their relatively larger size and more elaborate backgrounds: the Konya album, the Kıraç album, and a third in a private collection. For the Konya album, see Günsel Renda, *Padişah Portreleri*. For the Kıraç album, see Renda, *A 19th Century Album of Ottoman Sultans' Portraits. Suna and İnan Kıraç Collection = Osmanlı Padişah Portreleri. Bir 19. Yuzyil albümü. İnan ve Suna Kıraç Koleksiyonu* (Istanbul: Suna ve İnan Kıraç Vakfı, 1992).

in circulation among the artists or workshops that produced these and all such series featuring the enthroned type "double Mahmuds."

The existence of these doubled portraits begs the question of why – when the sultanate was actively and rapidly modifying its public-facing image to suit ideals based on the concept of an enlightened ruler according to Western-European-facing models – would a royal album include portraits that so explicitly linked Mahmud II's person to historical sultanic ideals? Was the function of the portrait in which the sultan wears the kaftan and turban only included to serve as an outdated foil against which the modernised image could be contrasted? Or should a more nuanced comparative or even interdependent relationship be considered? Archival records explaining official reasons for this duplication have yet to be identified, but turning to the commercial market may provide some preliminary answers. Images of Mahmud II in both styles proliferated beyond the court in Istanbul and beyond the time of his reign, especially in Western-European cultural capitals, where they were reproduced both on their own and in pairs through various media, including painted, drawn, and printed works on paper. The growing popularity of the sultan's image abroad, spurred on by advances in image-reproduction technologies, diplomatic engagement, and general curiosity about the wider world contributed to duplications for sale on the commercial market. Evidence of this foreign interest, which entered the palace collection through the prints that continue to be housed in Istanbul today, contributed to a greater general emphasis on sultanic visibility. Within the empire, this growing visibility was supported by the top-down propagandistic portrait campaign initiated in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century and picked up by Mahmud II's sons and successors, Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, in the second part of the century.

With the publication of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* in 1815, an officially generated, luxury example from the genre of the sultans' portrait series entered the commercial realm at the same time that demand was spiking among Western-European audiences. However, commercial demand for single-sheet images of the sultan had existed on the domestic market since at least the seventeenth century, when it became popular for foreign travelers to Ottoman lands to compile souvenir costume albums.[35] Visiting foreigners, and in particular individuals connected to Western-European diplomatic circles, were fascinated by the hierarchized sartorial codes of the Ottoman court and returned home with extensive visual records of different costumes.[36] In this way, the image of the sultan, which very often was inserted as the frontispiece to a collection, found itself circulated among foreign elite diplomatic and academic circles through less-than-official channels. Despite their different functions of use, costume albums that had cross-cultural origins often shared forms and iconography with elite Ottoman productions, such as the Konya album. The genres often converged, sharing overlapping iconography, and, more often than not, artists and workshops.[37]

35 For Ottoman costume books in the early modern cross-cultural and European contexts, see Elisabeth Fraser, "The Ottoman Costume Album as Mobile Object and Agent of Contact," in *The Mobility of People and Things in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, ed. Elisabeth Fraser (New York: Routledge, 2019), 91–114; Fraser, "The Color of the Orient: On Ottoman Costume Albums, European Print Culture, and Cross-Cultural Exchange," in *Visual Typologies from the Early Modern to the Contemporary*, eds. Tara Zanardi and Lynda Klich (New York: Routledge, 2018), 45–59; Gwendolyn Collaço, "Dressing a City's Demeanour: Ottoman Costume Albums and the Portrayal of Urban Identity in the Early Seventeenth Century," *Textile History* 48, no. 2 (2017): 248–67.

36 For albums owned by Ottomans, see Collaço, "Albums of Conspicuous Consumption: A Composite Mirror of an 18th-Century Collector's World," *Journal 18: A Journal of Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture* 6, "Albums" (Fall 2018). https://www.journal18.org/3089, last accessed June 26, 2023.

37 Artists such as Jean-Baptiste Hilair, who worked in Istanbul in the eighteenth century, produced images in both portraiture and costume album genres. For a thorough analysis of the cross-cultural network among which these prints were conceived, produced, and distributed, see Elisabeth Fraser, *Mediterranean Encounters: Artists between Europe and the Ottoman Empire, 1774–1839* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2017).



FIGURE 27 Artist unknown, *Portraits of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1839



FIGURE 28 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840



FIGURE 29 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1840

Unofficial travel and souvenir albums continued this desire to depict the two versions of Mahmud II as "before-and-after" images. Two additional instances of this pattern appear in non-imperial albums recently sold at auction at Sotheby's (Figs. 27–29).[38] Each image is a full-length figure against a blank background in the style of a costume album. The "before" images show the sultan wearing a green kaftan with diamond frogging, a turban with a *ṣorġuç*, and yellow leather slippers. The "after" images show the sultan wearing a version of his new uniform: a long cape over a mauve tunic and trousers, a red fez with a silk tassel and diamond-encrusted *ṣorġuç*, and black boots with heels. The first set of images comes from a larger group of 20 costume watercolours compiled by the British admiral Sir Baldwin Wake Walker, also known as Yaver Pasha, who served as an admiral in the Ottoman Navy from 1838–45.[39] As a cross-cultural member of the military elite, Admiral Walker probably would have had access to and the means for either commissioning or purchasing works on the open market. The owner of the second album remains unknown, but clearly shared Walker's interest in dress as a marker of identity, choosing to include images of members of the Ottoman court and military, as well as other costume plates labelled with regional, ethnic, and professional identities, including figures from Greece, Georgia, Armenia, Bosnia, and Albania.[40] Because of the ad-hoc nature of albums, both collections would have been suited to the individual tastes and budgets of their respective compilers. Yet their overlapping content speaks to the availability and apparent demand for a certain type of image, one that appeared to seamlessly continue the established format of the costume plate.

The Sotheby's examples are significant because they provide a glimpse into the interests of foreign collector-compilers as well as the simultaneous commercial availability of a variety of images of the sultan. The juxtaposition of these images was a way of working through the larger visual shifts that were occurring during the top-down reform process, whether that enactment was happening in the displays of vendors at the market, in the physical process of album-binding, or in the later action of album-viewing. Of greater interest to the present study, however, the Sotheby's albums prove that the "double Mahmud" phenomenon was present beyond the patronage of Ottoman elite genealogical album production. Picturing the sultan using consistent styles and poses across a temporal range (pre-1826–post-1826) represented by a sartorial shift would have stood as a reminder to viewers that the reform process had ramifications that were both highly visible and wide-ranging.

5 Courtly and Commercial Exchange

Of course, images of Mahmud II in the new military uniform circulated without a kaftan-clad pendant as well. In the late 1830s, the printing and publishing company Fulgenzi & Fils in Smyrna (İzmir) produced two portraits of the sultan likely based on models painted in Istanbul.[41] One design

38 For the details of the sale of Admiral Walker's album, see "Travel, Atlases, Maps and Natural History: Lot 187-Album of 20 Turkish costume watercolours, 19th century, 4to, red morocco," Sotheby's, July 28, 2020, https://www.sothebys.com/en/buy/auction/2020/travel-atlases-maps-and-natural-history/album-of-20-turkish-costume-watercolours-19th, last accessed June 25, 2023.

39 A lithographed portrait of Walker in Ottoman naval uniform was printed by Joseph Nash (*c.*1843–46) after a sketch by Sir David Wilkie (1785–1841). The portrait is contemporaneous with the album as well as Wilkie's 1840 portrait of Abdülmecid. BM 1918,0205.8.

40 For the details of the sale of the album of 91 watercolour drawings, see "Travel, Atlases, Maps and Natural History Including the Library of Colin and Joan Deacon: Lot 28–Costume drawings," Sotheby's, May 15, 2018, https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2018/travel-atlases-maps-l18401/lot.281.html, last accessed June 25, 2023.

41 For an analysis of the album's compilation, see Gwendolyn Collaço, *Prints and Impressions from Ottoman Smyrna*. The Collection de costumes civils et militaires, scènes populaires, et vues de l'Asie-Mineure

is familiar to the costume album format: the full-length figure of the sultan stands against an open background and his attire – navy frock coat, white pantaloons, and red fez – seems to be the focus of the composition (Fig. 30). Yet this image contains revealing background information as well. To the sultan's right, under his outstretched hand, is a battalion of artillerymen in double file; to the left, the façade of new military barracks stands out against the Istanbul skyline. The image's emphasis on the sultan's achievements make it stand out from the generic costume plates on the market while linking it to the type of information featured in the vignettes of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album*. Like that diplomatic-cum-commercial production, many of the prints known to have been made by Fulgenzi & Fils include multilingual captions. This one's French, Greek, and Ottoman Turkish captions speak to an expanded, cosmopolitan audience.

Another model shared between courtly and commercial realms is associated primarily with Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger (1814–93), a French artist of German origin.[42] His 1839 full-length standing portrait of Mahmud II would become a model for sultans' images well into the second half of the nineteenth century (Fig. 31).[43] Like the Fulgenzi & Fils print, the painting shows the sultan in full military dress, overlooking a military drill being conducted on the shores of the Bosphorus. Unlike the print, however, Schlesinger has situated Mahmud II on a palatial porch draped with rich velvet curtains. The sultan appears regal, composed, and as solid as the Neoclassical column against which he leans, sword at his side. The background, in contrast, holds elements of Romantic drama: a rearing steed and the groom struggling to regain control of the animal, a deep space filled with rows of soldiers, and the spray of the Bosphorus whipped up by the wind on which dark clouds enter the sky over Istanbul. This restrained Academic Romanticism, typical of Schlesinger's style, was favoured by rulers across European and Russian cultural capitals. This particular image of the sultan as a heroic, forward-facing ruler was delivered by the Ottoman statesmen Mustafa Reşid Pasha (1800–58), who had served as an ambassador to Paris, to the reigning "citizen king" of France, Louis-Phillippe (r. 1830–48).

The Schlesinger-type composition seems to have been the model for print images of the sultan, including a lithograph that was published in two similar versions in Stockholm (Fig. 32) and Vienna (Fig. 33).[44] The Stockholm copy was designed by the Swedish military draughtsman Adolf Ulrik Schützercrantz (1802–54), who visited Istanbul, Egypt, and the Morea in 1838 and subsequently published his works as part of the set *Reseminnen Från Orienten* (*Travel Memories from the Orient*).[45] A copy of the sultan's portrait from that set (or from the same shared model) was published in Vienna by Johann Höfelich.[46] That these two prints are related is reflected not only by their use of Schlesinger-type imagery – the sultan is shown in uniform, sword at his side, supervising his troops while remaining aloof – but also in their use of a eulogistic poem also recorded in the *Dīvān* of Pertev Pasha (see Chapter 3).[47] The message here,

Album (1836–38) at Harvard University's Fine Arts Library, with historical comments by Evangelia Balta & Richard Wittmann. Memoria. *Fontes Minors ad Historiam Imperii Ottomanici Pertinetes*, vol. 4 (Bonn: Max Weber Stiftung, 2019), 10, https://perspectivia.net/publikationen/memoria/collaco_smyrna, last accessed June 25, 2023.

42 Schlesinger also went by the name of Heinrich Wilhelm Schlesinger.

43 See Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 451.

44 A closer model for these prints appears in a watercolour sketch, RMK 121/46.

45 *Reseminnen Från Orienten* (Stockholm: L.J. Hjerta, 1839).

46 Höfelich's version can be viewed on the Bavarian State Library page of Google Arts & Culture here: https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/sultan-mahmud-ii/LAEoWB_jPdhgag, last accessed June 25, 2023.

47 Schlesinger's portrait was engraved in Paris in at least two versions, from which it was further disseminated. One version, identified by Renda in a private collection in Ankara, is inscribed '*dessiné sur nature par Schlesinger*,' although no record of the artist



FIGURE 30 Eugene and Raphael Fulgenzi, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1836–38



FIGURE 31 Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, 1839



FIGURE 32 Adolf Ulrik Schützercrantz, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1830–40



FIGURE 33 Johann Höfelich, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1830–40

a common one in elite portraiture of the time, was that the sultan was an enlightened, gentlemanly ruler, prepared to take off the kid gloves of diplomacy to head up his military when necessary.

An equestrian portrait by Fulgenzi & Fils shows Mahmud II using the "Frank military saddle," with his knees extended and the toes of his Wellington boots – outfitted with steel spurs – locked into long stirrups (Fig. 34).[48] He turns his upper body to address the viewer, a pose likely copied from oil paintings by foreign artists working at the Ottoman court, including Giovanni Marras (1765–1830), Paolo Verona (active mid-nineteenth century), and Schlesinger.[49] According to the travel writer

having visited Istanbul in person has come to light. See Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 451. Another version, which may have been part of a series titled *Gal*(*rie*) *Hist*(*que*) *de Versailles*, by Emile Giroux, after Léopold Massard, after Schlesinger, exists in collections in New York and Amsterdam and can be viewed online here: NYPL 1702354, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/6b9f0723-ac98-1ff7-e040-e00a18064 27a, last accessed June 25, 2023; RA RP-P-1905-4854, https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-1905-4854, last accessed June 25, 2023. RCIN 618528 and BNF N2.28989.6 may also be copies from the same plate.

48 Charles Macfarlane, *Constantinople in 1828. A Residence of Sixteen Months in the Turkish Capital and Provinces: With an Account of the Present State of the Naval and Military Power, and of the Resources of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1828), 253, 346, https://books.google.com/books?id=LHFBAAAAcAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

49 Marras is also known by the names Juan or John Marraz. Paolo may also be transliterated as Pavlo. The equestrian paintings by Marras (RMK 121/116) and Paolo (RMK 121/994) have recently been published in Gülsen Sevinç Kaya, "Chlebowski ile Guillemet'nin Sultan Abdülaziz Portreleri," *Millî Saraylar Sanat-Tarih-Mimarlık Dergisi* 20 (2021): 60. A group equestrian portrait by Paolo is a variation on the latter (RMK 121/122).



FIGURE 34 Eugene and Raphael Fulgenzi, *Equestrian Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, *c.*1836–38

John Auldjo (1805–86), one such portrait was brought out by the sultan himself to be viewed by those attending an audience held in 1833 for Lord John Ponsonby (*c.*1770–1855), British Ambassador to the Porte.[50] The formal relationship between courtly paintings and the Fulgenzi prints highlights one instance in which the sultan's image passed between official and commercial spheres. The exchange happened in much the same way that images from commercial costume albums of the previous centuries had travelled across porous boundaries, but these later works were helped along in the pace of their formal responses by advances in communication and transportation.

The variations, simplifications, and augmentations among full-length standing and equestrian portraits of Mahmud II illustrate how commercial and imperial production was interlaced. The mechanisms for production were bound together in ways that allowed works originally produced by court artists to be copied and sold in great quantities. This produced a "trickle-down" effect, where images that worked within the confines of a court-appropriate vocabulary were later used as models for print media on a mass scale. At the same time, commercial works produced within the empire and abroad made their way into the hands of the Ottoman elite, where they could provide a mirror for the imperial image, demonstrating how the sultan's portrait could be reformed via new productions.

6 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that paper media provided an important field in which various local and foreign aesthetic strategies were blended to support the imperial reformist agenda under the sultans Selim III and Mahmud II. In it, I have compiled evidence of images of the sultan in circulation both within the empire and abroad, including dynastic album portraits, costume albums, and single-sheet compositions. Some works were exchanged as diplomatic gifts through official channels, as in the case of the portrait of Selim III that Muhib Efendi brought to Napoleon, or in the case of the portrait of Mahmud II that Reşid Pasha brought to Louis-Phillippe. Others, such as the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album*, originated at the highest levels of the Ottoman Porte, but ended up being produced and distributed for both courtly and commercial audiences due to major disruptions in the political sphere. Still others, such as the Devéria lithograph of Mahmud II, the costume-type "double Mahmuds," as well as the Fulgenzi-type models and their myriad iterations, seem to have originated as commercial ventures in close dialog with the productions being carried out at the sultan's behest in Istanbul.

Using these artworks as evidence, I have argued that the increased visibility of the sultan via a new, modern image was facilitated by works on paper across elite courtly and commercial realms. The portability and versatility of these works allowed for the blending of established Ottoman and imported image-making tools, which in turn helped to shape wider ideological shifts from dynasty-based to more varied legitimisation strategies in international aesthetic spheres. This change in royal image production and dissemination was propelled in some ways by the increase in the foreign printing of images. So too was it shaped through a combination of developing power dynamics and the various overlapping, complicated networks they engendered. In this way, the emergence of modern Ottoman imperial identity was crafted with tools borrowed from local and foreign sources and shaped by international discourse.

50 John Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople, and Some of the Greek Islands, in the Spring and Summer of 1833* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green, & Longman, 1835), 64, https://books.google.com/books?id=dRoFAAAAYAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

CHAPTER 2

"Dazzlingly Brilliant": Precious Miniatures

In the spring of 1836, the *reʾīs efendi* (Minister of Foreign Affairs),[1] Mehmed Akif Pasha (1787–1845), received the English traveller Miss Julia Pardoe (1806–62) at his shoreside mansion on the Bosphorus.[2] Through an interpreter, they discussed current events and diplomatic gossip. At one point, the conversation turned towards the subject of the Ottoman military's recent dress reforms, whereupon the pasha called for his military decorations and orders to be brought out to his guest. According to Pardoe's account,

"[Akif Pasha] put into my hands a miniature portrait of the Sultan, surrounded by a wreath, of which the flowers were diamonds, and the leaves wrought in enamel; enclosed within a second frame-work of the same precious gems, formed into emblematical devices, and dazzlingly brilliant. This magnificent decoration was appended to a chain of fine gold, and secured by a diamond clasp."[3]

Pardoe's account is noteworthy in its detailed visual description of the precious materiality and multiple components of the impressive portrait-object at hand.[4] The description identifies it as a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, the so-called "Order of the Imperial Portrait."[5] Such portraits were typically round or oval, 5–6 cm in diameter, painted in oils or watercolour on ivory or worked in enamel, and often set into gilt or diamond-encrusted frames intended to be displayed as a pendant hung from the collar or pinned to the breast of a military jacket.[6] The wearing of a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* by its recipient resembled the style of display popularised by European military orders of the eighteenth century, but scholars of numismatics do not consider it to be an order in the strict phaleristic sense due to its subjective conditions of bestowal. It was officially gifted to Ottoman officials, military leaders, Ottoman and foreign ambassadors, and foreign leaders as a sign of royal favour, friendship, and loyalty among politically powerful men.

Pardoe's account of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* in Akif's possession is significant in that it records an instance in which an official image of the reigning sultan was displayed to, handled by,

1 Also called *reʾīs-ü'l-küttāb*, this position variously encompassed Chief Secretary of the Chancery, Chief Under-Secretary of State, and Assistant to the Grand Vizier. The department (at the Sublime Porte) of *ḫāriciye neẓāreti* (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) was founded in this same year (1836). Afterwards, the position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs was also called *ḫāriciye nāẓırı*. See Redhouse, 999, 819, respectively. See also Carter Vaughn Findley, "Hariciye Nezâreti," in *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1997, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/hariciye-nezareti, last accessed July 12, 2023.

2 Miss Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan; and Domestic Manners of the Turks, in 1836,* 3 vols. *Second Edition* (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), 3:104–5, https://books.google.com/books?id=aZpMAAAAcAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

3 Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:104–5.

4 My use of "portrait-object" is borrowed from Marcia Pointon's use of the phrase to refer to the complete assemblage of a precious miniature-scale portrait and its "container," often of intrinsic material value itself. Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants."

5 İbrahim Artuk and Cevriye Artuk have argued that the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* is more accurately classified as a "decoration" rather than an "order" since it was not distributed according to a strict rank or degree system. While it does not conform to the norms established by the medieval Catholic chivalric or merit orders (such as Austria's Order of the Golden Fleece), I do believe that it qualifies under the more informal system of contemporary dynastic orders distributed as personal gifts by sovereigns (such as England's Royal Victorian Order). See Artuk and Artuk, *Osmanlı Nişanları* (Istanbul: İstanbul Matbaası, 1967). See also Eldem, "Decorations of Exception: The Imperial Portrait (Tasvîr-ı Hümâyûn) and the Order of Distinction (Nişân-ı İmtıyâz), 1832–1862," in *Pride and Privilege*, 126–35.

6 Renda, "Osmanlılarda Portreli Nişanlar," 491–502.

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FIGURE 35 Artist unknown, *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II, *c.*1830

and even worn (at the pasha's insistence, as we shall see) by an individual outside of the largely homosocial pool of recipients to whom the portrait was awarded. That the individual was a foreign, non-Muslim woman who – though socially influential – had no official diplomatic standing makes this instance all the more surprising.[7] She continues,

"When I had sufficiently admired [the portrait], the gallant old man begged me to wear it for an instant in order that it might acquire an additional value in his eyes; and the gentle Conjefèm Hanoum flung it over my head, and entangled the chain in my ringlets, to the great delight of the Vèzir, who watched the progress of its release with genuine enjoyment, and told me that he had never before seen his decoration to so much advantage."[8]

Pardoe's humorous, even flirtatious, narrative flair must be read with an eye to the author's professional ambitions as a travel writer for a Western-European audience hungry for exoticised romanticism. Yet her perceptive comment on the way that a portrait-object could accrue "additional value" through bodily proximity deserves a closer look.

Though the details of Pardoe's experience are unique, records of physical interaction between a viewer and the sultan's portrait are not uncommon in the descriptions of the semi-public portrait-bestowal ceremonies recorded in archival and newspaper sources. The phenomenological engagement of the beholder, who variously gazes at, clasps, pins, or wears a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* becomes a form of intimate viewing; it signifies an interpersonal interaction available only to close friends or privileged viewers.[9] Moreover, this intimate viewing – when set into the overlapping contexts of ceremonial activation and eulogistic descriptions attached to this and other forms of the sultan's portrait – indicates a prescriptive function wherein the noble viewer strives to find themselves reflected in the perfect (physical and moral) qualities of the portrait. Pardoe, as a non-Ottoman, would not have necessarily envisioned her relationship to a foreign ruler in such terms, though her professional personality as a travel novelist did depend on intimate knowledge of and interaction with famous political celebrities. Her attention to the beholder-beheld interaction in her own experience (and her interpretation of Akif Pasha's understanding of the image) suggests, in broad strokes, a contemporary understanding of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* as something more than the sum of its finely wrought components.

By taking the object in hand and wearing it – however briefly – as a mode of display, Pardoe was not just engaging as a viewer, but as a *beholder*. That is, she interacts through her touch and engages with the present object in a bodily way that activates and completes the symbolic power of the sultan-in-miniature as representative of the royal personage in the flesh, a connection underlined by the author's recollection of the imperial presence having occupied the very apartment in which she met the pasha.[10] While Pardoe's wearing of the portrait was momentary and somewhat unceremonious, the accrual of symbolic value through holders of high diplomatic, bureaucratic, or military rank was, in fact, a factor in the larger stories of these portrait-medallions. This chapter

7 Other women in diplomatic circles who had interactions with the portrait include Princess Mélanie of Austria and Princess Dorothea of Courland (Duchess of Dino), though the descriptions surrounding these encounters are not as visual and detailed as that of Pardoe. The latter reports that in Paris, on June 6, 1837, the "Turkish Ambassador [Nuri Efendi] … allowed [her] to see the portrait of Sultan Mahmoud, who seems to be very handsome." *Memoirs of the Duchesse de Dino* (*Afterwards Duchesse de Talleyrand et de Sagan*) *1836–1840* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons /London: William Heinemann, 1910), 111, https://books.google.com/books?id=kZ5dAAAAIAAJ, last accessed June 25, 2023.

8 Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:105.

9 For the relationship among touch, scale, and interiority, see Stewart, *Poetry and the Fate of the Senses*, 162. See also Stewart, *On Longing*.

10 Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:98.

investigates the conditions of those audiences and other aspects of the bestowal ceremonies held for awardees of the sultan's imperial image, arguing that the portrait-object marked personal loyalties to the sultan within the dynamic diplomatic networks of the nineteenth century.

1 Award Form and Its Accrual of Symbolic Value

Pardoe's formal description makes clear that the portrait in the possession of the *re'īs efendi* is a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, an assertion substantiated by the fact that Akif Pasha himself has presented it as among his other official military decorations.[11] But what, if anything, is lost in considering this object to be a military decoration? Are there more nuanced formal, technical, and stylistic elements that add to the experience of holding the *nişān* in one's hand or wearing it on the body? If so, how did the experience of holding or beholding these shining, finely rendered objects support the political and ideological meanings behind their bestowal?

Consider the detail with which Pardoe describes the floral frame and the shine of its brilliant-cut diamonds. The description corresponds with one of the best-known examples of this type, a 7.5 × 6.5 cm rectangular-format oil-on-ivory portrait in the Topkapı Palace Museum collection (Fig. 35).[12] This portrait-object features the three-quarter bust portrait of Mahmud II wearing his military jacket, a diamond-encrusted decoration, and a red, tasselled fez. The sultan's eyes, framed by perfectly arched brows, meet those of the viewer-beholder, while his well-trimmed beard reveals a reserved smile at close range.[13] This portrait's gilt frame is surrounded by three-dimensional roses enamelled in pink and yellow, and smaller, blue flowers set with diamonds. The entire composition is suspended from a fine gold chain with a blue enamel clasp set with diamonds in the shape of an eight-pointed star.[14] This object was crafted with the precision and skill commensurate with an idealized likeness of the perfect leader, reprising age-old tropes that were themselves being reinvigorated and applied to the ideological defence of Mahmud II's absolute rule. It was therefore not just a beautiful object, but a symbolically loaded one that had the ability to absorb and reflect power as it passed from hand to hand. Critically, that power could only be transferred at the behest of the sultan, as the decoration was passed down to the next official to hold a particular office rather

11 These included Akif Pasha's vizierial rank medallion and an additional unranked medallion for "his faithful services to the Porte," Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 105. It is possible that this was the *nişān-ı iftiḫār*, or "Order of Glory," a gold medallion inscribed with the imperial *tuġra* and surrounded with brilliants, which was gaining popularity at around the same time. See Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 126.

12 Gül İrepoğlu alludes to the possibility of this connection by reproducing the portrait next to Pardoe's quote in *Imperial Ottoman Jewellery: Reading History through Jewellery* (Istanbul: Bilkent Kültür Girişimi, 2012), 104–5. TSM 2/1023 is perhaps the most frequently reproduced and therefore most well-known of the lot, appearing also in Artuk, *Osmanlı Nişanları*, 39, pl. 1; Metin Erüreten, *Osmanlı Madalyaları ve Nişanları: Belgelerle Tarihi* (Istanbul: The Destination Management Company, 2001), 171; Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*, 508; Hakan Karateke, "Einige Bemerkungen zu den osmanischen Insignia Imperialia – Insbesondere des 19. Jahrhunderts," in *Scripta Ottomanica et Res Altaicae. Festschrift für Barbara Kellner-Heinkele zu ihrem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Ingeborg Hauenschild, Claus Schönig and Pieter Zieme (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 2002), 208; and Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 127.

13 Part of the sartorial reform initiated by Mahmud II included the trimming or complete shaving of beards. Berkes, *Secularism*, 122.

14 The eight-pointed star was a popular emblem in Ottoman orders and decorations in the early part of the century. It appeared, for example, on the Sultan's Medal for Egypt in 1801, which was awarded by Selim III to British officers assisting the Ottomans against the French campaign. Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 39. A digitized example from the National Army Museum Study Collection, London, NAM. 2016-12-15-6, is available online here: https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2016-12-15-6, last accessed June 25, 2023.

than to a family member – a detail upon which Pardoe herself remarks.[15]

According to a report published in the Ottoman state-run newspaper, *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* (*The Calendar of Events*), Akif Pasha received his *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* during an official bestowal ceremony, about six months prior to Miss Pardoe's aforementioned visit. The ceremony began at 10:30 in the evening on 10 Jumada II, 1251 (September 21, 1835).[16] Attendees, including the sultan's closest advisors and other bureaucrats, gathered at Akif's *sāḥilḫāne* (shoreside residence) in the Emirgan district on the European side of Istanbul. The sultan himself graced the gathering with his presence, the sight of his face causing the mansion – according to the panegyric language of the report – to become a "*dār-ı yümn ü sürūr*" ("house of felicity and joy"). Those gathered at that happy place were served *aḫşam ṭaʿāmı* (dinner), and afterwards, they watched a display of *fişenkler* (fireworks) launched from the nearby Baltalimanı shore. The festivities culminated as the sultan honoured Akif by bestowing him with "*bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı meḥāsin-nümūn-ı şāhāne*" ("one beautiful imperial portrait"). The spectacle of the bestowal of imperial favour therefore linked the bodily presence and power of the sultan with the symbolic portrait-object presented to Akif as the holder of one of the highest Ottoman diplomatic offices.

The association of the sultan, his portrait, and his inherent moral goodness would have been linked in the memories of Akif, as well as those of the other participants, which included bureaucratic and military officers of high rank who would have been well-versed in the sultan-honouring panegyric used in the ceremony and its corresponding report printed in the official gazette. This linkage existed in the memory of Pardoe as well, who was well-informed of diplomatic news (Pardoe spoke a bit of Turkish, but was certainly not reading the convoluted, flowery language of the Ottoman gazette herself). In her introduction to the chapter, she explicitly calls to the mind of her reader that the imperial presence had recently occupied the very apartment in which she met the pasha.[17] Any of those officers who had their own *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, either on their person or in a place of honour in their home, would have been reminded of the splendour of the ceremonial bestowal each time they interacted with the portrait-object. In this way, the award accrued symbolic value through its association with the person of the sultan, its fabulous ceremonial presentation, and its interaction with various elite beholders. As related ceremonies began to occur more frequently in the late 1830s, that value increased by virtue of repetition and through the incorporation of more awardees into the elite – but expanding – circle of politically significant figures surrounding the sultan.

2 Tokens of Friendship and Loyalty in Non-Ottoman History

In general, this type of small-scale, medallion-format ruler portrait – as well as the formally overlapping but not always functionally synonymous genre of chivalric orders featuring ruler portraits – was first popularised in Western-European court culture. According to Martia Pointon, portrait miniatures of this type were first worn by women

15 Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:105.

16 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 114, 20 Jumada II 1251 (October 13, 1835), 1. The event took place "*işbu cemāziye'l-āḫireniñ onuncu cumʿa günü*" (on Friday into Saturday, 10 Jumada II 1251 or Saturday, October 3, 1835). Discrepancies in dates occur with some frequency across both primary sources and historical accounts. Friday, the Muslim day of public worship, was generally favoured for its religious and political significance. See Marion H. Katz, "Friday prayer," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam Three Online*, ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Devin J. Stewart (Leiden: Brill, 2016), https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_27193.

17 Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:98.

in early modern European courts as private tokens of affection from a husband, father, or lover.[18] As these portrait-objects transitioned into more public spheres of social and economic exchange systems, their embellishment became costlier and more elaborate. In the seventeenth century, a fashion for brilliant-set or diamond-studded enamel portraits, known as *boîtes-à-portrait*, developed at the French court of Louis XIV. By the second half of the eighteenth century, the medallion-portrait had undergone several stylistic shifts in its appropriation by various rulers, including the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (1765–90; ruler of the Habsburg lands, 1780–90) and Catherine II of Russia (1762–96), who both, like Mahmud II, undertook extensive portrait campaigns to justify their rule and promote personal loyalty at a time when their monarchical power was challenged by liberalizing views, revolutions, and independence movements.

Simultaneously, in the second half of the eighteenth century, burgeoning urban elite classes expanded the demand for portraits on ivory by commissioning their own likenesses. This market broadened still further as soldiers and travellers of the Napoleonic epoch commissioned their own portraits or portraits of loved ones to carry abroad. This widespread circulation, exchange, and commissioning of small-scale portraits led to great variation in the methods and materials of their production. Therefore, while scholars have drawn parallels between Mahmud II's use of the portrait medallion format and wider trends towards Europeanising courtly conventions, it would be a vast oversimplification to attribute the success of this format to a single outside source (i.e., a foreign artist working at multiple courts, such as Giovanni Marras) or even multiple unilateral forces (i.e., courtly gifts exchanged among French, British, Russian, and Ottoman courts). That is to say that the formal phenomenon of the wearable miniature portrait-object was enjoying both increasing popularity and rapid development in multiple courtly and non-courtly centres, which often traded and absorbed visual trends from each other.[19] This development can be credited, in part, to the Ottoman cultural sphere itself, which had already been undergoing a complex series of self-imposed, primarily top-down changes concentrated in the area of military reform since the eighteenth century. This shifting landscape, which included a broad spectrum of liberal movements and conservative reactions against such movements, would result in a cultural and artistic milieu primed for the implementation of this new, highly visual form of propaganda. The milieu's emphasis on military culture and its conflation with Western-European-facing modernisation made the military order an ideal form for augmentation within the portrait campaign.

3 The Mahmuds Multiply

The portrait-object bestowed on Akif – which can be loosely linked via Pardoe's account to the Topkapı example – is related to six other examples in the collection of the Millî Saraylar Resim Müzesi, each featuring a more-or-less similar portrait of the sultan as described above. While the portraits in this group all follow the same model, they are each distinguishable through variations

18 Pointon, "'Surrounded with Brilliants'," 50–51. For more on the portrait medallion and portrait-object genre in the European courtly and upper-class contexts from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries, see Diana Scarisbrick, *Portrait Jewels: Opulence and Intimacy from the Medici to the Romanovs* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011). See also Aronson, *Perfect Likeness*.

19 For similar views of cultural exchange interpreted slightly more as European "influence" within this campaign, see Tuncer Baykara, "II. Mahmud ve Resim," in *Bedrettin Cömert'e Armağan, Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, Beşeri Bilimler Dergisi*, özel sayı (1980): 509–29, and more broadly, Shaw, *Ottoman Painting*.



FIGURE 36
Giovanni Marras, *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II, 1832

in glossiness, richness, and opacity of colour.[20] These works are executed in oil or mixed technique on ivory disks, a labour-intensive technical process that involves degreasing and retexturing the surface to hold delicate washes that could be built up to give the impression of translucent flesh.[21] This was a relatively new technique developed as ivory and porcelain became a popular support in the production of miniature portraits at Western-European courts at the turn of the eighteenth century.[22] The brilliant-cut diamonds that originally encircled these portraits (most have been repurposed) were also the result of cross-cultural exchange as well as a relatively new technical feat in stone cutting, discovered in the seventeenth century, which improved the light-scattering quality of the stones.[23] The combined effects of these translucent and refractive qualities must have given the impression that the depicted sultan was glowing from within, illuminating the body of the portrait-object's wearer. The symbolic power of this visual effect was reinforced with panegyrical poetry, propagandistic treatises, and the frequent repetition of celestial allegories across multiple genres, as we shall see later in this chapter.

In her seminal work on this *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* group, Günsel Renda attributed their style to Giovanni Marras (1765–1830), based on the fact that only RMK 121/208 (formerly TSM 17/208) (Fig. 36) is signed, inscribed "Marras f. 1832" along its right edge.[24] Marras, an artist of Neapolitan

20 The new installation of these portrait medallions at the Resim Müzesi greatly improves the visibility of these details by displaying a higher number of them under dedicated lighting and within a custom vitrine. For a photograph of the installation, see Gülsen Sevinç Kaya, "Chlebowski ile Guillemet'nin Sultan Abdülaziz Portreleri," *Millî Saraylar Sanat-Tarih-Mimarlık Dergisi* 20 (2021): 59–79, 65, 10a.

21 "Miniature Painting on Ivory and Enamel," *The Crayon* 7, no. 8 (Aug. 1860): 226–29, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25528099, last accessed June 27, 2023.

22 Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants," 53.

23 Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants," 57. The artist Charles Doussoult reported that Abdülmecid showed keen interest in the new diamond mines in Brazil, using a globe in the royal library to trace the journey to distant places. *L'Illustration* vol. 24, no.7, October 14, 1854, 261, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b000359263, last accessed June 27, 2023. See also Chapter 5.

24 Renda, "Osmanlılarda Portreli Nişanlar," 493. "f." here stands for the Latin *fecit*, he/she/they made (it).



FIGURE 37 Giovanni Marras, *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II, *c.*1830–31



FIGURE 38 Artist unknown, *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II, *c.*1830

origin, travelled so far as to North America, and throughout Europe, to produce portraits for elite patrons, including the Grand Duke of Tuscany.[25] According to contemporary European newspapers, Marras was present in Istanbul by 1831, where Mahmud II named him as Court Artist for his work on portraits of the sultan, his sons, and his private secretary.[26] However, the signature alone proves neither that this particular medallion was the first of its kind, nor that a European artist single-handedly introduced this innovation into the larger genre of sultanic portraiture.

Two recently rediscovered works from outside collections that bear remarkable similarities to the Resim Müzesi and Topkapı examples should be considered in the conceptualisation of their shared model. The first, an oval medallion in the collection of the Russian Museum (Fig. 37), depicts Mahmud II wearing the mauve tunic variation of the new military uniform seen in Chapter 1 (see Figs. 27 and 29).[27] A sunburst medallion encrusted with diamonds and embellished with a silver torch is suspended from his neck with a triple chain and

25 *Le Courrier de Smyrne*, May 28, 1831. Quoted in *Beilage zur Allgemeine Zeitung* no. 194, July 13, 1831, 776. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3980828, last accessed June 25, 2023. For more on Marras and his works in the Spanish portrait miniature genre, see Mariano Tomás, *La Miniatura Retrato En España*, (Madrid: Ministerio de Asuntos exteriores, Dirección General de Relaciones Culturales, 1953).

26 *Le Courrier de Smyrne*, May 28, 1831. Quoted in *Beilage zur Allgemeine Zeitung* no. 194, July 13, 1831, 776, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3980828, last accessed June 25, 2023.

27 Kira Vladimirovna Michajlova and Georgij Viktorovic Smirnov (eds.), *Portretnaia miniatiura : iz sobraniia Gosudarstvennogo Russkogo muzeia XVIII–nachalo XX veka /Portrait Miniatures : from the Collection of the Russian Museum XVIII–early XX century* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1979), 251, cat. 78. The image is labelled as "Portrait of a Turkish Nobleman" and attributed to Marras, 1830–31.

pinned over his heart.[28] The second work that I propose to associate with this group, a circular medallion portrait of Mahmud II in a double-breasted navy jacket, is more clearly a copy of RMK 121/208 (Fig. 38). However, this portrait is mounted on the lid of a fine box of burled walnut wood and tortoiseshell, making it absolutely unique among known examples. Putting these two new works in conversation with those in the Resim Müzesi and Topkapı collections further expands the possibilities for understanding their functions. The variations among them indicate that several different artists and jewellers may have been working on the group over a period of years.

Differences in material could also be related to the rank of the intended recipient, as Edhem Eldem has argued in the case of a British admiral, transliterated as "Teofils," who petitioned the Porte for his own copy of the decoration in 1837–38.[29] An internal memo from the Ottoman archives details the reasoning behind the material decisions:

"considering it was evident to all that the sacred angel-like face[30] of His Majesty had been endowed by the Grace of God with manifest brilliance and rare perfection, and that, therefore, the matchless portrait of His Imperial Majesty needed no additional ornamentation or decoration, it was unnecessary that the Imperial Portrait be set in magnificent diamonds, and just a simple enamelled portrait would be sufficient."[31]

The flowery, formal language of the document directly connects the likeness of the sultan to the qualities of his bodily form, themselves an expression of internal perfection. The subtext is, of course, that the admiral's rank or achievements did not qualify him to receive the same degree of distinction indicated by the diamond-encrusted *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, suggesting that there were levels of merit to the award, even though this was not delineated by a strict system as would be the case in Ottoman orders of the late nineteenth century.

The "Teofils" mentioned in the archival record is probably British Admiral Sir John Theophilus Lee (1787–1843), himself a painter who had trained at the Portsmouth Naval Academy and specialized in maritime battle scenes. The admiral had served on the side of the allied British, French, and Russian navies in the Battle of Navarino (1827) during the Greek War of Independence (1821–32), a significant embarrassment for the allied Ottoman and Egyptian naval forces.[32] An unlettered lithographic image of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* in the British Museum contains a note that it was copied "from a Portrait [of] His Imperial Majesty presented to Sir Theophilus Lee."[33] A lettered proof of the same lithograph labels the original work as having been "Painted by Manas, Portrait Painter of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan" (Fig. 39).[34] Copies of this same image later appeared on a mass scale, distributed in the English publications *The Literary World, The Mirror*, and *The Athenaeum* upon Mahmud II's death in 1839.[35] The prestige of its official production and the honour of the portrait bestowal, even

28 It is a clearer version of what was thought to be a unique depiction of the decoration in RMK 121/211.

29 Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 130–31.

30 "*mübārek cemāl-i firişte-miṣāl*," BOA HAT 1172/46366, 20 Safar 1254 (May 15, 1838).

31 BOA HAT 1172/46366, 20 Safar 1254 (May 15, 1838). Translation by Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 130–31.

32 According to his memoirs, which do not mention the receipt of the sultan's portrait, the admiral received a number of similar awards, including the honour of knighthood conferred by King George IV and the Legion of Honour from Louis XVII. Theophilus Lee, *Memoirs of the Life and Services of Sir J. Theophilus Lee, of the Elms, Hampshire* (London: Published for the Author, 1836), 197. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=RBtcAAAAcAAJ, last accessed June 26, 2023.

33 BM Museum no. 1871,0812.4198. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1871-0812-4198, last accessed June 26, 2023.

34 This is either a misspelling of "Marras" or a reference to a member of the Manas family of Ottoman-Armenian painters working at the court at the time. BM no. 1982, U.3007. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1982-U-3007, last accessed June 26, 2023.

35 *The Literary World: A Journal of Popular Information and Entertainment* no. 21, August, 17, 1839, 326. https://



FIGURE 39 Manas, Edward Morton, J. Graf, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, prior to 1839

if it was "only" an unframed enamel version, clearly resonated with a wider non-Ottoman public.

4 Ceremonial Bestowals: The Sultan's Inner Circle

One way to determine the audience and function of medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* as propaganda is to consider announcements of their bestowal in the press.[36] Detailed reports of official bestowal ceremonies began to appear on the pages of the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* not long after the first edition was published on 25 Jumada II 1247 (November 1, 1831).[37] The reports often included the location and timing of the event as well as references to the attendees by office or name. The guests most often in attendance were members of the sultan's inner circle (where loyalty to the throne was by design most concentrated). This circle consisted of the *ṣadrāʿẓam* (Grand Vizier), the *ḳā'immaḳām* (Deputy of the Grand Vizier) – a position that would later become *ṣadāret ketḫüdāsı* (Deputy to the Grand Vizier and later Minister of the Interior), the *serʿasker* pasha (Commander-in-Chief of the Military), and the *şeyhülislam* (or *şeyḫü'l-islām*, the highest-ranking religious official of the Ottoman court; Grand Mufti). The inclusion of such information would have worked alongside official efforts to reorganise the military, administrative, and religious-judiciary offices, enforcing the connection between the sovereign and his close advisors in a semi-public, official manner during a time of uncertain loyalties and political volatility in the 1830s.

It is fitting then that the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, as a badge of loyalty, was first gifted to individuals identified as high-ranking military, religious, and civil officers. According to the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ*, a group bestowal took place as part of a banquet held at the shoreside mansion of the *ṣadāret ketḫüdāsı* Pertev Mehmed Said Efendi (later Pasha) (1785–1837), on Saturday, 18 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 19, 1832) in Üsküdar.[38] Of the extensive list of attendees, those singled out for receipt of the honour of "*eṭrāfı pırlanṭa mücevher donanmış taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*" ("the imperial portrait decorated with diamonds") included the *ṣadrāʿẓam*, *ḳā'immaḳām, serʿasker paşa*,[39] and *ḳapūdān pāşā*. Pertev Efendi was given the additional special honour of embracing Mahmud II's sons, the princes Abdülmecid and Abdulaziz.[40]

Pertev was extensively involved in the sultan's arts patronage and likely played a role in developing the concept of awarding *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*. Evidence of this has come down to us in the form of the inscriptions that he penned for the dedicatory plaques installed on buildings, fountains, and monuments commissioned by the sultan.[41] One such poem, a eulogistic quatrain preserved in his *Dīvān* (an anthology or collection of works), is directly tied to the portrait campaign in two separate forms, neither of which has been discussed in relation to the medallion-format portraits of

books.google.com/books?id=AGQyAQAAMAAJ, last accessed June 26, 2023.

36 This methodology was first suggested by Baykara in "II. Mahmud ve Resim" and has been more recently explored in Sema Önder, "İlk Resmi Gazetesi Takvim-i Vekayiʿ de Padişah Portresine İlişkin Haberler," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi* 29 (2007): 149–68.

37 Technically, this was the second print, as a two-page brochure was published the month before as *Fihrist-i Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* or "Index of the Calendar of Events." Printing with movable type became popular in Muslim lands in the 19th century, but it was introduced much earlier, in 1727, by İbrahim Müteferrika. For more on the history of print as a medium, see Stephen Vernoit, "The Visual Arts in Nineteenth-century Muslim Thought," in *Islamic Art in the 19th Century: Tradition, Innovation, and Eclecticism*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit (Boston: Brill, 2006), 20.

38 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 27, 27 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 28, 1832), 3.

39 At this point in time, the post of *serʿasker* pasha also included the duties that would soon be reassigned to the *ḥarbiye nāzırı*, or Minister of War.

40 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 27, 27 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 28, 1832), 3.

41 Klaus Kreiser, "Public Monuments in Turkey and Egypt, 1840–1916," *Muqarnas* 14 (1997): 104.



FIGURE 40
Artist unknown, *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* of Mahmud II mounted in a shadowbox, *c.*1830–39

Mahmud II up until this point.[42] The first instance is in lithographic form, including the full-length portraits produced by Schützercrantz and Höfelich discussed in the previous chapter (Figs. 32 and 33). The second, found in the collection of the Galata Mevlevihanesi Müzesi, is a unique, three-dimensional plaque with a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* mounted at its centre (Fig. 40). The four lines of the poem frame the medallion, and the whole is surrounded by a carved wood or plasterwork composition of Baroque garlands, tassels, symbols of victory, and military insignia.

The poem itself touches on the theme of brilliance and illumination within the likeness of the sultan:

"Sulṭān-ı selāṭīn-i ciḥān Maḥmūd Ḫān
ṣūretde melek sīreṭi ẓıll-ı Yezdān
dīdārına mir'āṭ-ı nigāh-i āşüfṭe
ṭaṣvīr-i hümāyūnuna insān ḥayrān.

(Sultan of sultans of the world, Mahmud Han
His countenance is like that of an angel; his good character the Shadow of God

42 Pertev Pasha, *Dīvān-ı* (*sultānü'ş-şu'arā ve şeyhü'z-zürefā a'nī bih*) *Pertev Paşa* (*The Dīvān of* [*the Sultan of Poets and the Sheikh of the Eloquent among Them,*] *Pertev Paşa*)(Originally published in Cairo: Būlāḳ Maṭba'ası, 1253 [1837], reissued Istanbul: Maṭba'a-yı Bāb-ı Ḥażret-i Ser'askeriye, 1256 [1840]), 60. https://books.google.com.tr/books?id=veRCAAAAcAAJ, last accessed June 26, 2023.

The looking-glass[43] is dazzled by his sight
Everyone is amazed by his imperial portrait.)"

The subjects here relate to older tropes of beauty and mystic cosmology in Ottoman culture and in the wider Islamic and Persianate cultural spheres. However, when paired with the round, smooth, illuminated face present in the portrait-medallions, they take on specificity that grounds the idea of perfection – in terms of appearance as well as in behaviour – in the bodily form of Mahmud II. The allegorical mirror, which has the ability to reflect inner knowledge or truth, takes on several valences with regard to Ottoman perceptions of visuality.[44] For example, it calls the viewer to consider a mode of "inner gaze" or the introspective vision, a type of looking closely related to the Sufi idea of polishing one's heart to reflect the perfection of the divine.[45] The relationship between mystical introspection and physical beauty in Sufi thought was present in the official Ottoman courtly milieu from at least the mid-sixteenth century.

Wendy Shaw's recent work on Islamic perceptual frameworks has demonstrated the close connections among perception, visuality, and reflection within the wider Islamic theological and cultural spheres. She addresses the persistent and revealing nature of literature that shows what she terms "seeing through the mirror" – that is, considering the role of the image not as mimetic, but as symbolic of how a viewer may achieve understanding of the Platonic Real.[46] Consider, for example, the story of the contest between the Rum and Chinese painters in the *Khamsa* (Quintet) of Nizami (*c.*1141–1209).[47] In the tale, Alexander the Great challenges the two groups of painters to decorate two facing walls, separated by a curtain. The Chinese painters polish the surface of their wall so that when the curtain is lifted, it reflects a perfect, more luminous version of the Rum painting. Here, the polished wall transcends the mimesis of the painted wall, using light to literally illuminate the Real. This parable and others similarly featuring mirror imagery would have been known to Ottoman viewers in the nineteenth century, colouring their reception of portrait-related ceremonies. Such notions must have been augmented with the addition of other reflective and light-scattering materials, such as the brilliant-cut diamonds encircling the precious miniature copies of the imperial portrait. Within the context of group bestowal, wherein high-ranking officers would have been wearing their silver-embroidered frock coats, illuminated by the flickering of gas lamps and fireworks, the reflective effects must have been truly spectacular.

All that glitters was of course not limited to the temporal realm. In Ottoman-Islamic thought, celestial light and radiance was also closely associated with the Prophet Muhammed. This association comes to the fore in another format popular in Ottoman visual culture starting in the seventeenth

43 Literally, "*mir'āṭ-ı nigāh*" can be translated as "mirror of looking," though "looking-glass" seems to be of contemporary usage. Redhouse defines *mir'āṭ* as "A looking-glass, a mirror," 1796. Pertev's version replaces "*mir'āṭ-ı nigāh*" (mirror of looking) with "*mir'āṭ-ı cihān*" (mirror of the world), both clearly allegorical. Pertev Pasha, *Dīvān*, 60.

44 Gülru Necipoğlu situates the mirror metaphor in regard to differing modalities of the gaze in the context of sixteenth- to early seventeenth-century Ottoman and Safavid texts in, "The Scrutinizing Gaze in the Aesthetics of Islamic Visual Cultures: Sight, Insight, and Desire," *Muqarnas* 32 (2015), 23–61.

45 For a brief overview of Sufi hermeneutics at Islamic courts across geographies, including the rulers of the Seljuqs of Rum, Abbasids, Timurids, Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals, see Shaw, *What is "Islamic" Art?*, 22–23.

46 Shaw, *What is "Islamic" Art?*, 131–158.

47 Shaw, *What is "Islamic" Art?*, 140–141, citing Nizami, 1991, 289. Following Shaw, I've used "Rum" rather than "Greek" to reflect "the conflated connotations of Rum as both contemporary Greek speakers in (formerly) Eastern Roman territories and as authors of ancient philosophical texts inherited by the Islamic world," 141, footnote 26.

century: the *ḥilye*.[48] The *ḥilye* is a calligraphic composition of a textual "portrait" of the Prophet that describes his physical features in an abstract way, evoking his disposition and inherent good nature. The text, sourced from hadith, often describes the Prophet's face as moon-like, and the composition of the panel frequently features a crescent moon inset into a medallion. Ottoman sultans had been shaping their courtly personas and images on the divine model of the Prophet for centuries by the time that Mahmud II stepped into the position to do so himself. The celestial references, shining illuminations, and brilliant diamonds that surrounded his portrait and its bestowal ceremony would have legitimised these novel forms of representation and state ceremony through established conventions. As we will see in the following section, the propagandists who built upon these legitimation strategies included elite statesmen, such as Pertev Efendi, as well members of the *ulema* (high-ranking scholars of Islamic law).[49]

5 Controversy and Permissibility

After its initial appearance in the press, the honour of the bestowal of a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* was quickly expanded beyond the top military and diplomatic officials, showing the sultan's extensive reach in terms of personal loyalty. The first instance of this use of the honour occurred in 1832, shortly after the group bestowal discussed above, as the sultan named his candidate for the Emirship of Mecca, Sharīf ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Ghālib ibn Musāʿad (1790–1886).[50] The candidateship was controversial because of the current political instability in the Hijaz – the geopolitical area containing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. Sovereignty over the Hijaz had the power to bolster the Ottoman sultans' claim to a universal caliphate, so when Wahhabi forces occupied the area (1803–18), it was imperative that the sultan win it back. To do this, Mahmud II enlisted the help of the powerful provincial governor of Ottoman Egypt, Mehmed Ali Pasha (Viceroy of Egypt 1805–48). Once the Wahhabis were ousted, however, Mehmed Ali installed his own preferred candidate as Emir of Mecca – a treasonous act in the eyes of the sultan.[51]

In order to counter Mehmed Ali Pasha's undermining of his authority, the sultan replaced the governor's candidate with his own, commemorating the move with the ceremonial bestowal of a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*. The ceremony occurred on Thursday, 23 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 24, 1832), in the *mābeyn-i hümāyūn* or official reception hall of the palace. Some of the highest-ranking office-holders of the Porte had assembled there, including the *şeyhülislam*, *ḳā'immaḳām*, and *serʿasker*

48 Christiane Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Texts and Images* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), especially, "Verbal Paintings: Hilyes of the Prophet." See also Gruber, "Between Logos (*kalima*) and Light (*nūr*): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting," *Muqarnas* 26 (2009): 229–62. For floral imagery in *ḥilye*, see Gruber, "The Rose of the Prophet: Floral Metaphors in Late Ottoman Devotional Art," in *Envisioning Islamic Art and Architecture: Essays in Honor of Renata Holod* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 223–49.

49 For a detailed study of opinions among different groups within the *ulema*, including those who renounced the novel innovations introduced by Mahmud II, see Seyfettin Erşahin, "Islamic Support on the Westernization Policy in the Ottoman Empire: Making Mahmud II a Reformer Caliph-Sultan by Islamic Virtue Tradition," *Journal of Religious Culture/Journal für Religionskultur* no. 78 (2005). http://web.uni-frankfurt.de/irenik/relkultur78.pdf, last accessed June 26, 2023.

50 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 27, 27 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 28, 1832), 1. The event is published in the gazette a few days after its occurrence, which has led to some misdating of the source. See Artuk, *Osmanlı Nişanları*, 10; Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 127.

51 For details on how Mehmed Ali used the Emir as leverage to earn popular support to win back Ottoman lands in his own name, see Vernoit, "The Visual Arts," 22. See also Esther Peskes and W. Ende, "Wahhābiyya," in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn., (ed.) P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, P.J. Bearman (vols. X, XI, XII), Th. Bianquis (vols. X, XI, XII), et al. (Leiden: Brill 2002). http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1329.

Hüsrev Pasha. As the guest of honour entered the hall, the sultan stood and advanced to greet his guest, a gesture of acknowledgement and respect absent from the highly formal reception ceremonies of the preceding centuries, in which the aloof figure of the silent, immobile, and untouchable sultan refrained from such direct engagement.[52]

ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib was then presented with imperial blessings and advice from the very mouth of the sultan, monetary gifts, and a green *ḫarvānī* (mantle), richly embroidered with silver thread and studded with diamonds and pearls. These gifts had a long-established precedent at the Ottoman court, and the robe of honour in particular had connotations of submission to the protection of the sultan.[53] Next, in order to demonstrate the gift of his imperial favour, Mahmud II himself presented the awardee with his own "*eṭrāfı pırlanta ile müzeyyen bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*" (imperial portrait decorated with diamonds).[54] As the ceremony drew to a close, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib boarded a royal *ḳayıḳ* (boat) and left the palace via the Bosphorus. When he reached the opposite shore, a richly caparisoned horse from the imperial stables was waiting to take him away.

The *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ*'s highly detailed, front-page account of the ceremony surrounding this early bestowal – and the accompanying condemnation of Mehmed Ali Pasha's alternate candidate for Emir of Mecca – indicates the novelty of function for both the physical portrait-object and its mention in the press.[55] The naming of attendees, including Hüsrev Pasha – who had a longstanding rivalry with Mehmed Ali Pasha since the days when he had served as *ḳapūdān pāşā* – made it clear that those who held high offices were expected to stand with the sultan's decision to replace the standing Emir. However, the fact that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib received a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* becomes buried in the later historiography, which, if it bothers to specifically name any of the recipients at all, tends to focus on the high-profile reception of the portrait by the *şeyhülislam*, discussed below. Undoubtedly, the reason that ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib's award reception was so quickly forgotten – and the reason that it had become significant in the first place – was due to the rapidly changing political circumstances of the 1830s. In fact, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, despite being formally brought out of exile and instated by the sultan, never served out the (symbolic) tenure granted to him in 1832 (though he did serve in 1827, 1851–56, and 1880–81, between subsequent exiles for opposition to reform measures).[56]

Additional reports later in the newspaper recount the invasion of Mehmed Ali and the military advances of his son, İbrahim Pasha (1789–1848), in Ottoman Syria. Within this context, it is clear that the bestowal and its subsequent announcement in the press was a finely crafted piece of propaganda aimed at reiterating the sultan's legitimacy as the *ḫilāfet-penāh* (refuge of the caliphate), while simultaneously denouncing the treachery of Mehmed Ali Pasha.[57] News of the

52 For the contrast with ceremonial practices within imperial contexts of the early modern era, see Necipoğlu, "Framing the Gaze," and Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*.

53 Kaftans and robes of honor (*ḫulʿat*) played an integral role in the wider context of audience receptions and Ottoman courtly life from the fifteenth century onward. See Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (eds.), *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity* (Istanbul: Eren, 2004); and Amanda Phillips, "Ottoman Hil'at: Between Commodity and Charisma," in *Frontiers of the Ottoman Imagination: Studies in Honour of Rhoads Murphey*, ed. Marios Hadjianastasis (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 111–38.

54 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 27, 27 Dhu'l-Hijja 1247 (May 28, 1832), 1.

55 Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 127.

56 For the "meaningless" nature of this Emirship, see M. Abir, "Modernisation, Reaction and Muhammad Ali's 'Empire,'" *Middle Eastern Studies* 13, no. 3 (Oct., 1977): 295–313.

57 Mehmed Ali's actions were considered "treachery" from the imperial centre, although from an Egyptian perspective, these same actions could be considered the beginning of the modern Egyptian state. See Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

bestowal event and the invocation of the sultan's own image in the newspaper report distributed to its readership (which included Ottoman notables and non-Ottoman diplomatic circles) a multifaceted message. On one hand, news of what amounts to an administrative victory (the bestowal of the Emirship itself), remains the ostensible topic. On the other hand, the publicized ceremony of the bestowal underlines themes of personal loyalty to Mahmud II himself as well as the sultan's enduring authority over provincial Ottoman territories, especially those of the holy cities.

6 Rewarding Loyalty?

Just two months after ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib received his award, the sultan bestowed the same honour on Şeyhülislam Seyyid Yasincizade Abdülvehhab Efendi (1758–1833; in office 1821–22, 1828–33).[58] The description published in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* is short, but the incident itself apparently caused enough controversy to later become the primary example of the award's bestowal in both the official Ottoman chronicle as well as in the writing of various Western travellers.[59] The reason for this upset was allegedly the figurative nature of the award's imagery, which was deemed inappropriate for the highest-ranking religious official of an Islamic empire. Reputedly, the controversy surrounding the representation of the sultan's image (in addition to other reform measures) was so strong as to cause bursts of outrage in the streets of Istanbul. A local dervish by the name of Sheik Satchili(Şeyh Saçlı?), for example, stopped the sultan as he was crossing the Galata Bridge, admonishing the *gāvur pādişāh* (infidel sultan) for his transgressions against Islam.[60] The şeyhülislam himself, however, largely supported the sultan's reform efforts – as will be discussed below – pointing to the complex political matrices underlying religious, judiciary, and class identities. In addition to the allegedly offensive form of the portrait-object, the function of its public bestowal in this case deserves further scrutiny.

The ceremony was held at Göksu Pavilion, a *yalı* (shoreside residence) along the Bosphorus, on a Friday afternoon just after the *selāmlıḳ* (ceremonial procession to Friday prayers) at Beylerbeyi mosque.[61] The *selāmlıḳ*, consisting of a royal cavalcade proceeding from the palace to an imperial mosque, provided an opportunity for subjects to directly present petitions to the sultan in his role as the caliphal arbiter of justice.[62] As the parade

58 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 32, 13 Safar 1248 (July 12, 1832), 1. The date of the event is stated as "*ṣaferü'l-ḫayrıñ sekizinci cumʿa günü*" (Friday, into Saturday, 8 Safer; Saturday, July 7, 1832). Lütfi adjusts the date to "*ṣaferiñ yirmi sekizinci cumʿa günü*" (Friday, 28 Safer; Friday, July 27, 1832). Lütfi, *Tārīḫ-i Lütfī*, 4:65, https://archive.org/details/tarikh-lutfi/tarikh-lutfi-4/, last accessed June 26, 2023.

59 See Helmuth von Moltke, *Türkiye'deki Durum ve Olaylar Üzerine Mektuplar*, trans. Heyrullah Örz, (Istanbul: Türkiye Iş Bankası Kültür Yayınlari, 1960), quoted in Baykara, "11. Mahmud ve Resim," 514. See similar statements in Robert Walsh, *A Residence at Constantinople during a Period Including the Commencement, Progress, and Termination of the Greek and Turkish Revolutions*, 2 vols. (London: Frederick Westley and A.H. Davis, 1836), 2:299, https://books.google.com/books?id=8GNCAAAAcAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023. For more general comments on popular objections to Mahmud II's wider portrait campaign, see Slade, *Records of Travels in Turkey*, 2:194; Edmund Spencer, *Travels in the Western Caucasus, Including a Tour through Imeritia, Mingrelia, Turkey, Moldavia, Galicia, Silesia, and Moravia, in 1836*, 2 vols. (London: H. Colburn, 1838), 2:149, https://books.google.com/books?id=C-kOAAAAYAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023; and Horatio Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour through Armenia, Kurdistan, Persia, and Mesopotamia*, 2 vols. (London: Tilt and Bogue, 1840), 1:73–76, https://books.google.com/books?id=gIpEAQAAMAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

60 For example, see the account of A. de La Jonquière, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1914), 1: 422, https://books.google.com/books?id=h4PPAAAAMAAJ, last accessed June 27, 2023.

61 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 32, 13 Safar 1248 (July 12, 1832), 1. The Göksu Pavilion would not have been in its current Neobaroque form commissioned by Abdülmecid I, but rather in the timber version first constructed in the seventeenth century under Mahmud I (r. 1730–54).

62 For a description of the *selāmlıḳ* ceremony in the sixteenth century, see Selanikī Muṣṭafa Efendi, *Tarih-i Selânikî (971–1003 / 1563–1595)*, (ed.) Mehmet İpşirli (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1999), 449, 469, 670, 708.

of foot soldiers, cavalry, officers, and commanders mounted on finely caparisoned horses made its way along the street, the sultan was made publicly visible as a just and pious leader who was willing to interact with the populace.[63] The ceremony also held dynastic connotations and was associated with Mehmed II's performance of prayer in Hagia Sophia immediately after the conquest in 1453. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the *selāmlıḳ* remained a significant show of royal visibility for sultans who drew their power from strategies of visual occlusion.[64]

Mahmud II, who used a strategy of extreme visibility to bolster his power, was said to have made himself extremely accessible during the ceremony. According to Friedrich von Tietz, Prussian Counsellor of Legation, the sultan had a special building in which to meet with anyone wishing to bring a petition to his attention following the procession.[65] Therefore, the timing of the presentation ceremony immediately after the *selāmlıḳ* framed it in terms of the sultan's ultimate authority in civic, judiciary, and religious matters. The sultan took an active role in the bestowal ceremony, showering the *şeyhülislam* with compliments before bestowing upon his honouree the gift of "*pırlanta ile maṣnūʿ bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı muʿciz-nümūn-ı ḫilāfetpenāhī*" (a wonderous imperial portrait of the refuge of the caliphate decorated with diamonds).[66]

The respective bestowals of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* on ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and Abdülvehhab are significant not only because they are among the first to be mentioned in the press, but because of the nature of the power of the offices held by their respective recipients.[67] In contrast to the Emir, whose influence over religious matters was indirect and highly symbolic, the *şeyhülislam* held significant authority over religious and judiciary matters concerning Ottoman subjects. In the nineteenth century, questions regarding the permissibility under Islamic law of various modern innovations, among them new shifts in arts and culture, became a major source of anxiety for the *ʿilmiye*, or high-ranking scholars and community leaders of the *ulema*. Niyazi Berkes has argued that the *ʿilmiye* were highly opposed to all changes; however, scholars such as Uriel Heyd have shown that some of these leaders were actually members of progressive reform councils.[68] For example, Abdülvehhab did in fact support the progressive centralist agenda by writing a treatise in support of the idea of complete obedience to Mahmud II and his reform programmes.[69] The treatise, *Ḫulāṣatü'l-Burhān fī İṭāʿati's-Sultān* (*The Summary of Evidence in Obedience to the Sultan*), used traditional virtue literature to glorify and legitimate the Ottoman dynasty. Several copies of the *Ḫulāṣatü'l-Burhān* can be found at the Süleymaniye Library, including those owned by prominent Ottoman officials, among them, the prominent statesmen Pertev (no. 350) and Hüsrev Pashas (no. 266), who would both eventually receive their own respective *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*. The ownership of this propagandistic treatise among the courtly elite is further proof of a centralised movement among them to support the sultan's autocratic reform goals.

The earliest publications of bestowal ceremonies for medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* were

63 Prior to Mahmud II, janissaries played a major role in such processions.

64 Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 126–27.

65 Friedrich von Tietz, *St. Petersburgh, Constantinople, and Napoli di Romania, in 1833 and 1834: A Characteristic Picture, Drawn during a Residence There*, (trans.) James D. Haas (New York: Theodore Foster, 1836), 161. https://books.google.com.sb/books?id=TjsEAAAAYAAJ, last accessed June 26, 2023. Cited by Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 127.

66 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 32, 13 Safar 1248 (July 12, 1832), 1. Lütfi's account leaves out the ceremonial details relayed by the newspaper, but his description of the portrait-object as "*pırlanta ile muraṣṣaʿ bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*" (an imperial portrait decorated with diamonds) is copied with virtually no adaptation. Lütfi, *Tārīḫ-i Lütfī*, 4:65, https://archive.org/details/tarihiltfi04ltuoft, last accessed June 27, 2023.

67 For the role of religious figures at court during the Westernising reform process, see Berkes, *Secularism* and Heyd, "The Ottoman Ulema."

68 Heyd, "The Ottoman Ulema," 63–96.

69 Erşahin, "Islamic Support," especially 4–5.

intended primarily for a domestic audience, though the loyalties solidified by their symbolism would have ramifications in international politics. This audience, consisting mainly of the high-ranking officials of the Sublime Porte, was in large part the same pool from which recipients would be drawn. It was not until the highest-ranking religious official of the empire was gifted with the portrait that interest from foreign audiences intensified, attracted by the apparent contradiction of his acceptance of an object dangerously close to the idea of a graven image.[70]

Domestic bestowals continued throughout the 1830s, honouring such figures as the *ṭopḫāne-i ʿāmire nāẓırı* (Director of the Imperial Arsenal), Saib Efendi, who received "*muraṣṣaʿ bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı meḥāsin-nümūn-ı şāhāne*" (one bejeweled, beautiful imperial portrait of the sultan)[71] at an 1835 ceremony held at a *sāḥilḫāne* (shoreside residence), involving an *aḫşam ṭaʿāmı* (dinner) and *fişenkler* (fireworks) that lasted until late into the night. Some receptions were not documented in the press, but can be inferred from portraits of the awardees wearing the honour, including an image of the Ottoman-Armenian *ḍarb-ḫāne nāẓırı* (Director of the Imperial Mint), Harutyun Amira Bezciyan (1771–1834) (Fig. 41).[72] The statesmen



FIGURE 41
Artist unknown, *Portrait of Harutyun "Kazaz" Artin Amira Bezciyan*, early nineteenth century

and diplomats Sadık Rifat Bey (later Pasha) (1807–57) and Reşid Pasha also had their portraits made wearing their respective medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* (Fig. 42).[73] In 1838, (Chief) Çerkez Hafiz Mehmed Pasha (d. 1866) received the *taṣvīr-i şāhāne* (sultan's portrait) for meritorious service, and at least one musical artist, the composer of classical Ottoman music, İsmail Dede Efendi (1778–1846), was bestowed with the honour in 1839.[74] At the same time that the sultan's portrait was being gifted to Ottomans in different

70 The British fascination with Ottoman (Orthodox Sunni) religious opposition to figurative images in general appears even earlier than Mahmud II's commissions. According to *The Observer* no. 1974, April 18, 1830, 2, citing the German paper *Der Komet*, when Mahmud II appointed a Mr. Lauriston to the position of "Painter to the Court," the mufti (*şeyhülislam*) "was much opposed to this innovation, and preferred a number of threats from the Koran, but the Padishah soon frightened him and induced him to be silent."

71 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 116, 14 Rajab 1251 (November 5, 1835), 1. The ceremony of Saib Efendi took place on Friday evening into Saturday, 17 Jumada II 1251 (October 10, 1835), a few days before that of Akif Pasha, though the article recounting it was published later. *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 116, 14 Rajab 1251 (November 5, 1835), 1.

72 For a photograph and more information on the original early-nineteenth century portrait on which this image is based, see Garo Kürkman, *Armenian Painters in the Ottoman Empire 1600–1923*, trans. Mary Pricilla Işin, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Matüsalem Uzmanlık ve Yayıncılık, 2004), 1:33–35. According to Kürkman, this painting was purchased by a Greek gardener in Arnavutköy and given to the patriarchate. The title "*Amira*" indicates that Harutyun, also known as Kazaz Artin, shared in privileges normally reserved for Muslim members of the court bureaucracy. The original portrait was since lost during recent renovations of the Patriarchate building. Thanks to Archpriest Krikor Damadyan, Patriarchal Vicar for this information.

73 For the portrait of Sadık Rifat Bey in the Selçuk Esenbel collection, see Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 87, 126.

74 For the former, see Lütfi, *Tārīḫ-i Lütfī*, 5:111. For the latter, Nimetullah Akay, "Osmanlı Sultanı II. Mahmud Döneminde Mevlevilik," *Harran Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 20, vol. 33 (January–June 2015), 88.



FIGURE 42 J. Reynard, Lemercier & Cie, *Portrait of Mustafa Reşid Pasha*, *c.*1830–60

positions, the grantee pool was diversified with foreign representatives of various ranks, including kings and rulers who received ceremonial boxes on which a similar version of the portrait was mounted.[75] From this point forward, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* in all its forms would leave an indelible mark on both internal and foreign affairs connected to the Ottoman court.

7 The Sultan: Friend of the King

With the growing emphasis on foreign policy and diplomacy within the Porte in the 1820s and 30s, it is unsurprising that visiting ambassadors are among the early recipients of *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*. In fact, archival records indicate that many foreign ambassadors received the imperial portrait and other Ottoman decorations, such as the *nişān-ı iftiḫār* (Order of Glory),[76] at a higher rate than Ottomans themselves, at least during the initial years of their official implementation.[77] Requests for such badges of honour were transmitted through diplomatic channels, and in some cases, became a matter of political tension when portraits were given to some ambassadors and not to others during their respective audiences.

The first foreign ambassador to be bestowed with this honour was a representative of Mahmud II's on-again-off-again ally, the British Empire. On Monday, 9 Rabiʿ I 1248 (Monday, August 6, 1832),[78] at the shoreside palace of Istavroz Sarayı[79] on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, the sultan received the longest-serving British Ambassador to the Porte, Sir Stratford Canning. Canning was about to depart to London after having played a major role in negotiating British aid and influence in the aftermath of the Greek War of Independence.[80] The *serʿasker*, *müşīr-i ḫāṣṣa* (Chief of the Imperial Guard) Fevzi Pasha, *ferīḳ-i ḫāṣṣa* (Divisional General of the Imperial Guard) Ahmed Fethi Pasha (1801–58), and *mīrlivā* (General of the Brigade) Namık Pasha (1804–92), were present through the intermediation of the *re'īs efendi*. The sultan himself graced the palace with his presence, speaking with the ambassador through the *dīvān-ı hümāyūn tercümānı* (Grand Interpreter at the Porte) and Stephanos Vogorides, Canning's trusted friend who was acting as his personal interpreter.[81] During this relatively intimate exchange, Mahmud II

75 See, for example, the bestowal upon King Otto of Greece in June of 1833 as reported in John Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople*, 177.

76 Redhouse simply calls it an "order of special merit," 2082.

77 For a detailed history of the history and development of these orders, including its alleged origins as Selim III's gift of a jewelled decoration (*çelenk*) to British admiral Horatio Nelson in 1798, see Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*. For a contemporary English translation of Selim III's decree regarding the "Imperial Ottoman Order of the Crescent" in 1804, see RCIN GEO/ADD/2/12, https://gpp.rct.uk/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=ADD2%2f1%2f36&pos=1, last accessed June 27, 2023.

78 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 35, 16 Rabiʿ I 1248 (August 13, 1832), 3.

79 This summer palace, designed by royal architect Krikor Amira Balyan at the behest of Mahmud II, was also known as the "Yellow Palace" and built between 1829 and 1832. It is well-known from descriptions by von Moltke and Pardoe, but the wooden structure burnt down in 1851.

80 Canning had served as ambassador to the Ottoman Empire previously 1825–1828, and would serve again 1841–1858. According to his own account, his 1831–1832 ambassadorship was cut short over a disagreement with the British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston (Henry John Temple, 1784–1865) over the secretary's push to install the Bavarian King Otto on the throne of Greece.

81 The latter was also known as Istefaniki Bey/Stefan Bogoridi /Stoïko Stoïkov, and was an excellent example of an individual able to navigate the upheavals of four decades to survive in the service of the Ottoman court. For his story, see Christine M. Philiou, *Biography of an Empire: Governing Ottomans in an Age of Revolution* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011). Canning explains the presence of Vogorides in place of the official translator of the British envoy due to the sensitive political nature of the discussion between himself and Mahmud II. Letter from Canning to Palmerston, August 7, 1832: F.O. 78/211, published in Lane-Poole, *Stratford Canning*, 513.

stood to receive his guest and, after addressing and giving the favour of his attention to Canning, further honoured his awardee by attaching to his neck *"eṭrāfı pırlanṭa ile müzeyyen bir ḳıṭ'a taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı meḥāsin-nümūn"* (one beautiful imperial portrait surrounded with diamonds).[82] Here, "beautiful" refers to both the inner and outer qualities of the sultan. As the bestowal of the physical object is described as an immediate extension of the favours of the sultan's attention within the context of his immediate physical presence, there is an elision between the two. Canning is honoured by both the sultan-in-person and the sultan-in-portrait with the hope that the positive interaction will translate to continued friendly relations between Britain and the Porte. The exchange therefore served not as a simple gesture of goodwill, but as a tangible symbol of the face-to-face interactions and conversations upon which enduring alliances would be forged.

The familiar nature of this bestowal ceremony may indicate the growing importance of personal loyalties in international contract-making on a global stage. While Canning's political loyalty lay primarily with his own sovereign, King William IV (r. 1830–37), he also demonstrated loyalty to Sultan Mahmud II by securing favourable agreements and maintaining positive relations between the British and Ottoman empires. At the time that Canning's tenure at Istanbul was ending, the three so-called "Great Powers" of Britain, France, and Russia had just recently signed the Treaty of Constantinople (1832), an agreement concerning the restabilisation of monarchical government in Greece following the assassination of Ioannis Kapodistrias in 1831.[83] The sultan's gracious reception and engagement with Canning signalled his interest in maintaining a good relationship with the British, through which it was hoped British military aid against further territorial encroachment by Mehmed Ali Pasha could be secured. However, the bestowal of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* as a token of friendship and loyalty failed to achieve anything more than a symbolic exchange in this case, as Canning was unable to follow through with the British alliance against Egypt. The refusal of British aid would soon, as Canning himself had feared, "throw the Sultan at once into the arms of Russia."[84]

8 The Sultan: Friend of the Czar

When plans for a defensive alliance with the British against Mehmed Ali Pasha fell through, the Ottomans turned to an unlikely ally: Russia. This was surprising, given that the two powers had been at war with one another frequently over the last century, the latest outbreak of which (1828–29) resulted in an indemnity the sultan was still in the process of paying. Furthermore, Russian encroachment upon Ottoman land in the Balkans, the Black Sea, and the Caucasus was one of the major threats to territorial stability in the northern part of the empire. Yet the sultan's approach to the diplomatic negotiations leading up to the treaty of Ḫünkār İskelesi (July 8, 1833) were couched in terms of friendship and mutual happiness, symbolically sealed with the bestowal of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* upon the Russian Ambassador

82 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyi'* no. 35, 16 Rabi' I 1248 (August 13, 1832), 2–3. Canning's own account frames the sultan as having "caused [me] to be invested with his Grand Order; the insignia being his portrait in miniature, attached to a gold chain and set in diamonds," Lane-Poole, *Stratford Canning*, 513. It is well-known that Canning was an avid patron of Ottoman art and that while in Istanbul, he had commissioned a local artist, possibly of the circle of Kapıdağlı, to record his views and studies. The set was gifted to the Victoria and Albert Museum by Canning's daughter, Charlotte, in 1895. For more, see Charles Newton, "Stratford Canning's Pictures of Turkey," the Victoria & Albert Album, vol. 3, 1984, 76–83, and Charles Newton, *Images of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 2007).

83 Ioannis Kapodistrias is also known as John Capodistria.

84 Lane-Pool, *Stratford Canning*, 512.

Butenev(?),[85] who had previously been stationed in the post of *ḳonsolos* at Alexandria.[86]

According to a *taḳrīr* (internal memo) in the Ottoman archives, the immediate reason for the bestowal was that Butenev had become saddened and hurt when he had learned of Canning's bestowal.[87] Additionally, it was reported that the bestowal would shore up his loyalty, since Butenev had previously maintained a close relationship with Habib, the deputy of the *ḫā'in* (treacherous) Mehmed Ali Pasha. The sultan's response, recorded in two parts above and below the original body of text, reflects his satisfaction that Habib would not be accompanying Butenev back to St. Petersburg. He interprets this as a sign of the *dostluḳ* (friendship) between himself and Czar Nicholas I, which he intends to commemorate with two marks of favour: a decorated box for the czar and a *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* for Butenev, the manufacture of which was estimated to take about 10 days.[88]

As the comment on the production time indicates, the diplomatic negotiations leading up to the treaty produced a quick turnaround. Ambassador Butenev's audience with the sultan was held in Istanbul at the *mābeyn-i hümāyūn* of the palace on 11 Jumada II 1248 (November 5, 1832),[89] just three months after Canning's reception. Accompanied by the Head Translator Frenkin(?) and the Vice Consul, he was received at the palace by Mahmud II and many of the same ministers that had been at the British ambassador's farewell audience, including the *serʿasker* pasha, *müşīr-i ḫāṣṣa* Fevzi Pasha, and the *reʾīs efendi*.

According to the report of the audience published in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ*, the *ḳonsolos* came away with a diamond-inset *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, while the box produced for the czar was set with jewels and decorated with the imperial portrait.[90] Other members of the legation received bejewelled decorations of an unspecified order for themselves. This show of mutual respect was intended to bring *maḥẓūẓiyet* (joy and pleasure) to its participants, but also to mark the sultan's portrait as a token of sincere friendship to the czar. The public-facing description of the event in the official newspaper had the additional benefit of announcing the development of friendly relations between the Ottoman and Russian empires to the wider diplomatic sphere, including the British

85 Lütfi mentions an Apollonir Butenev in *Tārīḫ* 2:89. He is also mentioned as confirming the Russian position to the Porte along with Count Orloff on 3 Rabiʿ II [1]249 (August 8, 1833) in *Muʿāhedāt-ı ʿUmūmiye Mecmūʿası*, 5 vols. (Istanbul: Cerīde-i ʿAskeriye Maṭbaʿası, 1294–98 [1878–82]), 4:90, https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedhamid2.0004010/, last accessed July 10, 2023. Therefore, this may be a reference to the Russian ambassador Apollinary Petrovich Butenev.

86 According to Serkan Demirbaş' reading of the treaty, the sultan's turning to the czar was a diplomatic manoeuvre intended to get the attention of the British. Demirbaş, "A New Perspective on the Treaty of Unkiar Skelesi – Mahmud II's Use of Diplomacy to Resolve the Mehmet Ali Problem," *Journal of Social Sciences Eskisehir Osmangazi University* 17, no. 2 (Dec. 2016), https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/263492, last accessed July 10, 2023.

87 "*kānine taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı şāhāneleri iʿṭāsında rusya elçisi putineffiñ maḥzūn ve müteʾssir olduğunu*" (The Russian Ambassador Butenev became saddened and hurt when he had learned of the bestowal of the Imperial Portrait on Canning), BOA HAT 367/20282, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1248 (May 19, 1833).

88 "*on güne ḳadar iʿmāl olunabileceği*" (it can be manufactured in about ten days), BOA HAT 367/20282, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1248 (May 19, 1833). This record is cited but not thoroughly examined by Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 449.

89 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 45, 24 Jumada I 1248 (November 18, 1832), 1.

90 "*cānib-i cenāb-i imparatorīye taṣvīr-i hümāyūn ile müzeyyen bir ʿaded muraṣṣaʿ ḳūṭu ihdā ve elçi-i mūmāileyhe bir ḳıṭʿa aşḳılı mücevher taṣvīr-i hümāyūn ve tercümān ve vekīl-i mūmāileyhimaya daḫī bir ḳıṭʿa mücevher nişān iʿṭā buyurulmuş*" (A box set with jewels and decorated with the imperial portrait was gifted to the czar and a bejewelled Imperial Portrait with a tassel(?) was given to the aforementioned ambassador and a bejewelled order was given to the aforementioned translator and deputy), *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 45, 24 Jumada I 1248 (November 18, 1832), 1. As it was common practice to remove a portrait from a portrait-box for reuse or liquidation of the intrinsically valuable stones and metals, the Ottoman *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* in Russian collections, if they survive, are likely to be in a form similar to that of Fig. 37.

agents whose sovereign had snubbed their former ally.

Throughout the 1830s, the sultan's portrait continued to be bestowed upon foreign diplomats and high-ranking political operatives. For example, according to an archival document, the Russian general Pavel Dmitriyevich Kiselev (1788–1872) – who served as governor of the Ottoman Danubian principalities of Eflāḳ (Wallachia) and Boġdān (Moldavia) after the Russo-Ottoman war of 1828–29 – received the award along with the title of *bey* in 1252 (1836–37).[91] The Austrian chancellor Klemens von Metternich (1773–1859) and Archduke (later Emperor of Austria) Franz Joseph (1830–1916) both received *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* in August of 1837.[92] The delivery of the portraits was mediated by Rifat Pasha, who was at the time serving as the ambassador to Vienna.[93] Metternich's continued relationship with Rifat and Mustafa Reşid Pashas fostered the exchange of ideas regarding the reforms that would take place during the early Tanzimat period.[94] Both Metternich and Kiselev were supportive of the politically conservative plan to keep the Ottoman Empire united against separatist movements, the framework for which was outlined at the Congress of Vienna (1814–15). However, like Mahmud II, they also supported some socially liberal programmes, such as universal education, improved quarantine and other public health measures, and the drafting of proto-constitutionalisation documents. In this light, the seemingly unstructured assignment of the portrait "order" highlights the benefits of its multifaceted meanings and ambiguous network. Whether the countenance surrounded by brilliants represented the *cihān-bānī* (World-Builder) or *ḫilāfet-penāh*, or both, to individual viewers, its symbolic potency secured the portrait-object a place among the highest-ranking political players of its own time.

9 Continuities and Changes in the Mid-Century

After the death of Mahmud II in 1839, his son and successor, Abdülmecid, sustained some of the same policies of image-distribution in the diplomatic sphere, though the emphasis on the medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* was lessened. The sultan's portraits continued to be sent to his contemporaries, including Louis Philippe,[95] and to representatives, such as Palmerston and Metternich, who were serving as the foreign secretaries of England and Austria, respectively.[96] Ottoman officials also received images of Abdülmecid, such as the *ṣadāret ketḫüdāsı*, who received the honour of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* in 1847.[97] Abbas Hilmi Pasha, Viceroy of Egypt (r. 1848–54) and grandson of Mehmed Ali Pasha, was gifted a portrait of the sultan, which he appears to wear in copies of his own portrait (Fig. 43).[98] In at least one case, a

91 Kiselev is also spelled Kiselyov. BOA HAT 1168/46194, 29 Safar 1252 (June 15, 1836). Note that this identifier matches the location in the digital archive system; a handwritten note marks it as 1164/46194. See also Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 130. For more on Kiselev, see Chapter 4.

92 BOA HAT 1187/46774, 25 Safar 1254 (May 20, 1838); BOA HAT 1187/46767, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1254 (March 15, 1839), BOA HAT 478/23410, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1253 (March 26, 1838). See also Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 130.

93 Eldem has suggested that this mission may have also been the occasion when Rifat Bey had his own portrait painted wearing the decoration, *Pride and Privilege*, 130.

94 Miroslav Šedivý, "Metternich and Mustafa Reshid Pasha's Fall in 1841," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no. 2 (2012): 259–82.

95 BOA İ.HR 22/1055, 11 Shaʿban 1259 (September 6, 1843), BOA İ.HR 22/1060, 18 Shaʿban 1259 (September 13, 1843).

96 For Palmerston, see BOA İ.HR 9/448, 19 Muharram 1257 (March 13, 1841). For Metternich, see BOA İ.HR 10/505, 29 Rabiʿ I 1257 (May 21, 1841). See also Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 131.

97 Several congratulatory letters were sent: BOA A.}TŞF 3/34, 15 Jumada II 1263 (May 31, 1847), BOA A.}TŞF 3/37, 19 Jumada II 1263 (June 4, 1847), BOA A.}TŞF 3/40, 24 Jumada II 1263 (June 9, 1847), BOA A.}TŞF 3/41, 25 Jumada II 1263 (June 10, 1847). See also Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 131.

98 A document dating to the reign of his successor, İsmail Pasha (1863–79), reports on the preparation of a

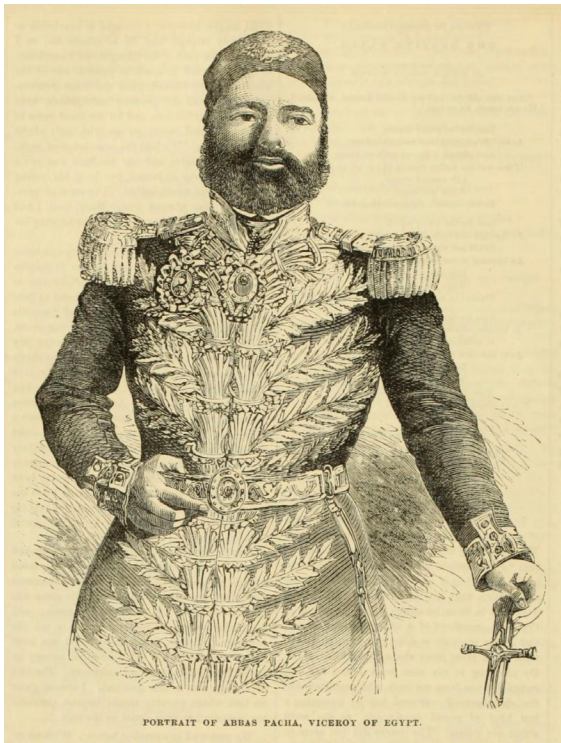

FIGURE 43 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Abbas Hilmi Pasha*, 1852



FIGURE 44 After J. Perignon, *Portrait of Mihail Sturdza*, 1866

portrait of the Moldavian prince Mihail Sturdza (r. 1834–49) located in the Sturdza family chapel in Baden-Baden Germany, the *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* of Mahmud II and Abdülmecid were portrayed as having been worn alongside one another (Fig. 44). It is likely that this is a retrospective commemorative work rather than one that reflects contemporary practice; nevertheless, more work remains to be done on this case before a conclusion can be made.

In older images of Prince Mihail and his contemporaries in the Ottoman Balkans, which will be covered in greater depth in Chapter 4, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* of Abdülmecid is worn in a manner similar to the way that portraits of Mahmud II appear in the images of Rifat and Reşid Pashas and Harutyun Amira Bezciyan. The medallion itself follows the conventions of those established by his father, and in small-scale paintings and prints of poor quality, it is difficult to determine which individual is in the position of the sovereign (perhaps by design).

Around the time that Abdülmecid came to the throne, brothers Sebuh (1816–89) and Rupen (1810–75), of the Ottoman-Armenian Manas family of court artists, were working at the Ottoman embassy and studying art in Paris.[99] Using techniques he had recently learned in his studies, Sebuh produced a number of oil-on-ivory portraits of the sultan in the 1850s.[100] In an example from the Khalili Collections, Sebuh has rendered the young sultan naturalistically, with a closely cropped beard and whisps of hair sticking out from under his short and narrow *Mecīdiye* fez (a style named after Abdülmecid himself). His fez

valuable *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* sent to the Viceroy of Egypt. BOA HH.İ 40/26, 5 Jumada I 1281 (October 6, 1864).

99 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 454. See also Kürkman, *Armenian Painters*.

100 Sebuh Manas signed RMK 121/217, and dated it 1267 (1850–51). Similar, but unsigned, works include: RMK 121/216, RMK 121/220, RMK 121/221, and RMK 121/222. See Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 454 See also Renda, *Nisanlar*, 494.



FIGURE 45 Sebuh Manas, *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı of Abdülmecid*, 1271 (1854–5)



FIGURE 46 Artist unknown (attributed to Jean Portet, Sebuh or Ruben Manas), *Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid*, mid-nineteenth century

is decorated by a delicate plume of white heron feathers clasped by a *çelenk* and a heavy navy mantle fastened at the neck, where the star of the *Mecīdī* Order (also named after Abdülmecid) can be glimpsed (Fig. 45). This model was also used by the French artist Jean Portet (d. 1862), who painted portraits of Abdülmecid in oil-on-paper as well as miniature formats, examples of which can be found in the RMK collection.[101] An oil-on-canvas portrait of the sultan in the Pera Museum (Fig. 46), while unsigned, demonstrates how the designs of Manas and Portet may have been scaled up to even larger dimensions in the mid-nineteenth century. Such designs were further copied in printed formats, as demonstrated by an engraved portrait of Abdülmecid attributed to Victor Florence Pollet (1811–82) (Fig. 47).[102] Copies of this portrait, framed by a decorative floral garland and labelled in both Ottoman Turkish and French, entered Western European collections around the time that the Ottoman Empire forged allegiances with the British and French leading up to the Crimean War (1853–56). The portrait type of Abdülmecid wearing the updated fez and military orders solidified his image as a youthful, yet dignified leader with modernising sensibilities.

During the reign of Abdülaziz, miniature sultans' portraits on ivory continued to be produced in smaller quantities, often based on images of the ruler in other media. For example, Viçen Abdullahyan (1820–1902), one of a trio of

101 RMK 121/219. An engraved copy of Portet's portrait was printed in Paris and later returned to the Ottoman palace, where it was appended to a copy of the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album*. TSM A. 3719. A report in the archives notes that a "Mösyö Porte" has been paid for the expenses associated with making a plate of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* in Paris. BOA HH.İ 33/38, 20 Jumada II, 1276 (January 14, 1860).

102 Copies of this print include Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève EST81_1RES_P7, https://archive.org/download/EST81_1RES_P7/EST81_1RES_P7.jpg, BM 1895,0617.249, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1895-0617-249, ÖNB PORT_00034294_01, https://onb.digital/result/11045878, RCIN 618533, https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/1/collection/618533/abdulmecid-i, all last accessed July 30, 2024.

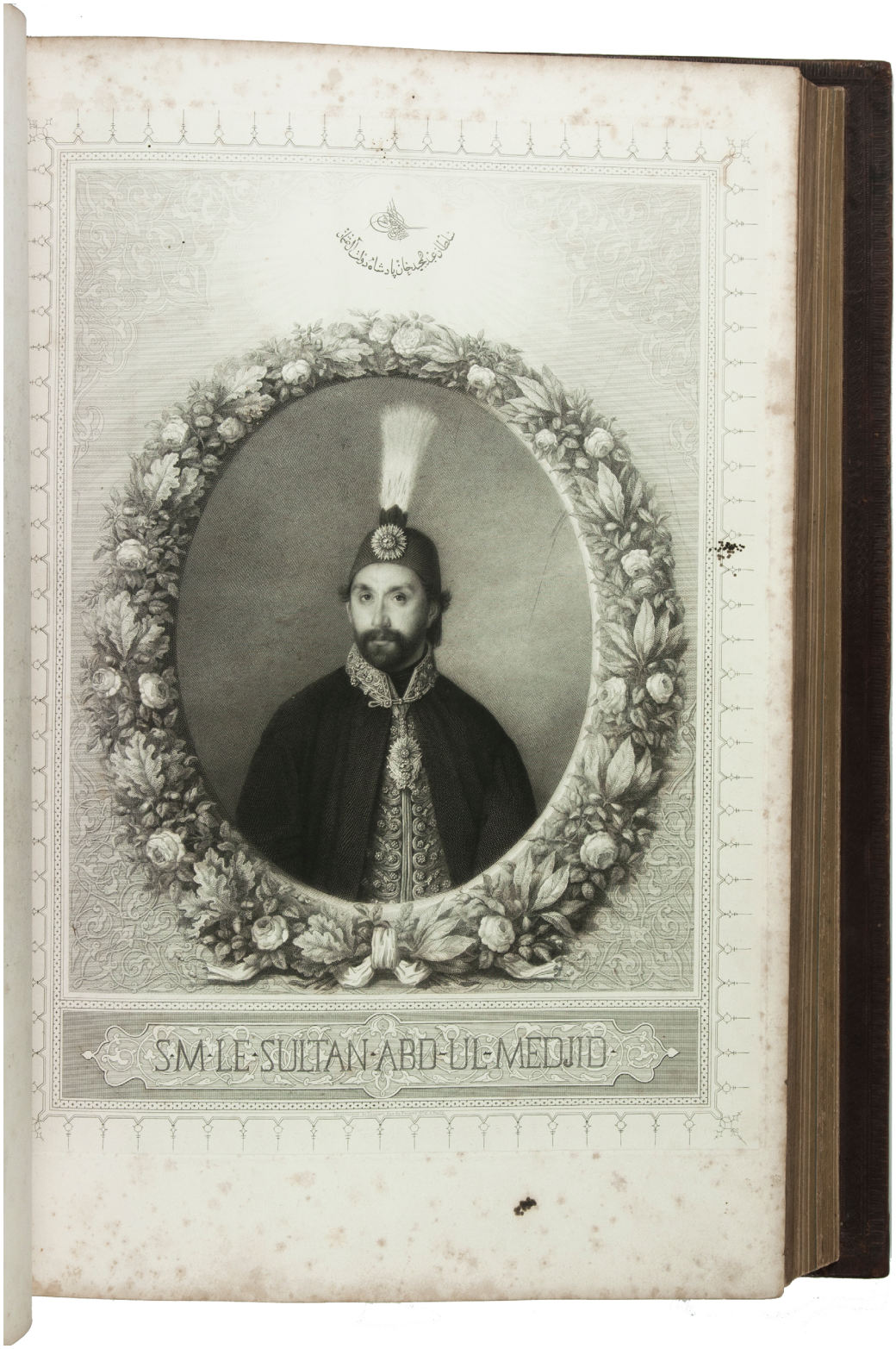

FIGURE 47 Artist unknown (attributed to Victor Florence Pollet), *Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid*, *c.*1860–1861(?)



FIGURE 48 Viçen Abdullah, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz*, *c.*1870



FIGURE 49 Stanisław Chlebowski, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz*, 1876

Ottoman-Armenian brothers who founded the photography firm Abdullah Frères, produced miniatures based on their official photographic portrait of Abdülaziz (Fig. 48).[103] In 1875, Josef Manas (1835–1916) – a younger cousin to Rupen and Sebuh who was also educated in Paris – produced a number of images of Abdülaziz that incorporated elements from the same model.[104] Other artists who worked across media to produce images of the sultan include the French painter Pierre-Désiré Guillemet (1827–78) and the Polish painter Stanisław Chlebowsky (1835–84). Chlebowsky, for example, produced both large-scale oil-on-canvas works and miniature oil-on-ivory portraits sharing iconographic models (Fig. 49).[105] By the time that Abdülaziz came to the throne, the practice of wearing the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* on one's person had been largely phased out as new forms, such as the photographic *carte de visite*, became popular visual means for demonstrating friendship and favour. However, a smaller number of precious miniature *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* were produced as singular commemorative pieces or as part of a dynastic series through the reigns of Murad V, Abdülhamid II (r. 1876–1909), Mehmed V Reşad (r. 1909–18) and Mehmed VI Vahdeddin (r. 1918–22).

103 RMK 121/234.

104 RMK 121/230, RMK 121/231, RMK 121/232. Some smaller (diameter 2.5cm) works have the same signature, such as RMK 121/236. One portrait, displayed on its own miniature brass easel, is a charming example of alternate display methods that indicate the changing functions associated with such objects. RMK 121/236.

105 Chlebowski's papers in the Polish archives indicate that he participated in both the production and presentation of portrait miniatures on ivory for foreign leaders. He received medals and orders from Spain (1871), Belgium (1872), Germany (1873), and Italy (1874). See Mary Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft and the 'Pencil of Nature': Photography, Painting, and Drawing at the Court of Sultan Abdülaziz," *Ars Orientalis* 43 (2013): 10–30.

10 Conclusion

The fusing of Ottoman and international diplomatic politics during the reign of Mahmud II set the stage for an extraordinary new era in diplomatic gift exchange and ceremonial reception. The global tides of modernism, ebbing and flowing among cultural capitals, encouraged rapid innovations in the standardisation of gifts that could operate within this shifting environment. The changing global political landscape of the Ottoman empire in the 1820s and 1830s, shaped by internal rebellions, external military pressure, and competition among high officials, set the stage for the high-profile giving of the precious portrait-object as a token of loyalty.

The ambiguous nature of the earliest bestowals of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* (including that of the *şerīf* of Mecca, *şeyhülislam*, *ṣadrā'ẓam*, *ser'asker* and *ḳapūdān pāşā*s, and Pertev Pasha), coupled with the fact that they were published as some of the first headlines in the state-run *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyi'*, served to demarcate the sultan's most favoured officials, but also the offices to which he ascribed strategic political capital. The bestowals granted to foreign agents (including Canning and Butenev) highlight the role of the sultan's portrait in the diplomatic negotiations and political manoeuvrings occurring in response to the threat of Mehmed Ali Pasha's territorial encroachment. In the wake of the Russo-Ottoman treaty of Ḫünkār İskelesi, fine snuff-boxes boxes featuring the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* (such as those granted to Czar Nicholas I and King Otto of Greece) underscored Mahmud II's willingness to work within the confines of Russian policy, even when that meant showing favour to those who had the power to threaten the empire's territorial stability.

A third group of bestowals, occurring from the middle of the decade onwards (including King William IV, Sir Theophilus Lee, General Kiselev, Prince Metternich, and Saib, Akif, Sadık, and Reşid Pashas) included both domestic and foreign recipients that together held a range of ranks and offices that stretched further than the first two groups combined. While the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* had never been conceptualized as a reward for specific service or the achievement of a particular rank (though it was sometimes conferred at the same time that a change in rank occurred), it is within the last five years of Mahmud II's portrait campaign that the true complexity of his bestowal system is revealed. Though the medallion-format *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* continued to be produced during the reigns of Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, these were not bestowed with the same level of ceremonial pageantry. Perhaps the last politically significant bestowals were undertaken by Abdülaziz, who awarded the Grand Vizier Mahmud Nedim Pasha (*c.*1818–83) his portrait in 1872 and *şehzāde* (prince) Yusuf İzzeddin Efendi (1857–1916) – his favourite candidate as crown prince over the legitimate heir, Prince Murad Efendi, later Sultan Murad V – around 1875.[106]

By highlighting the locations and actors common to the ceremonial bestowal of the sultan's portrait by Mahmud II in its initial institution in the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, my goal was to demonstrate the multiplicity of distribution networks and diplomatic functions of these tiny paintings. At the same time, I have identified the specific recipients in respect to their involvement in fostering diplomacy during the last 14 years of Mahmud II's reign. Examining these portraits as nodes within a propagandistic network, connected by the shared experience of ceremonial splendour, which would be relived and remembered each time a beholder looked at or wore their own *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, represents a significant expansion of the discussion of imperial Ottoman art in the early nineteenth century.

106 This bestowal has been called "an exceptional move of public relations" by Eldem in *Pride and Privilege*, 229, citing *L'Orient Illustré*, II, 104 (March 27, 1875), 413. For the gift to Mahmud Nedim Pasha, see Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 150.

CHAPTER 3

"Beautiful," "Wonderful" Wall-Hanging Works

1 A Report from the Barracks[1]

On 25 Rabiʿ II 1252 (August 9, 1836), the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* ran a report on the ceremonial installation of the "*taṣvīr-i şems-naẓīr-i mülūkāne*" (sun-like imperial portrait) at the newly rebuilt imperial Selimiye barracks at Üsküdar, on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus.[2] The description of the spectacle, which had occurred a few weeks earlier, is worth quoting in detail:

"The commanders and officers of the Mansure Army and those at the Imperial Arsenal and officers of the Mansure Troops inhabiting the Barracks of the Bombardiers [and the District Governors of the Imperial Shipyard and the Officers of the Naval Corps] gathered together on the previously mentioned day [29 Rabiʿ I 1252 (July 14, 1836)] at one o'clock sharp at the reception hall of the shoreside mansion of the Marshal [of the Imperial Guard, Fevzi Pasha], outfitted in heavy official dress embroidered with metallic thread, charming orders, and epaulettes. And the naval captains and deputies of His Excellency the Marshal, along with a battalion of the regular naval troops, passed within the vicinity of the mansion in formation with their boats decked in banners in the new fashion. […]

The troops lining the route respectfully presented arms as they awaited the joy-scattering procession bearing the imperial portrait of the sultan. The phaeton especially prepared for the sublime portrait of the sultan pulled up alongside the mounting block, preceded by officers and commanders on horses as well as sixty sergeants of the Imperial Guard on foot, and the portrait was loaded and appropriately situated within it. The Major General of the Imperial Guard, Fethi Pasha, Governor General of the District of Çirmen, Mustafa Nuri Pasha, and the Marshal of the Mansure Army and Corps of the Imperial Guard [Fevzi Pasha] drew near, one by one, to respectfully take their places in front of the phaeton. İzzet Bey and the Serasker [Hüsrev Pasha] followed behind.

The sultan himself – the embodiment of angelic attributes who nourishes and arranges kindnesses for his servants – graced the imperial barracks so that he could see and be seen by the spectacular procession.[3] And as the procession passed by the aforementioned places, the battalions assembled there, honoured by the proximity of the portrait and of the Ruler of the World, saluted along with musical accompaniment[4] and shouted "Long live the sultan!" as the phaeton bearing the moon-like imperial portrait passed by them.

Upon the phaeton's approach to the barracks, the regimental commanding officers, leaders, major generals, and viziers dismounted from their horses and turned to face it. The sublime portrait was taken to the sublime place that had been prepared and decorated with heavy, gold-embroidered fabric and shawls arranged in a

1 Parts of this chapter are adapted from my forthcoming article, "Mapping the Miracle-Showing Portrait in Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 41 (2025).

2 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 133, 25 Rabiʿ II 1252 (August 9, 1836), 3–4. See also Lütfi, *Tārīḫ*, 5:52. For translations of Lütfi's summary version, see Wendy Shaw, *Reflections*, 27 and Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 128–29.

3 While the sultan's physical presence is noted in this case, he does not seem to interact with the portrait itself. This lack of apparent interaction supports the idea that the portrait was a sort of "doubling" or "extension" of the ruler.

4 The music of new military bands replaced that of the famous *mehter ṭaḳımı*, which was associated with the janissaries. For the role of the Italian Giuseppe Donizetti in training the new bands, see Emre Araci, "Giuseppe Donizetti at the Ottoman Court: A Levantine Life," *The Musical Times*, 143, no 1880 (2002): 49–56.

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decorative arch. Sacrificial sheep were slaughtered by religious functionaries and [the Sheik] of the Hüdayi Mahmud Efendi Dervish lodge [...] gave a prayer for the zealous feats of the Mansure Army and for the long life and prosperity of the Sultan. Sheik Yunus Efendi[5] led those present in the recitation of the *fātiḥa* (the first chapter of the Qur'ān), and as they said 'Amen,' a twenty-one cannon salute was fired."[6]

Once the portrait was installed, rolling infantry fire continued for half an hour. Then, battalions of soldiers took turns experiencing "*şeref-i temāşā ve ziyāretiyle istiḥṣāl-i sürūr-ı evfā*" (the continuous acquisition of great joy through the honour of seeing and visiting) the portrait, erupting into shouts of "*pādişāhum çok yaşa*" (Long live the sultan!). For three days afterwards, holiday festivities, illuminations, and fireworks adorned the barracks and commemorated the hanging of the portrait in a way that could be witnessed by an even wider swath of the sultan's urban subjects as well as foreigners present in Istanbul. Such lights were symbolic of the sultan's power, but also a reflection of his perfection, beauty, and luminosity – established ideas related to the display of divine power and further driven home through the use of eulogistic phrases. That the image itself is described as both "*taṣvīr-i şems naẓīre*" (sun-like) and later, "*taṣvir-i ḳamer-naẓīr*" (moon-like) within the newspaper account connects the person of the sultan, his image, and celestial sources of power, light, and order.

2 Ritual and Repetition in Portrait-Inauguration Ceremonies

This description of the ceremonial procession to and portrait installation at Selimiye is characteristic of that of several portrait-inauguration ceremonies carried out at military barracks, schools, and government offices. These ceremonies and their published descriptions in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* were part of the wider propagandistic portraiture campaign of Sultan Mahmud II in the 1830s. While unique in format and focus, the inauguration ceremonies held in honour of large-scale *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* shared much in common with the bestowal ceremonies held for awardees of the miniature-scale medallion format *nişān*s discussed in the previous chapter. At the same time, such ceremonies participated in international trends for official receptions held in honour of state portraiture in European, Russian, and American geographies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The fabulous portrait-initiation ceremonies of the 1830s were a relatively short-lived phenomenon, but they mark an important shift in the use of large-scale, wall-hanging portraits in the Ottoman context. In this chapter, I argue that the ceremonial content of the portrait-inauguration programmes, which adapted and combined Ottoman and foreign ritual symbolism in an eclectic but deliberate manner, supported the propagandistic effort to portray the sultan as an active, capable, and modern military leader. This military-king persona was typical of ruler portraiture across Eurasian courts in the first half of the nineteenth century, appearing, for example, in images of Czars Alexander I and Nicholas I of Russia, Charles X of France, George IV of England, Francis I of Austria, and Frederick William III of Prussia.

In Chapter 1, I demonstrated the subtle beginnings of this movement towards sultanic visibility under Selim III and Mahmud II and its acceleration through new stylistic and technical trends using paper works (including paintings, drawings, and print works), the models of which continued

5 The choice of Yunus Efendi, who was a famous leader of the Sünbüliye order in the nineteenth century, is telling since Mahmud II actively supported his *tekke* (dervish lodge) and made several visits to it. See "Sünbüliyye," in *Islam Ansiklopedisi* 38 (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 2020), 136–40, https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/sunbuliyye, last accessed June 28, 2023.

6 For a full transliteration, see Appendix 1.



FIGURE 50 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, mid-nineteenth century

to be emulated through the reigns of Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz. In Chapter 2, I explored how the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* (medallion-format imperial portrait) was implemented to heighten the bonds of loyalty and friendship within an exclusive social network of high-ranking military and civil officials primarily under Mahmud II (though Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz did distribute their portraits on a smaller scale). This chapter continues the study of the symbolic power of portraiture through yet another materially distinct form of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* – the large-scale wall-hanging portrait, typically executed in oil on canvas. Considering the function and reception of these objects within the context of official ceremonial programmes held in prescribed institutional settings shows how these images were framed as proxies for the sultan's presence as a charismatic military leader, which in turn had ramifications for the concrete implementation of radical military reforms in the second half of the 1830s.

In 1836 in particular, the same year that the portrait was installed at Selimiye, it was also inaugurated at military barracks at Rami and Taksim, the Bāb-ı ʿĀlī (lit. the "Sublime Porte," but which had come to refer to the Offices of the Grand Vizier in the nineteenth century), and the naval ship *Nuṣretiye*. By the summer of 1838, according to an account by the American missionary Horatio Southgate (1812–94) (upon whom the charm of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* was apparently lost), "a woful[sic] misrepresentation of the royal features was to be seen in most, if not all, the barracks, in several of the public offices and in the cabins of the ships of war."[7] In his disapproval, coloured by his own faith-based bias against portraiture,[8] Southgate goes as far as to say that it "must seem downright idolatry" for the Muslim faithful to regard a portrait so highly.[9] The British travel writer Miss Julia Pardoe (d. 1862), who was among the crowd viewing the official procession as it brought the portrait to the Ṭopçu Ḳışlaḳ-ı Hümāyūnu (Imperial Artillery Barracks) in what is now Taksim's Gezi Park, reported a shared sense of unease among the local Istanbul residents with whom she spoke.[10] These reports bear witness to both the ubiquity of the sultan's image in Istanbul and the strong opinions elicited by its display to thousands or tens of thousands of troops.[11] Emotional reactions, either in favour of or against the public display of the sultan's portrait, in addition to their physical presence in new or recently rebuilt government institutions, symbolically imbued these portraits with the controversies inherent to the reform movement.

This chapter pays particular attention to the formal descriptive factors published in newspaper accounts, which remain the primary source material for the study of these ceremonies, both for determining common elements as well as for examining the honorific language used to describe the sultan's image. Examining textual records is particularly useful for filling in the gaps in art historical scholarship regarding the audience and reception of the campaign. Conversely, social histories rarely bother to connect written descriptions to adjacent visual examples, missing out on the pivotal role of the portraits' material qualities

7 Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 1:73.

8 Southgate was an American Protestant Episcopalian missionary. In his writings and sermons, which are now freely available online, Southgate uses iconophobic language to argue that the Armenian Orthodox church was corrupted by the Catholic "worship of images." For his use of popular examples linking the ritual use of images to idolatry, see Horatio Southgate, *Narrative of a Visit to the Syrian* (*Jacobite*) *Church of Mesopotamia: With Statements and Reflections upon the Present State of Christianity in Turkey and the Character and Prospects of the Eastern Churches* (New York: Dana and Co., 1856), 50–51, 208.

9 Southgate, *Narrative of a Tour*, 1:75.

10 In the author's words, the concern was that Europeans were "turning the head of the Sultan, and he will soon be as they are." Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 3:73.

11 It is difficult to quantify the size of the crowds gathered at these events, though reports indicate that both the amount of (military) participants and (civilian, including foreign diplomatic) observers were large. For example, upwards of 24,000 troops were said to have paid homage to the portrait during the event held at the Imperial Artillery Barracks, *The Standard* no. 2906, September 1, 1836, 2.



FIGURE 51
Athanasios Karantz(ou)las, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, mid-nineteenth century

and their poetic relationship to the published text.[12] Unfortunately, no examples of the large-format wall-hanging genre that can be definitively dated to the fourth decade of the nineteenth century have survived.

According to an account by the *vaḳ'a-nüvīs* (official chronicler) Ahmed Lütfi Efendi, those large-scale *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* that had been on display in barracks and state offices were "covered and hidden" after the death of Mahmud II.[13] This ambiguous phrase could refer to a sort of immediate mourning veil for the image of the deceased or, more generally, to the idea that the paintings were forgotten in storage over the years. Whatever their eventual fate, it is important to consider here that Lütfi was compiling his histories retrospectively. They were submitted to Sultan Abdülhamid II at a time when attitudes towards the image of the Ottoman ruler had shifted drastically from extreme visibility to tight control. While no original portraits associated with the spectacles of the 1830s are thought to survive, three large-scale paintings in Istanbul collections today may give us an idea of how they looked. The first, an unattributed portrait of Mahmud II in the collection of the Resim Müzesi, features the sultan in dress uniform, seated before a view of Istanbul, holding an official document emblazoned with his *tuġra* (imperial monogram) (Fig. 50).[14] The style and setting are similar to the work of Schlesinger discussed in Chapter 1 (Fig. 31), and the sultan's gesture – pointing the way towards the reformed future – mirrors that of one of the Fulgenzi prints (Fig. 30). The second, in the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation Collection at the Pera Museum, is a full-length standing portrait of Mahmud II that repeats the now familiar elements of dress, pose, and background of the above-described examples (Fig. 51). It is signed by one Athanasios Karantz(ou)las and contains an inscription that refers to the sultan as "*cennet-mekān Ġāzī Sulṭān Maḥmūd Ḫān-ı Ṣānī*" (The Warrior Sultan Mahmud Khan II, who now dwells in Paradise), though it is unknown if this inscription was original or added after Mahmud II's death in 1839. The third portrait, painted by İsmail Hakkı (1883–1923) in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, is in the collection of the Naval Museum in Istanbul (Fig. 52). It resembles a scaled-up version of the medallion-format *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*, but more research must be done in order to determine if it had any formal relationship to the model used for the wall-hanging works at the centre of this chapter. In examining related works and later copies alongside newspaper and archival records, we gain a better sense of the audience for whom the images were prepared and whether or not they were successful in garnering support for the sultan's reform programmes. To the point at hand, such examinations can show us the ways in which ceremonial augmentation – such as ceremoniously parading, saluting, and eulogising the portrait – complemented its role as a proxy for the sultan.

3 Embodiment and Image in the Early Nineteenth Century

Using the portrait as a proxy or stand-in for a ruler is a practice with ancient roots.[15] This age-old strategy for legitimising power was revitalized in the form of state portraiture – characteristically full-length, large-scale works featuring their subjects in robes of state or military uniform, surrounded by symbols of rulership – during the Napoleonic era of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth

12 For example, those of Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, and Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*.

13 Lütfi, *Tārīḫ*, 5:52.

14 This portrait has been variously attributed to either a member of the Ottoman-Armenian Manas family or the German painter Franz Xaver Winterhalter (1805–73). See Renda, "Portraits: the last century" and Shaw, *Ottoman Painting*, respectively.

15 Ernst Kantorowicz theorized the use of this strategy for representing power by medieval kings, who legitimised their right to rule through their two bodies: one natural, and the other transcendent. See Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*.



FIGURE 52
İsmail Hakkı, *Portrait of Sultan Mahmud II*, late nineteenth or early twentieth century

centuries. Napoleon's power could not rely on monarchic or dynastic legitimacy,[16] so new forms incorporating the image of the ruler-conqueror – such as the famous image of *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* (Fig. 53) – were contrived by the artists of the Davidian school of Paris. These representational types relied on the conflation between the physical body of the emperor and the body politic, an ideology famously summed up in Louis XIV's absolutist statement, "*L'état c'est moi*."

The idea of the image of a ruler embodying his power operated on some of the same principles and lasted well into the modern period and across many cultures. The photograph of the Japanese emperor, for example, was considered to be the emperor himself.[17] Layla Diba has investigated the

16 The phrase "invention of tradition" was coined as a way of describing how Napoleon supported his power. See Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For portrait paintings of Napoleon, see David O'Brien, *After the Revolution: Antoine-Jean Gros, Painting and Propaganda* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Philippe Bordes, *Jacques-Louis David: Empire to Exile* (New Haven: Yale University Press and Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2005); Lorenz Eitner, *French Paintings of The Nineteenth Century Part 1: Before Impressionism*, (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art, 2000); Antoine Schnapper (ed.), *Jacques-Louis David, 1748–1825* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1989).

17 For more variations on this relationship between photograph and the embodied subject, see *Photography,*



FIGURE 53
Jacques-Louis David, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*, 1801

use of proxy portraiture in the contemporaneous Qajar court, where life-size painted images of Fath ʿAli Shah Qajar (r. 1797–1834) were used within a programme of pageantry including court ceremonies, diplomatic receptions, feasts, military reviews, fireworks displays, and celebrations of the Persian New Year (Fig. 54).[18] The power of the portrait was often acted out in the diplomatic sphere. For example, Mīrzā Abū'l-Ḥasan (d. 1846), Persian ambassador to England, bowed before a portrait of Fath ʿAli Shah when it was hung beside that of King George III (r. 1760–1820) in the ballroom of the City of London Tavern.[19] Fath ʿAli Shah's successor, Muhammad Shah Qajar (r. 1834–1848), followed suit as the third ruler of the dynasty, commissioning portraits of himself across media ranging from precious enamel miniatures to large-scale oil paintings (Fig. 55).[20] Such images of the Qajar shah, like images of the Ottoman sultan, were treated with ceremonial veneration and displayed

Anthropology and History: Expanding the Frame, edited by Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton (London: Routledge, 2010). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315600413.

18 Layla Diba, "Images of Power and the Power of Images: Intention and Response in Early Qajar Painting (1785–1834)," in *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch 1785–1925*, ed. Layla Diba with Maryam Ekhtiar (New York: Brooklyn Museum of Art in association with I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1998), 30–49, 35.

19 According to Diba, the English in attendance apparently followed suit. "Images of Power," 30, footnote 2.

20 Diba, "Images of Power," 225–227.



FIGURE 54 Mihr 'Ali, *Portrait of Fath 'Ali Shah*, 1809–10



FIGURE 55 Muhammad Hasan Afshar Urumich, *Portrait of Muhammad Shah*, 1837–38

in strategically located structures, including new permanent foreign embassies across western Europe, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire.[21]

While Mahmud II, like his contemporaries, adopted successful and appropriate elements from Napoleonic propaganda, his portraiture was in some ways a continuation of the long-established genre of Ottoman sultanic portraiture. Günsel Renda has done the most extensive work on the topic of the large-scale wall-hanging *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*, which she frames as a bridge connecting the established genre of sultan's portraiture in small-scale single-page, album, and illustrated historical works to later large-scale Westernising works sponsored by the imperial household.[22] As I argued in Chapter 1, images of Mahmud II continued to reach back to earlier Ottoman pictorial conventions, including both the image of the

21 One major difference between the respective portraiture campaigns is that Fath 'Ali Shah had his image carved in rock relief in outlying areas of historical significance. This was intended to frame the Qajars as the rightful heirs to a glorious Persian past. Diba, "Images of Power," 32–33.

22 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 442–63. See also Tuncer Baykara, "II. Mahmud ve Resim," 509–514.

aloof, decorous ruler and the military-charismatic portraiture of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. The similarities between the portrait-as-object and the portrait-in-text link the newspaper reports of the nineteenth century to earlier forms of Ottoman ceremonial commemoration, such as a *surnāme-i hümāyūn* (book of festivities).[23] While the luxury manuscript format of a *surnāme-i hümāyūn* typically limited its readership to the upper echelons of the court, the printed *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* reached a relatively wider audience in line with the educational and social trends that were developing around the turn of the century. As demonstrated by Tülay Artan's studies of wedding and circumcision celebrations, ceremonial innovations and revivals at the court in Istanbul were already expanding in a way that engaged the landscape and royal architectural patronage of Istanbul in the early eighteenth century.[24] Therefore, Mahmud II's oil portraits and their inauguration ceremonies in Istanbul (and foreign cities) should be viewed as a continuation, or variation, of these existent trends.

While grand-scale military-style inauguration processions were concentrated in the capital city of Istanbul, the sultan's portrait presided over other types of ceremonies taking place in Ottoman provinces as far as Rumelia and Egypt, and even in permanent foreign embassies abroad.[25] Darin Stephanov has recently called to the fore the trend of displaying the sultan's portrait during annual celebrations, such as birthday and accession days, held in the newly-established Ottoman embassies in London, Paris, Vienna, and Tehran.[26] Studying the "map" of where these pictures were installed highlights patterns in how these particular displays upheld the institutional reforms of the 1830s: the barracks provided the amenities in which the new standing army lived and trained, the schools a place for students (themselves future soldiers and bureaucrats) to learn the new, standardised curriculum, and the permanent foreign embassies, an Ottoman enclave from which to make favourable diplomatic impressions.[27] Reading the portraits with an eye to the function of these places within the wider reform programme shows us that both Ottoman and non-Ottoman, domestic and foreign, as well as military and civilian audiences were targeted in the sultan's propaganda campaign. Therefore, the portrait needed to be easily legible to cosmopolitan audiences in terms of style, form, and size. Considering the portraits in terms of their full ritual significance, it becomes clear that Mahmud II and his propagandists were attempting to reinforce his legitimacy as a modern military ruler while framing the reforms carried out at his behest as permissible under Ottoman aw and cultural mores.

4 Display at Sea: *Maḥmūdiye* and *Nuṣretiye*

One of the first walls on which the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* was ceremoniously hung was not that of the barracks, but rather the cabin onboard

23 This form typically included elements such as skill demonstrations, parades in full regalia, gift presentations, banquets, and illuminations. Two of the most well-known examples are those commissioned by Murad III in 1582 and Ahmed III in 1720 on the occasions of the circumcisions of royal princes.

24 Tülay Artan, "Royal Weddings and the Grand Vezirate: Institutional and Symbolic Change in the Early Eighteenth Century," in *Royal Courts in Dynastic States and Empires: A Global Perspective*, Jeroen eds. Duindam, Tülay Artan, and Metin Kunt (Leiden: Brill, 2011): 339–99. doi: 10.1163/ej.9789004206229.i-444.81.

25 Hakan Karateke, "Einige Bemerkungen zu den osmanischen Insignia Imperialia – insbesondere des 19. Jahrhunderts," in *Scripta Ottomanica et Res Altaicae. Festschrift für Barbara Kellner-Heinkele zu ihrem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Ingeborg Hauenschild, Claus Schönig, and Peter Zieme (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2002), 195–208.

26 Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 24–29.

27 For a study on the relationship between Istanbul's cityscape and the portraiture inauguration ceremonies of the late 1830s, see my forthcoming article, "Mapping the 'Miracle-Showing' Portrait in Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 41 (2025).

the three-decker warship *Maḥmūdiye*. While the barracks-centred portrait inauguration ceremonies such as the one described in the introduction to this chapter are well known in the art historical scholarship, those that took place aboard naval ships are virtually absent within the literature. The descriptions of two such ceremonies in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* show how they were directly connected to military innovation in the form of new technologies and manoeuvres, as well as the continued activation of the Bosphorus as a strategic connecting force within the city.

The installation of sovereign portraiture onboard ships of war was a trend shared among contemporaries and played out against a backdrop of international interest. For example, Auldjo reported that the sultan examined with great interest the portraits of the Russian czar and czarina onboard a Russian ship in 1829.[28] Just a few years earlier, the joint Ottoman-Egyptian naval forces had experienced a significant defeat at the hands of their British, French, and Russian counterparts at the Battle of Navarino (1827) during the Greek War of Independence (1821–32), sparking an interest in the renewal of Ottoman naval strength. By commissioning or approving his own version of such ship-bound imperial likenesses, the sultan must have viewed his contemporaries' habits as an effective and auspicious means of boosting naval morale.

On the evening of 9 Jumada I 1249 (September 24, 1833), the *Maḥmūdiye* was anchored in the waters of the Bosphorus at Beşiktaş as officers and sailors onboard anticipated the arrival of the ship's namesake.[29] As Mahmud II set his imperial foot aboard the ship, banners were unfurled, cannons fired, and his arrival celebrated with "*şevket ve iclāl*" (pomp and all public marks of honour). Later in the evening, illuminations and fireworks lit up the sky as bright as daylight as the sultan – the brightest light of all – returned to the royal palace. On the following Tuesday, the ceremony was continued as dignitaries of the Tersāne-i ʿĀmire (Naval Yard) came to visit the portrait. Sheik Yunus Efendi, who would also play a role in the ceremony at Selimiye, sent the galleon on its maiden voyage by "*duʿāsıyla temvīc-i deryā-yı isticābet*" (stirring the waves of the sea of acceptance with his prayer).[30] The varied elements of this early portrait hanging ceremony, the first to be conducted on a ship of the Ottoman navy, combined representations of ideological, martial, and religious powers in a focused manner during a time when the renewal of the naval forces was of great strategic importance.

The central role of the sultan's bodily presence in this ceremony affirms the connections among the ruler, his image, and the warship of his namesake. For example, the "*şīme-i kerīm-i ʿasker-perver-i mülūkāne*" (sovereign's generous, military-nourishing character) is provided as a reason for his active interest in and observation of the naval drills conducted prior to the ceremony at the Tersāne-i ʿĀmire. Perhaps the most poignant invocation of the sultan's generous character occurs in reference to the idea that the benefits of his bodily presence would be made available to the navy even when he was not physically aboard the ship:

"A large, wonderous (*muʿciz-nümūn*) imperial portrait has been bestowed upon His Excellency the Grand Admiral so that it may be hung in the imperial galleon in order that its unique and special manifestation and affirmation of imperial benevolence is found to be present virtually in every

28 Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople*, 177.

29 *Takvīm-i Vekāyiʿ* no. 68, 21 Jumada I 1249 (October 6, 1833), 1. The *Maḥmūdiye* was built at the Tersāne-i ʿĀmire in 1829. The largest warship at the time, it featured three decks and 128 cannons. It was later used in the Siege of Sevastopol (1854–55) and the Crimean War (1854–56), and its legendary character made it a subject of many paintings. For a history of the ship, see Hacer Bulgurcuoğlu, *Efsane Gemi Mahmudiye Kalyonu* (Türk Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı, 2009).

30 For a comparable "baptism ceremony" (*la cérémonie du baptême*) of the three-decked French vessel *Louis XIV*, see *L'Illustration* no. 576 vol. XXIII (March 11, 1854), 153–54.

condition and in all places alongside the Imperial Navy."[31]

While it served as a reminder of the sultan's good deeds and auspicious nature, the portrait was also a symbol for the martial might of an omnipotent (and perhaps omniscient) leader. Those leadership qualities were then transferable to figures including the *ḳapūdān pāşā*, Fevzi and Fethi Pashas, and the *ḫazine-i hümāyūn ketḫüdāsı* (Secretary of the Treasury), all of whom had prostrated themselves at the sultan's feet during the welcoming ceremony.

Three years after the installation ceremony onboard the *Maḥmūdiye*, another imperial galleon, the *Nuṣretiye* ("Victory [through the help of God]"), received its own imperial portrait, linking the earlier bestowal to the series of festive events carried out in 1836.[32] On 23 Dhu'l-Hijja 1251 (April 10, 1836), boats of the imperial fleet were anchored at Beşiktas and the Tersāne-i ʿĀmire. One Ali Bey Efendi delivered the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* to the *ḳapūdān pāşā*, who had acted as the official recipient in the above case as well. During the second day of the ceremony, officers and commanders of the navy were permitted to enter into the presence of the portrait in order to view and salute it as if it were the sultan himself. Afterwards, the requisite prayers were said, and the galleon was spectacularly festooned with *ṭāḳçe* (decorative arches). The ceremonies onboard the *Nuṣretiye* and the *Maḥmūdiye* both emphasised the inherently generous and munificent characteristics of the sultan himself. Their shared inclusion of spectacular decorations and requisite prayers lent authority to the respective events while drawing parallels between the embodied sultan and his inaugurated image.

5 Display at School: Maçka

The display of the sultan's portrait in military institutions extended also to schools, including the Mekteb-i ʿUlūm-ı Ḥarbiyye-i Şāhāne (Imperial School of Military Sciences) in Maçka, where future officers and generals underwent European-style training under foreign and Ottoman instructors. Western-European (primarily French) educational models had been employed in the Ottoman military context under the reform programmes of Selim III, who established the Mühendisḫāne-i Berrī-i Hümāyūn (Imperial Military Engineering School) in 1773 and the Mühendisḫāne-i Baḥrī-i Hümāyūn (Imperial Naval Engineering School) in 1795. Both were closed for a period during the rebellions against military reform, but were reopened following the annihilation of the janissaries in 1826, after which Mahmud II began instituting his own modernisation programmes of the 1830s.[33]

The Maçka installation occurred in 1835 and, while the ceremony did not receive its own report in the *Takvīm-i Vekāyiʿ*, the newspaper framed the event as an important precedent for the inaugurations held in 1836, always listing it in the introduction to subsequent installations in military barracks. According to Pardoe, the *taṣvīr-i*

31 "*... teveccühāt-ı şāhānesine başḳaca ve maḥṣūṣca ibrāz ve işbāt żımnında donanma-yı hümāyūn-ı şāhānelerinde her ḥāl ve maḥāllde bi'l-ḳuvve bulunmak ve ḳalyon-ı hümāyūn-ı mezkūra taʿliḳ olunmaḳ üzere ḳapūdān-ı müşārunileyh ḥażretlerine bir ḳıṭʿa kebīr taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı muʿciz-nümūn-ı şāhāne iḥsān* [*olmuşdur.*]"

32 The *Nuṣretiye* was built in 1835 by the engineers Foster Rhodes and Mimar Hasan at the Tersāne-i ʿĀmire, according to information provided by the Istanbul Deniz Müzesi. The ship shares its name with Mahmud II's imperial mosque, the name of which took on additional connotations after the bloody abolition of the janissaries in 1826. The mosque was built by the chief royal architect Krikor Balyan (1764–1831), an Ottoman-Armenian with foreign training, who also designed the Selimiye barracks. See Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque*, 267–69.

33 Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the Bourgeoisie, Demise of Empire: Ottoman Westernization and Social Change* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 72.

hümāyūn hung above a raised gallery at the front of the mathematical hall – the same place that the sultan himself would use when appearing in person.[34] The display of the portrait in the school linked it to the display in other official Ottoman contexts, further solidifying the link between the state (in the person of the sultan) and military education under the reformed system. As in the practice of displaying rulers' portraits aboard naval vessels, we may find foreign precedents for their display in military schools. For example, the portrait of Czar Alexander I (r. 1801–25) presided over a festive breakfast held during the groundbreaking ceremony for the Cadet Corps (Military School for Nobles) in Kharkov.[35] The Russian celebration bore other formal similarities to Ottoman pageantry, including a procession and sanctification ritual (though of course the associated religious rites were aligned with Russian Orthodox Christianity rather than Ottoman Orthodox Sunni Islam), salvos, salutes, and wishes for the long life of the ruler. It is therefore within the context of balancing the Ottoman and the imported that the inauguration of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* as a ceremonial form can best be understood.

6 Display at the Dīvānḫāne

The *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* eventually made its way to the symbolic geographic centre of Ottoman government with its display at the Dīvānḫāne (Council Chamber) at the Bāb-ı ʿĀlī in August of 1836.[36] The portrait, variously referred to as "*meḥāsin-nümūn*" (lit. "beauty-showing" or beautiful) and "*mihr-nümūn*" (sun-showing)[37] in the *Takvīm-i Vekāyiʿ* report, was "*ālāy-ı vālā ile*" (ceremoniously) paraded along the centuries-old ceremonial route known as the Divan Yolu.[38] The parade included high-ranking officers and bureaucrats, soldiers, and civil functionaries outfitted in official uniforms and arranged according to rank. When the phaeton bearing it pulled up to the *seng-i rikāb* (mounting block), the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* was taken out and put in the beautiful place that had

34 Miss Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan; and Domestic Manners of the Turks, in 1836,* 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1837), 1:199. https://archive.org/details/cityofsultananndd01pardiala, last accessed July 2, 2024. For the appointment of the official palace painter, see Tuncer Baykara, *Osmanlılarda Medeniyet Kavramı ve Ondokuzuncu Yüzyıla dair Araştırmalar* (Izmir: Akademi Kitabevi, 1992), 55.

35 Darin Stephanov, "A Personality Cult Against One's Will? Traits and Trajectories of Popular Veneration of Emperor Alexander I (r. 1801–1825)," in *Ruler Personality Cults from Empires to Nation-States and Beyond: Symbolic Patterns and Interactional Dynamics*, eds. Kirill Postoutenko and Darin Stephanov (London: Routledge, 2021), 64–78, 65.

36 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 134, 11 Jumada I 1252 (August 24, 1836), 1. I have located an early draft for this article in BOA HAT 647/31724, 29 Dhu'l-Hijjah 1251 (April 16, 1836). The same ceremony is reported in *The Times* no. 16,204, September 9, 1836, 3. See also Eldem, "Pouvoir, modernité et visibilité," 186.

37 *Mihr* can also refer to kindness, friendship, and sun, in the same vein as "*şems-nümūn*" (sun-showing). See Redhouse, 2044.

38 Lütfi describes the parade in his official chronicle as a *taṣvīr ālāyı* (portrait procession) and *şāyān-ı temāşā* (worthy spectacle), *Tārīḫ*, 5:50–52. The Divan Yolu is the old mese of Roman times. For its survival and integration into the Ottoman city in the modern period, see Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986). This is in part a reversal of the route recorded for the wedding procession of Mustafa II's daughter, Emine, and Grand Vizier Çorlulu Ali Pasha, in April 1708. Tülay Artan, "Weddings," 356–57. For other processions on the Divan Yolu, see Maurice Cerasi, "The Urban and Architectural Evolution of the Istanbul Divanyolu: Urban Aesthetics and Ideology in Ottoman Town Building," *Muqarnas* 22, 1 (2005): 189–232, doi: 10.1163/22118993_02201010; Maurice Cerasi, with Emiliano Bugatti and Sabrina D'Agostiono, *The Istanbul Divanyolu: A Case Study in Ottoman Urbanity and Architecture* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag in Kommission, 2004); and Gülru Necipoğlu, "Dynastic Imprints on the Cityscape: The Collective Message of Imperial Funerary Mosque Complexes in Istanbul," in *Cimetières et traditions funéraires dans le monde islamique = İslâm Dünyasında Mezarlıklar ve Defin Gelenekleri*, ed. Jean Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Aksel Tibet, vol. 1 (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1996), 23–36.

been prepared for its arrival. Hasırizade Süleyman Sıdkı Efendi, a sheik from the Sa'diye order, led prayers and was honoured with the bestowal of a *ferāce* (robe), and beautiful music was played. Afterwards, honoured guests reposed for a while, enjoying coffee and sherbet in the royal apartment.

Within a month of its installation, reports reached London that a high-ranking member of the *ulema*, identified as one Abdourahma (Abdurrahman) Efendi, publicly denounced the portrait's display.[39] According to the reports, Abdourahma Efendi entered the Council Chamber and, standing opposite of the portrait, "apostrophised it with severity," telling it to its face – so to speak – that its existence was sacrilegious and abominable.[40] The protestor's speech was cut short when he was removed from the chamber by the Minister of Domestic Affairs (Pertev Efendi), but the gesture was said to have had an impact on those present at the *Dīvān-ı Hümāyūn*. This foreign, anecdotal account is likely based on gossip and reveals more about Western expectations rather than Ottoman realities.[41] Nevertheless, it does suggest that there remained at least some resistance to and discomfort surrounding the use of the image as a proxy. That conservative opposition should find the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* within its targets speaks to the power that the image held as a symbol of the sultan's autocratic control in imposing his own reform programmes. As far as we know, Mahmud II's portrait remained in its place in the Council Chamber until his death, after which it was replaced with that of his son and successor, Abdülaziz.[42]

7 Display Abroad

In addition to its display in Istanbul, the large-scale *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* was hung in the recently reopened Ottoman foreign embassies in Paris, London, Vienna, and Berlin. Selim III had sent the first permanent Ottoman ambassadors to foreign capitals at the end of the eighteenth century, but those diplomatic programmes were put on hold when he was deposed in 1807.[43] Mahmud II reopened channels of diplomacy in concert with his wider efforts to reorganize and strengthen the civil bureaucracy, culminating in the establishment of the *ḫāriciye neẓāreti* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) in 1836.[44]

Taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn installed by Ottoman legations were viewed by different audiences and presided over new kinds of spectacles. Rather than Istanbul's Ottoman military elite, these portraits were met with the gazes of foreign men and women, many of whom were from Western-European military and diplomatic circles. Rather than military parades and drills conducted for the inauguration of the sultan's portrait, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* found itself at the centre of events such as the *cülūs* (anniversary of the sultan's accession) or *velādet* (birthday), a phenomenon that took off in the late 1830s.[45]

39 *The Morning Chronicle* no. 20,886, October 10, 1836, 2 https://newspaperarchive.com/london-chronicle-oct-10-1836-p-2/.

40 For more related reports from the *Times of London*, see Eldem, "Pouvoir," 185–86. While some religious scholars condemned the use of portraiture among other imported social and cultural practices, many came to support the reform programmes over time. High-ranking *ulema* who supported the sultan wrote treatises citing the traditional virtue literature (the *Fadhail*) in order to glorify and legitimate Mahmud II's dual role as sultan-caliph. See Erşahin, "Westernization," 41.

41 It was also reported that protests related to the portrait's display (by members of the public, especially those related to the old janissary order) were squashed by imperial patrols, who relocated offenders to Nicomedia. *The Times* no. 16,180, August 12, 1836.

42 Mehmed Memduh, *Mir'āt-ı Şu'ūnāt* (*The Mirror of Events*) (Izmir, 1910), 146–47. Quoted in Hakan Karateke, "From Divine Ruler to Modern Monarch: The Ideal of the Ottoman Sultan in the Nineteenth Century," (Oakville, CT: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht LLC, 2011), 295. I have yet to find evidence that Abdülmecid hung his portrait in the Council Chamber.

43 Virginia Aksan, *Ottoman Wars, 1700–1870: An Empire Besieged* (London: Routledge, 2007), 180–213.

44 Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform*, 136.

45 For the draft of the announcement prepared for the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyi'* regarding annual celebrations, see BOA HAT 492/24119, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1250 (April 28, 1835). See

For example, an 1838 report from Vienna describes the "*meḥāsin-nümūn*" (beautiful) imperial portrait having been "*tezyīnāt-ı lāyıḳası icrā* [*olunmuş*]" (decorated fittingly) on the occasion of the royal birthday for a European-style soiree to take place in its imperial *sāye* (lit. "shadow" or presence).[46] The same year, a report from Berlin described the portrait being set in a place of honour "*en muʿteber oṭasına*" (in the most presentable room) during the birthday evening celebrations.[47] Unlike the inauguration ceremonies, these events did not always focus on the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*. However, they did often use some of the same elements of visual splendour – including illuminations, fireworks, and entertaining performances – that appeared in contemporaneous celebrations in Istanbul.[48]

On December 23, 1836, while serving as the Ottoman ambassador in Vienna, Fethi Pasha held a reception in honour of the sultan in a room of the Esterhazy Palace.[49] According to Mrs. Frances Trollope, an English writer who was in attendance, one of the most significant elements of this occasion was its mixed audience, which included Viennese women.[50] The decorations and formal dress of the attendees produced a "very brilliant effect," augmented by gas lighting, including specially made colourful lamps emblazoned with the sultan's name, Bengal lights,[51] and refreshments in the form of ices and lemonade. Fethi Pasha's reception was so well attended that it occasioned a ball, presided over by Princess Metternich (1811–61), held on January 23, 1837. Again, the palace was transformed with decorations and light, including a "rising grove of flowering plants" along the staircase and a suite, "as brilliantly lighted as it was possible for rooms to be where the walls are closely covered with pictures." Mrs. Trollope's detailed description of the conditions of the portrait's display is worth quoting at length:

"The next object that attracted notice was a full-length portrait of the Sultan Mahmoud; as the taking [of] such a portrait at all, has been considered till very lately to be a sort of trifling with such august features too familiar to be permitted. The picture is placed on an estrade, under a splendid canopy adorned with hangings of crimson velvet and gold, and is altogether extremely well calculated to draw a crowd round it on such an occasion. In this sacred chamber, of course, no other picture was permitted to be visible, the walls being hung with light blue damask; neither was any chair

also Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 24. Stephanov notes that the first reports of ceremonies held on anniversary dates were from the volatile Danubian principalities of *Eflāḳ* (Wallachia) and *Boġdān* (Moldavia).

46 BOA HAT 1200/47094, 15 Ramadan 1254 (December 2, 1838). See also Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 28.

47 BOA HAT 831/37516, 17 Ramadan 1254 (December 4, 1838). The Berlin event also involved the display of the sultan's *tuġra*. For a clipping from an English newspaper reporting on the *cülūs-ı hümāyūn* celebration organised by the Ottoman ambassador Sarim Efendi, including a gaslight illumination in the shape of the sultan's *tuġra*, see BOA HAT 1187/46763, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1254 (March 15, 1839). See also Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 29.

48 For a ball hosted at the French Embassy in Istanbul, see *L'Illustration*, no. 575 vol. XXIII (March 4, 1854), 132–33. For a ball given by the Austrian ambassador at Istanbul, see *L'Illustration*, no. 576 vol. XXIII (March 11, 1854), 115–16.

49 Fethi Pasha had also played a role in the request and delivery of two miniature medallion-format portraits of Mahmud II to the Prince and Princess Metternich, the latter of whom was present in person at both embassy events. See chapter 2. For his appointment as the Ottoman Ambassador to Vienna, see Miroslav Šedivý, "The Diplomatic Background of Austria's and Prussia's Military Assistance to the Ottoman Empire in the 1830s," *West Bohemian Historical Review* vol. 2, no. 1 (2012): 149–77.

50 Trollope calls Fethi Pasha by his title, "Ferik" (*ferīḳ*). Frances "Fanny" Trollope, *Vienna and the Austrians with Some Account of a Journey through Swabia, Bavaria, the Tyrol, and the Salzbourg*, 2 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1838), vol. 2, letter XLIII, 24th December 1836, 111–16. https://books.google.com/books?id=9bYAAAAAcAAJ&pg, last accessed July 10, 2023.

51 Probably "sparklers" in this case, though the phrase "Bengal lights" was used to refer to a number of pyrotechnic products in the nineteenth century, including a specific sort of blue firework.

suffered to tempt to the irreverend [sic] sin of sitting before it, the only seat in the presence being the one of velvet and gold, which throne-like, *selon les règles* of all Christian embassies, stood extending its cushioned arms towards the portrait, significantly turning its back to the rest of the world.

If this portrait be a faithful resemblance of the illustrious original, the Sultan is quite a young man, and not without the charm of large dark Asiatic-looking eyes; nevertheless, his physiognomy is not so pleasing as that of the amiable Pacha who so agreeably represents him in Vienna."[52]

Like Pardoe, Trollope entertains her British audience with flights of Orientalising fancy, high-society gossip, and commentary concerning the handsomeness of men. Yet her detailed observations corroborate the description of the portrait and the conditions of its display during domestic ceremonies: the portrait is *tāmmü'ş-şekil* (full length), placed on a *kürsī* (estrade) in a "*cāy-ı muʿallā*" (place of honour) and surmounted with a curtain of *aġır üstüfe* (gold-embroidered velvet).[53] "*Müşāhede-i taṣvīr-i hümāyūn ile taḥṣīl-i şevḳ-i bī-bahā* [*bulunmuşdur*]" (Viewers were incomparably charmed by beholding the imperial portrait)[54] and expected to show it the same reverence that was assumed in front of the portraits of rulers displayed at other Viennese embassies.

Comparing these celebrations and their flashy decorations is useful for showing the popularity of shared visual motifs as well as the ways in which such ceremonies mixed Ottoman and foreign designs and technologies (such as gas lights, refined pyrotechnics, and brilliant-cut diamonds) to obtain the desired effect. Such events used both new technologies and traditional references already well embedded within Ottoman imperial ideology, politics, and an emerging international ruler paradigm in the post-Napoleonic era. The institution of foreign displays of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* within a ceremonial context expanded the audience with which the sultan's portrait interacted from the military and urban public of Istanbul to the diplomatic circles of foreign cities, giving the sultan's authority a truly international reach.

8 Display in the Second Part of the Century

When Abdülmecid came to the throne in 1839, he followed in the footsteps of his father in many ways. He too embraced the form of large-scale oil-on-canvas portraiture as a way of shaping his image, though the elaborate inauguration ceremonies with their proxy connotations were largely phased out with his predecessor.[55] Imperial ceremonies and processions still played

52 Trollope, *Vienna and the Austrians*, letter LIV, 23rd January 1837, 228–30.

53 Compare, for example, the descriptions of the places of honour at Rami and Selimiye barracks, respectively, "*taṣvīr-i hümāyūnu fayṭondan aḫẕ ve kürsī heyʾetinde muḳaddemā maḥṣūṣen tehyīʾe ve iḥżār olunmuş aġır ve muṭallā üstüfe pūşīde ile örtülmüş olan cāy-ı muʿallā üzerine vażʿ* [*olunmuşdur*]" (The imperial portrait was taken from the phaeton and placed on the sublime place whose estrade was previously covered with gold-embroidered velvet prepared and presented specifically for this purpose.), "*taṣvīr-i ʿālī-yi mezkūr aḫẕ ve derūn-i ḳışlaḳda aġır üstüfe ve şāl ile tezyīn ve tehyīʾe olunan cāy-ı muʿallāya vażʿ* [*olunmuşdur*]" (The aforementioned exalted portrait was taken and placed inside the barracks in the sublime place [which had been] prepared and decorated with gold-embroidered velvet and shawls.). *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 132, 9 Rabiʿ II 1252 (July 24, 1836), 3. *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 133, 25 Rabiʿ II 1252 (August 9, 1836), 3.

54 The Ottoman is more accurately translated here as "obtained an invaluable longing desire by beholding the imperial portrait." The stronger language is appropriate as it refers to Ottoman soldiers. *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 132, 9 Rabiʿ II 1252 (July 24, 1836), 3–4.

55 Although less frequent, examples of ceremonial portrait display appear later in the century. For example, during an 1888 accession day celebration in Izmir (Smyrna), portraits of Abdülhamid II were hung and decorated with flowers and gas jets. *Levant Herald*,



FIGURE 56 David Wilkie, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid*, 1840



FIGURE 57
Kostantin Kapıdağlı, *Portrait of Sultan Selim III*, 1803

a major role in promoting the sultan's visibility, however, and many of the innovations adopted during Mahmud II's reign – especially the open engagement with Western-European forms and audiences – remained in place. During the procession held for Abdülmecid's sword-girding ceremony, for example, viewing tents were set up for ambassadors of friendly powers and a special messenger was designated to greet them on behalf of their respective sovereigns.[56]

In his portraiture commissions, Abdülmecid retained some established forms while leaning into new trends popularised at the schools of London and Paris. The famous image of the young sultan done in oil on canvas by David Wilkie in 1840, for example, pictures the sultan in a relatively casual pose, seated on a European-style sofa with his sword across his lap, looking off to the side (Fig. 56). He wears an updated version of the military uniform with a heavy navy cape lined in light silk. While Mahmud II's portraits were often formal and stiff, Wilkie's portrait of Abdülmecid does recall a precedent produced at the Ottoman court nearly 40 years earlier – an oil portrait of Selim III painted by Kapıdağlı in 1803 (Fig. 57). Both images show their respective sitters

September 4, 1888, cited by Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 150.

56 The actual sword-girding ceremony was held inside the shrine. *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 182, 16 Jumada 1 1255 (July 28, 1839), 1. See also Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility*, 40.



FIGURE 58
Rupen Manas (attributed), *Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid*, *c.*1850



FIGURE 59 Abdullah Frères, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz*, *c.*1860



FIGURE 60 Stanisław Chlebowski, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz*, 1867

in asymmetrical poses, surrounded by furniture and other accoutrement of mixed Ottoman and Western-European tastes, giving the paintings a sense of having been done "from life."

Another large-scale oil-on-canvas portrait of the sultan in the Resim Müzesi collection, attributed to Rupen Manas, makes use of similar iconography. In this work, Abdülmecid stands, pointing to a map of the Ottoman territories with his right hand, his left on his sword (Fig. 58). The pose and setting – a porch with a white marble balustrade overlooking the Bosphorus – is reminiscent of the portrait of his father by Schlesinger (Fig. 31). The scale and style of the painting is similar to the unattributed portrait of Mahmud II in the Resim Müzesi, and it is possible that they were produced as a pendant set.[57] While no solid evidence of their coproduction has been identified, these two works clearly speak to similar ways of picturing the modern sultan. For example, the document held by Mahmud II represents the *Gülḫāne Ḫaṭṭ-ı Şerīfi* (Gülhane Imperial Edict), the formal proclamation of the Tanzimat passed on November 3, 1839 – just four months into the reign of Abdülmecid – which ushered in a new wave of reforms.[58]

From the mid-century onwards, official portraits assumed a new kind of consistency across painted, printed, and photographic forms (a topic that will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5). In the 1860s and 70s, Sultan Abdülaziz – a painter himself – commissioned large-scale oil-on-canvas portraits that were based on photographic images

57 This has been proposed by Shaw, *Ottoman Painting*, 27–30.

58 The reforms included the rights of life, honour, and property, the repeal of tax farming, new recruitment for the army, and equality for all subjects regardless of religion. See İnalcık, *Tanzimat*.

such as those taken by Abdullah Frères (Fig. 59). For example, the facial expression, uniform, and three-quarter view of Abdülaziz in a well-known photograph taken by Abdullah Frères in the 1860s appears in standing variations in an 1867 painting by Chlebowski (Fig. 60) and an 1873 painting by Guillemet.[59] While such compositions incorporated the use of new image-making technologies, they leaned on the use of scale and majesty already established at this time by the portraits of Abdülaziz's half-brother and father.

9 Conclusion

This chapter focused deeply on the propagandistic power of the portrait-inauguration ceremonies of Mahmud II published in the *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* and elsewhere, discussing domestic and foreign instances of such events. It acknowledged that these ceremonies' audiences and participants varied among different branches of the Ottoman military (Selimiye, Rami, and Taksim barracks, *Maḥmūdiye* and *Nuṣretiye* ships), bureaucratic (Bāb-ı ʿĀlī), and education systems (Maçka). It demonstrated the ways in which *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* were involved in intersecting spheres of power, some of which overlapped and complicated each other. Understanding how people wrote about and interacted with the sultan's portrait – treating it with the same deference that they would have shown the sultan himself – shows us how closely ideas of centralised control were bound up in the image of the sultan's body as a symbol of state. Mahmud II's final decade stands out as an idiosyncratic time in the history of Ottoman ceremonies, and, while large-scale wall-hanging canvases remained a popular expression of imperial power at the Ottoman court, the sultan's portrait was never again surrounded by the kind of pomp and circumstance afforded to it by Mahmud II.

59 RMK 121/943.

CHAPTER 4

The *Nişān* in Ottoman-Balkan Princely Portraits

A portrait of the Serbian national hero and diplomatic forefather, Miloš Obrenović (1783–1860), hangs in the House of the National Assembly in Belgrade (Fig. 61).[1] The knee-length, oil-on-canvas portrait shows Miloš as reigning *knez/başknezi* (prince) of the Serbs (r. 1815–39; 1858–60), standing in full-dress uniform, turned slightly to his left, and looking directly out at the viewer. His red *dolman/dolama*[2] (jacket) glitters with military decorations and awards, the silver stars and medallions of orders awarded to him by the neighbouring Russian, Austrian, and Ottoman empires.[3] Central among these, suspended from the sitter's collar, is the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, or imperial portrait of the reigning Ottoman sultan – in this case, either Mahmud II or Abdülmecid. The associative function of this portrait-within-a-portrait is at first surprising given the role of Prince Miloš as the rebel leader of the budding Serbian nationalist movement. After all, it was against the authority of Mahmud II that Prince Miloš personally led the second phase of the Serbian Revolution in 1815–17.[4] What, then, is the nature of this associative function? How do we understand one of the most famous images of this revolutionary leader – one that continues to represent his nationalist legacy today[5] – wherein he is wearing the image of his former Ottoman suzerain?

To answer these questions, the seemingly contradictory nature of this painting must be examined within the wider context of contemporary sultans' portraiture. In Chapter 2, I argued that the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, as a portrait-object, functioned within ceremonial and intimate viewing

1 This particular image of Miloš was popularised in the middle of the century through lithographs produced by Anastas Jovanović (1817–99), who gained fame as Serbia's first photographer. A copy from 1853 exists in the collection of the Belgrade City Museum as MGB, AJ_458. The House of the National Assembly is also known as the Old Palace (*Stari dvor*), and many works from former dynastic collections are displayed here.

2 Many examples of *dolman*s have been preserved and kept in the collection of the Historical Museum of Serbia. See Mirjana M. Menković (ed.), *In Between: Culture of Dress between the East and the West: ICOM's Costume Committee Proceedings of the 64th Annual Conference September 25–30, 2011* (Belgrade: Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, 2012), especially Katarina Mirtović, "Luxury Dress: Costume and the Politics of Representation in 19th-Century Serbia," 38–48.

3 These decorations include (left to right, top to bottom): the star of the Russian Order of St. Anne, the blue sash and star of the Russian Order of the White Eagle, the Ottoman Order of Glory (*nişān-ı iftiḫār*), the star of the Greek Order of the Redeemer, and the star of the Austrian Order of the Iron Crown. On Miloš' Austrian order, see BOA HAT 1112/44756, 29 Dhu'l-Qa'da 1251 (March 17, 1836).

4 The label "Serbian Revolution" was coined by the nineteenth-century historian Leopold von Ranke, who argued that it was based on the model of the French Revolution in *Die Serbische Revolution: Aus Serbischen Papieren Und Mittheilungen* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1829). An English translation by Louisa Kerr was published as *A History of Servia and the Servian Revolution* (London: John Murray, 1847). For a brief overview of the Serbian revolutions of 1804–30, see Stevan K. Pavlowitch, "The Awakening of Nationalities, 1804–1830," in *A History of the Balkans, 1804–1945* (London: Longman Publishing Group, 1999); Sima M. Ćirković, *The Serbs* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), 176–96; and Mehmet Börekci, *Osmanlı Imparatorluğu'nda Sırp Meselesi* (Istanbul: Kutup Yıldızı Yayınları, 2001).

5 The same image was used much later in the production of postage stamps and paper money in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. According to Slobodan Naumović, it played a role in the "retraditionalization" of Serbian culture during and after the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia. See Slobodan Naumović, *Upotreba tradicije u političkom i javnom životu Srbije na kraju dvadesetog i početkom dvadeset prvog veka* (Belgrade: Institut za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju, 2009). For postmodern adaptations of the princely image in contemporary art, see Magdalena Bogusławska, "From Icon to Punk Portrait: The Iconicity of the Ruler Image in the Context of the Transformation of the Idea of the Serbian State," *Slavia Meridionalis* 19 (2019). doi: 10.11649/sm.1893.

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FIGURE 61 Moritz Daffinger, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, c.1848



FIGURE 62
Ion Negulici (attributed), *Portrait of Prince Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica*, *c.*1834–42

contexts to allow the beholder to experience the presence of the sultan through the act of gazing. In this chapter, I will show how the sultan's portrait appeared as a referential feature – that is, its inclusion referred to the physical existence of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* in the possession of the respective sitter – in images produced for *de facto* independent and semi-independent political leaders of the Danubian principalities in southeast Europe.[6] These images include portraits of Miloš of Serbia as well as those of the two *hospodars* (princes) of the semi-autonomous Romanian principalities, Alexandru Dimitri Ghika in Wallachia (1849–53; 1854–56) (Fig. 62) and Mihail Sturdza in Moldavia (1834–49) (Figs. 63 and 64). The circumstances of their respective appointments differed significantly, as did their personal networks and political prerogatives. However, all three had their portraits made wearing the miniature medallion-format portrait of the sultan. Given the complex and dynamic political relationships among stakeholders in the region, why does this phenomenon

6 I use "Romanian principalities" and "Danubian principalities" here interchangeably to refer to the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, but the latter phrase has been used to include Serbia as well. Political circumstances often link the three as "buffer states" in imperial power manipulations – for example, the unilateral protectorate that the Russian Empire established over all three in 1826. Ottoman sovereignty over Moldavia and Wallachia was first established at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and these *ḫarāç-güẕār* (tributary states) remained so until the independence movements of the nineteenth century.



FIGURE 63 Josef August Schöefft, *Portrait of Prince Mihail Sturdza*, 1836



FIGURE 64 Josef August Schöefft, *Portrait of Prince Mihail Sturdza*, 1837

show up here and at this time? Are these portraits-within-portraits simply documenting military fashion or are they tools for fashioning a nuanced political identity?

The symbolic possibilities of these works struck a delicate balance among sentiments of loyalty, alliance, modernity, and independence within an extremely dynamic political climate. At the same time, these portraits possessed the latent power to pit imperial endorsements (symbolized by orders and medallions) against each other to further the political agendas and personal career aspirations of their respective subjects. In this chapter, I argue that the princely portraits' incorporation of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* – as an inset mimetic image – represented a uniquely direct, yet multifaceted, appropriation of a symbol originally produced in Istanbul at the behest of the sultan.[7] As I will demonstrate, this tactic of visual representation held the potential to be used by local rulers to present themselves not only in relation to their imperial counterparts, but also as independent

7 The theoretic foundation for semiotics comes of course from the lectures of Ferdinand de Saussure in the field of linguistics. This framework was adapted for use in studies of material culture and art history, where the "sign" is typically understood to be the visual representation of a referent, which encompasses the "signified," or the representation of a concept. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* Wade Baskin (trans.) (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959). See also Christopher Tilly, Webb Keane, Susanne Kuechler, Patricia Spyer, and Michael Rowlands, *Handbook of Material Culture* (London: Sage, 2006).

political agents keyed into contemporary cultural and intellectual currents.

1 The Embedded Miniature

Portraits of Ottoman-Balkan princes wearing the *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, often among other military decorations and orders as part of a full-dress military uniform, have not until now been fully examined in relation to the visibility campaigns centred in Istanbul.[8] This chapter addresses this gap by considering the circumstances under which sub-imperial and independent Balkan agents engaged with and exploited the sultan's image to bolster their own careers. I make this claim with the caveat that the three main cases examined in this chapter do not represent a homogeneous Balkan princely identity, but rather offer unique, yet related, situations in which the picture-in-picture phenomenon was produced and viewed. In other words, this chapter represents an initial attempt to map out broad patterns across varied local histories, offering a method by which Balkan princely portraiture can be more fully integrated into the broader histories of nineteenth-century portraiture.

Here I frame the sultan's miniature portrait within the context of identity-formation, showing that the "embedded" object acts as a symbol that carries value for the person represented in the large-scale image.[9] Such pictures were of course related to wider trends in the Western-European and American contexts which, by the eighteenth century, saw the miniature's inherent ability to signal personal bonds of friendship, family, love, and loyalty routinely exploited in larger-format images of their wearers.[10] In official portraits incorporating the image of a ruler, these relationships were conflated with subject loyalty. An example from the Russian imperial context by the Prussian artist Franz Krüger (1797–1857) shows Pavel Kiselev (later General) wearing the portrait of Czar Nicholas I (r. 1825–55) among his other orders (Fig. 65).[11] Kiselev, who was appointed by the czar to serve as the plenipotentiary president of the Romanian principalities following the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828–29, played a primary role in the establishment of the proto-constitutional *Regulamentul Organic* (Organic Regulation) of 1831–32.[12] In this role, the general's image and style of self-presentation would have become well-known among elite Balkan agents such as the princely

8 Any project aimed at drawing a cohesive, comparative narrative around these varied portraits is fraught with politicized ambiguities. The challenges surrounding the production and reception of the UNESCO and ICOM travelling exhibition *Imagining the Balkans: Identities and Memory in the Long 19th Century*, which opened at the National Museum of Slovenia, Ljubljana, on April 8th, 2013, is a case study in point. See Philippos Mazarakis-Ainian, "Imagining the Balkans: Identities and Memory in the Long 19th Century: Reviewing National Ideas through a Regional Exhibition Project," *Museum International* 67, no. 1–4 (2015): 64–82. https://doi.org/10.1111/muse.12086.

9 Grootenboer, *Treasuring the Gaze*; Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants."

10 For the interaction between scale and culture, see Stewart, *On Longing*.

11 Sorin Iftimi's work on the Sturdza family collection has uncovered links to such works, including a copy of Krüger's portrait of the czar produced by Schöefft after a lithograph by Friedrich Jentzen and Carl Wildt. A portrait of Kiselev said to have been personally gifted to Mihail in April of 1834 survives as a plate in Alexandru A.C. Sturdza, *Règne de Michel Sturdza Prince Régnant de Moldavie 1834–1849* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1907), plate 9, between pages 22 and 23. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/6c/Alexandru_A._C._Sturdza_-_R%C3%A8gne_de_Michel_Sturdza%2C_Prince_r%C3%A9gnant_de_Moldavie_-_1834-1849.pdf, last accessed July 10, 2023.

12 Constantin Iordachi terms the Organic Regulation "modernization *à la russe*" in *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities: The Making of Romanian Citizenship, ca. 1750–1918* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019), 90. For an in-depth historical analysis of the general Russian policy in Moldavia and Wallachia during the reform period, see Victor Taki, *Russia on the Danube: Empire, Elites, and Reform in Moldavia and Wallachia, 1812–1834* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2021). muse.jhu.edu/book/94014, last accessed July 10, 2023. For Kiselev, see Demetrius Dvoichenko-Markov, "General Count Pavel D. Kisselev and the Organic Regulation in the Danubian Principalities," *Balkan Studies* 31, no. 2 (1990): 287–92. For his receipt of the *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II, see Chapter 2.



FIGURE 65
Franz Krüger, *Portrait of Pavel Kiselev*, 1851

figures mentioned above. This suggests that the act of wearing a ruler's portrait – which had been popular since the reign of Peter I (r. 1682–1725) – retained its value in the central Russian military-political context at the same time that the style of wearing the portrait was becoming popular in both central and provincial courts of the Ottoman Empire. In Krüger's portrait of Kiselev, the symbolically charged portrait-object of the czar is embedded into the painted surface in a way that renders it an intrinsic part of the picture plane while simultaneously calling attention to the ability of the original portrait-object to signify the wearer's status and personal loyalty to the ruler.[13] From this perspective, the portrait of Prince Miloš described above, as well as formally similar portraits of other Balkan leaders, fits squarely into widespread nineteenth-century trends. Where they differ is in their dynamic potential to appropriate embedded imagery for the purposes of legitimising revolutionary, imperial, and nationalist projects in the mid- to late nineteenth century.

Both Alexandru and Mihail had been close associates of Kiselev and owed their respective positions to joint Ottoman-Russian appointments. Likewise, both princes shared the challenges of maintaining a position of power in a courtly society where innovation and tradition were constantly

13 For how the authority of a ruler is imbued symbolically onto the wearer/beholder of an image, see Marianne Koos, "Wandering Things: Agency and Embodiment in Late Sixteenth-Century English Miniature Portraits," *Art History*, vol. 37, no. 5 (November 2014): 836–59. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8365.12102.

being renegotiated. While Ottoman suzerainty still officially reigned in the Danubian principalities, ideals of independence and representative government maintained a palpable presence, especially in areas where Kiselev's infiltration remained in place.[14] To shape their own identities, the princes had to navigate the overlapping authorities centred in Istanbul and St. Petersburg, represented by proxies such as Kiselev (who wore a physical, mimetic, and symbolic representation of the czar), not to mention the myriad factional rivalries at their own courts, including the boyars of the assembly. It was through projections of those public identities, in part through the visual symbolisms of fashion and its fixed representation in portraiture, that they asserted their own political power and furthered their personal careers.

What is distinctly Ottoman about this portrait group, however, is that the multi-faceted identities of the sitters are visually represented with respect to their relationship with the sultan. Moreover, these examples differ from a similar group of oil-on-canvas portraits of high-ranking bureaucrats in Istanbul, whose painted portraits also featured prominently displayed *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* (see Chapter 2). In both cases, the *representation* of the decoration (as opposed to the physical portrait-object) maintained its ability to signal the wearer's status and personal loyalty to the sultan. However, when the decoration was represented as part of a portrait displayed in Belgrade, Bucharest, or Iaşi, it had the added feature of recalling the object's path of transmission from Istanbul to the provincial capital, the primary path by which the provincial prince's position was legitimated and one path by which the ideas of modernity were diffused.[15] It was in this way that such portraits functioned locally by legitimising the rule of provincial Ottoman-Balkan princes while helping to shape new ideas about the layered identities of the princes as modern leaders.

2 Sartorial Symbolism and Legitimacy

On May 19, 1834, the hospodar-elects of the Romanian principalities, Alexandru and Mihail, arrived at their dual investiture ceremony in Istanbul. While the investiture marked the beginning of independent internal administration for the Romanian principalities, they remained under the joint Ottoman sovereignty and Russian guarantorship set up under Kiselev's Organic Regulation.[16]

14 This was most obvious in the so-called "additional article" of the Organic Regulation, which made it impossible for the assembly or prince to exercise independence because it required that any legislation be approved by Russia. See I.C. Filitti, *Domniile române sub Regulamentul Organic, 1834–1848* (Bucharest: Academia Republicii Socialiste România, 1915), 38–58. Cited by Keith Hitchins, *The Romanians*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press and Oxford University Press, 1996),168. https://books.google.com/books?id=LUR3qXStHvAC, last accessed July 1, 2023.

15 One method of applying plural modernities to the history of Ottoman painting is presented by Shaw in *Ottoman Painting*. For the varied intersections and departures between innovation, Westernisation, and modernisation in architecture and spatial planning, see Shirine Hamadeh, "Ottoman Expressions of Early Modernity and the 'Inevitable' Question of Modernization," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63, no. 1 (March 2004): 32–51. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4127991, last accessed July 1, 2023.

16 When the Ottoman Empire absorbed the Danubian principalities as vassals in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, local princes had remained in power and many aspects of self-rule remained intact. However, as the Ottoman Porte attempted to centralise its power over the region in the eighteenth century, the sultan replaced them with Phanariot governors in Moldavia (1711) and Wallachia (1716). Following the revolutionary activity associated with the Greek Independence Movement, catalysed in large part by the Wallachian uprising of 1821, the Phanariot regime came to an end and local princes were again reinstated under the Organic Regulation. The 1834 investitures marked the outcome of a long string of negotiations over the role of Russian interference with local politics. See Stefania Costache, "At the End of Empire: Imperial Governance, Inter-Imperial Rivalry and 'Autonomy' in Wallachia



FIGURE 66
After Constantin Lecca, *Portrait of Prince Mihail Sturdza*, 1907

Visual and ceremonial elements of the Istanbul investiture underlined these power relationships, retaining a stripped-down version of the symbols of submission and loyalty to the Ottoman Empire that had been developed over centuries of investment procedures.[17]

and Moldavia (1780s–1850s)" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2013), especially 147–55. See also Costache, "Westernization as Tool of Inter-imperial Rivalry: Local Government in Wallachia between Ottoman Control and Russian Protection (1829–1848)" in *New Europe College Yearbook 2011–2012*, ed. Irina Vainovski-Mihai (Bucharest: New Europe College, 2014), 55–70.

17 Prior to this, Phanariot investiture ceremonies were close in content to the receptions of foreign dignitaries, according to the contemporary foreign source Robert Walsh, *A Residence at Constantinople during a Period including the Commencement, Progress, and Termination of the Greek and Turkish Revolutions*, 2 vols. (London, 1838), 1:345. See also Christine M. Philliou, "Worlds, Old and New: Phanariot Networks and the

One example of an event that symbolized the subordinate position of the princely candidates was a ceremony in which they both prostrated themselves before the sultan and were offered "a richly embroidered and jewelled *gevānī* (robe) as a sign of the investiture of the respective princes."[18] As mentioned earlier in this book, the *ḫıl'at* (robe of honour) was a symbolically dense sartorial sign within the wider context of Ottoman ceremonies, traditions, and official audiences since the fifteenth century. Amanda Phillips has shown how the gift of such a garment represented the sultan's munificence and protective role while symbolically assimilating its wearer into the Ottoman order, whether that wearer was a high-ranking Ottoman official, a foreign diplomat, or a provincial notable such as Mihail or Alexandru.[19] The assimilating power of this symbolically charged clothing helped to bolster the legitimacy with which local rulers wielded power and therefore played a significant role in the representations of Balkan princes produced for local courts, copied as personal favours, and distributed as tokens of diplomacy.

Images of elite Balkan patrons wearing the *ḫıl'at* or versions of established Ottoman official dress continued to circulate even as the ubiquitous trend of modern military portraiture gained traction in the region. For example, an image of Mihail wearing a *ḫıl'at* along with awards or orders circulated in a popular lithograph of the 1830s (Fig. 66).[20] The image shows Mihail standing in three-quarter view, gesturing to and holding documents that reference the Organic Regulation. The documents identify him as an important functionary under Kiselev and the czar's provisional administration, but his robe signals legitimacy bestowed on behalf of the Ottoman sultan. Another example – from the Serbian context – shows Prince Miloš in three-quarter view wearing a gold-embroidered, fur-trimmed robe and a colourful *çalma* (shawl) wound around his head, a reflection of a popular style in the Ottoman capital at the time (Fig. 67).[21] The Serbian painter Pavel

Remaking of Ottoman Governance in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2004), 22.

18 "*… ein mit Edelsteinen sehr reich besetzten Kevani* (*Ehrenkleid*) *als Zeiche der Investitur der respektiven Provinzen*," Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, *Document privitóre la istoria românilor culese de Eudoxiu de Hurmuzaki*, 22 vols. (Bucharest: Ion. I. Nistor, 1942), 21:557. See also Mihai Răzvan-Ungureanu, "Ceremoniile domnesti din vremea lui Mihail Sturdza. Sárbátorile instalárii la putere (1834)," in *Spectacolul public: între tradiție și modernitate*, ed. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu and Mária Pakucs Willcocks (Bucharest: Institutul Cultural Român, 2007), 121–58. For more on the gifts of the sultan, see Alexandre A.C. Sturdza, *Règne de Michel Sturdza, Prince Régnant de Moldavie 1834–1849* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1907), 401. For gifts bestowed during investiture ceremonies of the early modern period, see Viorel Panaite, "Customary Practices," in *Ottoman Law of War and Peace: The Ottoman Empire and Its Tribute-Payers from the North of the Danube. Second Revised Edition* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2019), 230–48. doi: 10.1163/9789004411104.

19 Phillips, "Ottoman Hil'at," Faroqhi and Neumann, ed., *Ottoman Costumes*.

20 One of these stars must be that of the Order of St. Anne, which the prince had recently received from the czar. See the letter, dated June 2, 1834, from Kiselev informing the recipient in Hurmuzaki, *Document privitóre*, 17:102. http://dspace.bcucluj.ro/handle/123456789/144628, last accessed July 7, 2023.

21 Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu identifies this headgear in Đurković's portraits of the young boyars Constantine Cantacuzino and Iancu Manu in the 1820s. See Vintilă-Ghițulescu, "Shawls and Sable Furs: How to be a Boyar under the Phanariot Regimes (1710–1821)," in *Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte/ European History Yearbook* 20 (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2019): 137–58. doi: 10.1515/9783110635942–008. Ottoman sartorial laws passed in Serbia technically continued to ban luxury clothes for non-Muslims until 1826. See Quataert, "Clothing Laws," and Katarina Mirtović, "Luxury Dress: Costume and the Politics of Representation in 19th-Century Serbia," in *In Between: Culture of Dress between the East and the West / ИЗМЕЂУ – култура одевања између Истока и Запада, ICOM's Costume Committee Proceedings of the 64th Annual Conference September 25–30, 2011*, ed. Mirjana M. Menković (Belgrade: Ethnographic Museum, 2011), 38–48. https://books.google.com/books?id=75EmBAAAQBAJ, last accessed July 10, 2023.



FIGURE 67 Pavel Durković, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, 1824

Đurković (1772–1830) painted this oil-on-canvas work in 1824, after the events of the second phase of the Serbian Revolution had come to an end, but before Serbia was granted vassal status in 1833.[22] Mihail's *ḫil'at* and Miloš' *çalma* demonstrate the use of established Ottoman styles in the fashioning of elite Balkan identities in portraiture of the early decades of the nineteenth century.[23]

3 The Case of Serbia

In June of 1835, shortly after Serbia was officially recognised by the sultan as a vassal state (1833) and around the same time that the Romanian princes visited Istanbul for their joint investiture (1834), Miloš wrote to the Vidin Guard to request that he may *yüz sürmek* (pay homage) to the sultan.[24] The request was received favourably and the Serbian prince was welcomed to Istanbul with a 75-day-long stay at the newly renovated Bosphorus-side mansion of Hüseyin Pasha. There, he and his retinue participated in entertainments such as hunting parties, extravagant feasts, and tours of the new artillery barracks facilities at Rami Çiftliği.[25] Prior to his arrival, it was decided that Miloš was to be presented with a *ḫarvānī* (robe of honour),[26] and later, with a diamond-set *nişān-ı iftiḫār* and a bejewelled *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*.[27] These gifts and the overall experience of the reception was designed to show off the wealth and cosmopolitan sophistication of the empire and its capital city of Istanbul. At the same time, it enforced Miloš' subordinate position as a guest to be fed, housed, and dazzled by the generosity and munificence of the sultan. The honour and joy received by the prince

22 The *hatt-ı şerīf* (imperial edict) issued on August 28, 1830 gave Serbia independent control of its internal affairs and placed Miloš in charge of the administration, legal courts, and security of Serbia. In 1833, another *hatt-ı şerīf* was issued that specified Serbia's autonomy, passed new restrictions on Ottoman military presence, and added some eastern Serbian lands, which had been left out of the previous deal.

23 That the switch to the modern military uniform was not necessarily immediate and final is exemplified in the instance of Alexandru wearing his "boyar's outfit" during his first military parade. See Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu, "Constructing a New Identity: Romanian Aristocrats between Oriental Heritage and Western Prestige (1780–1866)," in *From Traditional Attire to Modern Dress: Modes of Identification, Modes of Recognition in the Balkans* (*XVIth–XXth Centuries*), ed. Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 104–28, 121.

24 BOA HAT 1121/44925 C, 29 Safar 1251 (June 26, 1835), cited and translated by Mahir Aydın, "The Istanbul Visit of the Serbian Knez Miloš Obrenović," in *International Balkan Annual Conference* 6, *Turkey & Serbia: Changing Political and Socio-Economic Dynamics in the Balkans*, ed. Metin Ünver (Istanbul: Istanbul University and Eski Babil Yayınları, 2018), 33–46, 34. See also Redhouse, 1089, 2214.

25 BOA HAT 1112/44761, 28 Jumada I, 1251 (September 21, 1835). A year later, in 1836, the barracks hosted a spectacular portrait-inauguration ceremony for a large-scale *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*. See Chapter 3.

26 BOA HAT 1112/44758, 29 Dhu'l-Hijja 1251 (April 16, 1836). See Aydın, "The Istanbul Visit," 34.

27 BOA A. {DVNS.NMH.d 11/174, 10 Jumada 1, 1251 (September 3, 1835).



FIGURE 68
(After?) Joseph August Schöefft, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, *c.*1835 (1838?)

was recorded in official letters as well as the visual record.

According to the Romanian historian Sorin Iftimi, it is likely that at some point during Miloš' 1835 reception in Istanbul, the prince commissioned the itinerant Austrian artist Joseph August Schöefft (1776–1851) to paint his portrait to commemorate the occasion.[28] A version that may be a later copy is displayed today in the *ḳonaḳ* (official residence) of Obrenović's wife, Princess Ljubica,[29] and is dated to 1858 (Fig. 68). The *ḳonaḳ* portrait features the moustachioed prince in a red military uniform, seated in front of a Neoclassical balustrade overlooking a representation of the

28 Sorin Iftimi, "Portretul Principelui Sârb Miloš Obrenovič, de Josef August Schöefft (1835)," *Cercetări Istorice* (*Serie Nouă*), 30–31 (2012): 127–53. https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=29616, last accessed July 10, 2023.

29 The Konak of Princess Ljubica in Belgrade (built between 1829 and 1831) is part of an exhibition of architecture by the Belgrade City Museum. It holds a large number of family portraits and furniture in Ottoman-Balkan styles. The portrait of Prince Miloš is in a group that also includes Stevan Todorović's *Princess Ljubica with her Son Milan* (1882) and Jovan Popović's *Prince Mihailo Obrenović*, (1841). See Danijela Vanušić, Angelina Stojanović, and Pavao Poša, *The Residence of Princess Ljubica: The Interiors of 19th Century Homes in Belgrade* (Belgrade: Belgrade City Museum, 2012), 53.



FIGURE 69
Joseph August Schöefft, F. Herr, J[os.] Trentsensky, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, *c.*1835

dome and minarets of Hagia Sophia.[30] He wears the *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Mahmud II among other military orders and decorations, including the Ottoman *nişān-ı iftiḫār* and the star and sash of the Russian Order of St. Anne. The *ḥarvāni,* the wearing of which would have obscured the military jacket and orders, is notably absent. At the same time, the image explicitly refers to the sultan as the figurehead of centralised power and the source of legitimacy through which Miloš' power functioned. This is achieved not only through the sultan's miniature portrait, but also through Miloš' choice of headgear: the tall, red *Maḥmūdiye* fez that had come to symbolize Ottoman modernity. I am not arguing here for the complete Ottomanisation of Miloš' sartorial presentation. After all, his sash and star of the Russian Order of St. Anne are just as visible as his Ottoman orders. In commissioning a portrait to commemorate his Istanbul reception, Miloš presented himself as a modern, autonomous, and respectable guest of the sultan,

30 The reference to Hagia Sophia connects the sitter to the geography of Istanbul as well as to shared Islamic and Christian imperial heritages. However, this rather fanciful rendition is not architecturally accurate and only includes one minaret. The Hagia Sophia was originally constructed as a Byzantine Christian building (which may have been constructed over a more ancient sacred site) in the year 500 and has undergone subsequent rebuilding. In 1453, it was converted into a mosque, and in 1935, it was converted into a museum. In 2020, it was reconverted back into a functioning mosque.

one who has just received a mark of personal friendship and loyalty, suspended conspicuously over his heart.

Schöefft's original painting may have been intended for display in the Prince's Office,[31] the command centre located in the central part of the first floor of his *ḳonaḳ*, from which Miloš directed military, diplomatic, and cultural initiatives throughout his first reign. According to the Serbian travel writer Joakim Vujić, the office was decorated in the "European" style, with tables, a globe, maps of European countries, copper engravings, and paintings.[32] The Prince's own image hung on the wall, flanked by portraits of Mahmud II, Napoleon Bonaparte, Russian czars and dignitaries, as well as a flag of Serbia from the time of the First Serbian Uprising.[33] The inclusion of the Serbian flag in this display marked a degree of defiance against the existing imperial system as well as a desire on the part of the Serbs for political autonomy. However, the overarching side-by-side display of leader portraits, likely received as diplomatic gifts, invited comparison between the power and leadership abilities of Miloš and his contemporaries within the existing political framework. Lithographic copies of Schöefft's portrait of Miloš were distributed as diplomatic gifts to rulers of foreign nations with whom the prince wanted to cultivate good relations, including Metternich, who may have been the original recipient of works in the Austrian collections (Fig. 69).[34] The fact that the *ḳonaḳ* portrait circulated in print demonstrates its diplomatic function and validates the symbolic efficacy of the portrait-in-portrait trope in inter-imperial contexts. Likewise, it demonstrates the ability of Miloš to appropriate established visual forms as a means of glorifying his own (as yet unstable and highly controversial) rule as Prince of the Serbs.

4 The Serbian Revolution, Russian Aid, and Napoleon

Unlike the Romanian territories, Serbia did not undergo a period of Russian occupation, and Miloš was not directly involved in Kiselev's network. However, his rise to power was in part aided by Russian interference. The first major revolutionary activity in the Ottoman Balkan territories occurred in Serbia, one of the so-called Balkan "buffer" states sandwiched between the rival Ottoman and Russian empires. The population was comprised primarily of Christian Orthodox Serbs, whose shared religious, linguistic, and cultural traditions fostered the rise of an early form of national identity.[35] During the first phase of the Serbian Revolution in 1804, famously led by Đorđe Petrović (popularly known as Karađorđe, or Black George) (Grand Vožd of Serbia 1804–13), Serbian rebels were militarily aided by the Russians, who claimed a protectorate over all Orthodox Christians living within the Ottoman Empire.

31 The Prince's Office was renamed the Prince's Cabinet in 1835, and then again renamed to the Court Office in 1837. Miloš Jagodić, "Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Serbia in 1846," *Istraživanja* 26 (2015): 106–107. doi: 10.19090/i.2015.26.106–132.

32 Jelena Bogdanović, "On the Architecture of the *Konaks* in Serbia (1804–1830s)," *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 21, no. 2 (2007): 176. In addition to Miloš's office-residences in Kragujevac and Belgrade, the residences of his brothers, Jovan and Jevrem, were also decorated with portraiture. See Lidija Cvetić, "Традиција и транзиција/ културна контраверза. Студија случаја: портрети кнеза Милоша Обреновића" ("Tradition and Transition/ Cultural Controversy Case Study: Portraits of Knez Miloš Obrenović"), *Култура. Часопис за теорију и социологију културе и културну политику* 140 (2013): 401–418. doi: 10.5937/kultura1340401C.

33 Jagodić, "Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," 107. See also Bogusławska, "From Icon to Punk Portrait," 16.

34 Though the Serbian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not officially established until 1839 (under provisions of the Constitution of 1838), the Prince's Office had maintained separate departments for foreign and internal affairs since 1833. Jagodić, "Library of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," 106.

35 Dušan T. Bataković, "A Balkan-Style French Revolution? The 1804 Serbian Uprising in European Perspective," *Balcanica* 36 (2005), 113.

The rebellion was initially successful, but when Napoleon moved to invade Russia in 1812, Czar Alexander pulled out of Serbia to consolidate his troops, and the revolution ground to a halt. Russian support was formally withdrawn with the Treaty of Bucharest (May 18, 1812) at the conclusion of the Ottoman-Russian War (begun in 1806), returning Serbia to roughly the same state as it had been prior to 1804.[36] At the conclusion of the First Serbian Uprising, Ottoman forces chose the former peasant-rebel, Miloš, who had served under Karađorđe, to be placed in the position of *veliki knez/başknezi* (Supreme Prince). With Ottoman troops in firm control of Belgrade, however, Prince Miloš was quick to acknowledge the supremacy of the sultan and was able to maintain favour with both the Ottoman central administration in Istanbul and with the local administrators of the *paşalık* of Belgrade.[37] In doing so, Prince Miloš adopted the contemporary diplomatic methods in use among the Ottoman elites, preferring (for the time being) a slower path to independence rather than the quicker, but riskier, alternative of violent rebellion.[38]

A few months later, attempts at a peaceful resolution were again upended as Ottoman authorities began arresting and executing former rebels.[39] Setting his diplomatic methods aside, Miloš called his followers to arms on Palm Sunday of April 1815, outside of the church in the Serbian village of Takovo.[40] This gathering touched off the events of the Second Serbian Uprising (1815–17), and in doing so, remained an ideological rallying point for Serbian independence – and later, nationalist – movements. The timing of the second phase of the Serbian Revolution coincided with Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo on June 18, 1815, and Mahmud II, fearing that Alexander I would once again send military aid to the Serbs, was put under pressure to enter into negotiations for Serbia's semi-independence as a vassal state with Miloš as its primary representative. In this way, Miloš secured his position of power by being on the right side of clashing imperial forces.

Miloš's political prowess in maintaining diplomatic relationships with both imperial powers, even when relationships between the czar and sultan were tense, finds literal expression in his sartorial self-fashioning. The image of Prince Miloš wearing both Ottoman and Russian signifiers presents him as an active agent who had gained legitimate power through investiture from both neighbouring imperial powers. This image continued to live on as a model in later painted and printed copies throughout Miloš' first and second reigns, the sheer longevity of which demonstrates that the image successfully achieved his goals for presenting this particular princely identity.

5 Prince Miloš: Going Fezless

In 1835, in response to a growing constitutionalist movement that demanded protection for citizens' rights and the division of the power that had become concentrated in Miloš' hands, Serbia adopted the Sretenje Constitution (also called the "Candlemas Constitution"). The short-lived Sretenje Constitution was abolished under pressure from the Austrian, Russian, and Ottoman empires, who replaced it with the more conservative

36 Lilien Filipovitch-Robinson, "Paja Jovanović and the Imagining of War and Peace," *Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 22, no. 1 (2008): 35–53. doi: 10.1353/ser.2011.0000.

37 Tijana Borić, "Konak in Gornja Crnuca: The Court of Prince Miloš Obrenovic," *Facta Universitatis Visual Arts and Music* 4, no. 1 (2018): 26.

38 William Miller, *The Balkans: Roumania, Bulgaria, Servia and Montenegro* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1907).

39 Fred Singleton, *A Short History of the Yugoslav Peoples* (Originally published 1985; reissued Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 82–83.

40 This event was retrospectively romanticised on canvas by one of Serbia's most famous painters, Paja Jovanović (1859–1957), who created two oil paintings of Prince Miloš calling his men to arms under a tree near the church (1894–98). The paintings are housed today at a museum in Gornji Milanovac and at the National Museum of Serbia, respectively.



FIGURE 70 Moritz Daffinger, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, *c.*1842

"Turkish Constitution" in 1838. Unwilling to rule under the new constitution, Miloš abdicated the throne, passing rule to his sons while developing his own political career abroad.

During the time that Miloš was in Vienna, the Austrian artist Moritz Daffinger (1790–1849) painted his portrait in watercolour and gouache (Fig. 70). Daffinger and other miniaturists were working to compose an album of 248 portraits of rulers and diplomats who had been honoured as invitees to the wedding of Klemens von Metternich and Countess Mélanie née Zichy-Ferraris (1805–54) in 1831. Many of these invitees were allies who shared in the creation of or were themselves deeply impacted by the conservative political framework established by Metternich in the Congress of Vienna.[41] Daffinger's portrait of Miloš notably pictures him without the gold epaulets and prominent Ottoman fez, perhaps the most recognisable sartorial marker of centralised Ottoman identity. By this point in the century, it was becoming more popular for European Christian men to appear out-of-doors with uncovered heads. However, this was decidedly not the case within the Ottoman administration, where the fez represented a bureaucratic identity associated with Istanbul. In contrast to Schöefft's 1835 portrait of Miloš, in which the seemingly oversized fez dominates the composition, the absence of headgear in Daffinger's portrait may hint at Miloš' defiance towards, or lessening dependence on the central authority of Istanbul in the wake of the 1838 constitution. I offer this observation with a grain of salt, since earlier portraits of bare-headed princes exist (Lecca's portrait of Mihail, for example), and after all, the portrait of the sultan still remains in a privileged position around Miloš' neck in both cases.

Daffinger's portrait was copied many times over in various media. The artist later sold the design on to printing houses, including the Paris-based Lemercier and the Vienna-based Rauh, which produced Miloš' new, fezless princely image for an international commercial audience (Figs. 71 and 72). While lithographic reproduction was quickly becoming the most widespread means of portrait distribution, painted works remained strategically important as authoritative witnesses. At least two versions of the fezless Miloš were painted in oil-on-canvas by the Austrian artist Edouard von Engerth (1818–97) in 1843, though details such as the colour of Miloš' *dolama* or the wearing of a Hussar's pelisse vary between versions (Figs. 73 and 74).[42] When Miloš returned from Vienna to

41 "Conservative" in this context refers to maintaining the territorial integrity of absolutist states, including the Ottoman Empire. This also included the restoration of Louis XVIII and the suppression of uprisings in Spain, Portugal, and the Italian states. In this vein, it was in Metternich's opinion that Vienna was the ideal place for young Ottomans to receive a technical and military education, as they would be sheltered from "improper ideas," meaning the revolutionary ideals of the Greek and Serbian movements. See Miroslav Šedivý, "The Diplomatic Background," 154.

42 For a copy in the Versailles Collection, see Gordana Krstić-Faj, "Обреновићи у јавним збиркама



FIGURE 71 E. Desmaisons, Lemercier, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, *c.*1840



FIGURE 72 Moritz Daffinger, Josef Kriehuber, B.J. Rauh, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, 1842

Serbia in 1858, the fezless image type returned with him. This type even went on to appear on medallions distributed by a newly reappointed Prince Miloš to commemorate the St. Andrews Day Assembly (Fig. 75).[43] In this way, a prince who had been wearing the sultan's portrait as a way of legitimising his position now distributed wearable medallions of his own visage (with the ghost of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* included) to bolster his public-facing image. What had begun as the image of the modern sultan had been dematerialised and rematerialised – from *nişān* to painting to print to medallion – within the portrait of the local leader of semi-independent Serbia.

The fezless portrait type of Prince Miloš appeared around the same time that other Balkan princes, including Alexandru of Wallachia and Mihail of Moldavia, were choosing to forego headgear in their official portraits, as we have seen above. Despite this shift, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* remains as a direct declaration of personal – though not necessarily exclusive – loyalty to the Ottoman sultan. The careful reworking, editing, and retaining of certain parts of his own image makes sense considering the recent political events and their varied impacts on the courts at Belgrade, Bucharest, Iași, Istanbul, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Paris. Despite drastic shifts in military uniform

Француске [Obrenovići in the Public Collections of France]," in *ОБРЕНОВИЋИ У МУЗЕЈСКИМ И ДРУГИМ ЗБИРКАМА СРБИЈЕ И ЕВРОПЕ III* [Obrenovići in Museums and Other Collections of Serbia and Europe III], ed. Aleksandar Marušić and Ana Bolović (Gornji Milanovac: Museum of the Rudnik-Takovo Region, 2015), 293. https://www.muzejgm.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/3-Obrenovici-u-muzejskim-i-drugim-zbirkama-Srbije-i-Evrope-III.pdf. Last accessed July 11, 2023.

43 The St. Andrew's Day Assembly was a Serbian parliament that recalled Prince Miloš to the throne for his second reign, following that of Alexander Karađorđević (r. 1842–1858), son of Karađorđe and founder of the second famous Serbian ruling dynasty.



FIGURE 73 Edouard von Engerth, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, 1843



FIGURE 74 Edouard von Engerth, *Portrait of Prince Miloš Obrenović*, 1843



FIGURE 75 Karl Radnitzky, *St. Andrew's Day Assembly Medallion with Portrait of Obrenović*, 1858

in the 1830s, those essential markers of loyalty and friendship connecting the Balkan princes to the neighbouring Russian, Ottoman, and Austrian sovereign powers persisted visually. In this way, the military orders and decorations marking the Balkan princes' relationships with the sultan and the czar remained a significant point of stability in the ever-shifting political climate of the Balkan courts in the mid-nineteenth century.

6 The Dual Cases of Moldavia and Wallachia

Around the same time that Miloš' image was taking off, the Romanian princes to the northeast were commissioning their own portraits under comparable circumstances, and in some cases, within the same artistic circles. For example, Schöefft (likely when he was in Moldova in 1835–37) handled commissions in 1836 and 1837 commemorating Mihail's investiture and the establishment of the Academia Mihăileană (Mihailene Academy), respectively (Figs. 63 and 64).[44] Both portraits show the prince wearing a modern military uniform, complete with the red sash and star of the Order of St. Anne, the badge and star of the Russian Order of St. Stanislas, and the Ottoman *nişān-ı iftihār* and *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*.[45] He wears nothing on his head, but in his right hand, he holds a sable boyar's hat decorated with a diamond-encrusted aigrette given to him by the sultan at the time of his investiture.[46] Alexandru's portrait, attributed to the Romanian painter Ion Negulici (1812–51), pictures the Prince of Wallachia wearing the same uniform as his Moldavian counterpart (Fig. 62). Like Mihail, Alexandru wears Russian and Ottoman orders, including the portrait medallion of Mahmud II. Additionally, Alexandru wears the cross and star of the Greek Order of the Redeemer, representing his recognition of the newly independent Christian-ruled state, which had gained its autonomy from the Ottomans in the period following the War of Independence in 1821.[47]

According to their depictions, the *taşāvīr-i hümāyūn* of both princes are very similar in design: a circular form in a gold frame surrounded by an additional single row of brilliants.[48] Both are topped with an emblematic ribbon, set with a large diamond at the knot and smaller diamonds along the length of the two undulating tails. This is significant because, although the sultan's portrait is not a military order in the strict sense (as it is not graded), it appears that we are seeing two examples of an equal "rank."[49] Compare, for example, the award of Prince Miloš in the Schöefft portrait (Fig. 68), which includes an additional diamond-inset wreath.

44 The painting commemorating the establishment of the Mihailene Academy, which was led by Sturdza himself from 1834–49, was originally in the collection of the academy before being transferred to the Museum of Iași upon its foundation in 1860. Schöefft's paintings were later copied by the Romanian painter Constantin Daniel Stahi (1844–1920) in 1897. My thanks goes to Dr. Corina Cimpoeșu for this information. See also Sorin Iftimi, "Portretul Principelui Sârb Miloš Obrenovič," 33.

45 These are likely the "*yıldız nişānı*" (star-shaped military decorations) mentioned in the archival record as having been awarded by Czar Nicholas I. BOA HAT 1292/50208 0, 19 Jumada I, 1250 (September 23, 1834).

46 Sorin Iftimi, "Portretul Principelui Sârb Miloš Obrenovič," 33.

47 The cross also features a portrait – that of the Bavarian prince Otto, who ruled as King Otto I of Greece from 1832–62. The recognition of an independent Greece by this time was not necessarily a show of approval for other independence movements within the Ottoman Empire. Even Mahmud II signalled his good will towards Otto (and his foreign support) by sending the new king a box mounted with his own portrait in June of 1833. See John Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople*, 177.

48 Alexandru and Mihail received their *nişān*s in Istanbul, a few days before their final audiences on June 30 and July 9, respectively. *The Morning Chronicle* no. 20,263, August 7, 1834, 4.

49 See Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 126.

Textual records confirm that these painted *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn* referred to existing physical objects. According to a report in the *Albina Românească/Abeille Moldave*, a contemporary dual-language newspaper published in Romanian and French, Prince Mihail received his *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* on his return journey from Istanbul, as he was about to make a ceremonial re-entrance into the Moldavian court. According to the account, while his ship was preparing to anchor at the city of Galați, "*S. Hautesse le Sultan, pour témoigner Son estime distinguée à S. A. le Prince Michel, lui a en voyé son portrait enrichi de brillans, avec* [*la*] *permission de le porter au cou.*" (His Highness the Sultan, to demonstrate His distinguished esteem for H.H. Prince Mihail, sent him his portrait inset with brilliants along with permission to wear it around his neck.).[50] This was a departure from the usual ceremonies held for either Ottoman officials or foreign visitors, in which the portrait was bestowed in Istanbul, sometimes by the hand of or in the presence of the sultan himself. Such a change may signal a shift in intended audience. In the case of Mihail, the bestowal ceremony seems to have been staged for the benefit of local spectators, including regional officials and Russian agents who were waiting to greet him when his boat arrived in Galați.

While the audience for Mihail's ceremonial arrival in Galați was localised, the portrait of him wearing the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* was disseminated widely via print media. A lithograph after Schöefft, for example, shows Prince Alexandru standing in a stately interior, wearing his Ottoman and Russian orders. This time, the sash of the Russian Order of St. Anne obscures the sultan's face, covering all but his fez (Fig. 76). Smaller, less-detailed versions with the background removed repeat this obscuring of the portrait (Figs. 77 and 78). As it is in these images, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* is in a seemingly contradictory position: privileged, on one hand, to be worn at the neck, and at the same time, obscured by a symbol of Russia – the very power that directly threatened the sultan's sovereignty in the Balkan territories. Obscuring the embedded object, however, does not negate its symbolic value. In the 1840s, just after Abdülmecid had come to the throne, but perhaps before new awards were issued, this may have been a visual tactic for claiming the support of the sultan without directly referencing his recently deceased predecessor. For the intended diplomatic audience, who would have been familiar with these awards and some of whom would have been bestowed



FIGURE 76 F. Herr after J.A. Schöefft, *Portrait of Prince Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica*, nineteenth century

50 *Albina Românească/Abeille Moldave* 61, 12 July, 1834. https://dspace.bcu-iasi.ro/handle/123456789/83342, last accessed July 2, 2024. Cited in Mihai-Răzvan Ungureanu, "Ceremoniile domnești din vremea lui Mihail Sturdza. Sărbătorile instalării la putere (1834)" in *Spectacolul public între tradiție și modernitate: Sărbători, ceremonialuri, pelerinaje și suplicii* (eds.) Constanța Vintilă-Ghițulescu and Mária Pakucs Willcocks (București: Institutul Cultural Român, 2007), 126.



FIGURE 77 Constantin Lecca, *Portrait of Prince Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica*, 1837



FIGURE 78 Andrew Duncan, *Portrait of Prince Alexandru Dimitrie Ghica*, nineteenth century

with such honours themselves, the suggestion of the *nişān* would have been enough to evoke the sultan's power to support – or dismiss at will – his vassal.

Whether in Istanbul or in Galați, while dressed in Ottoman robes or Russian jackets, the awarding of the sultan's portrait and its subsequent acceptance by the princes affirmed their identity as loyal Ottoman officials who maintained a friendly – if somewhat risky – diplomatic relationship with the Russian Empire. The inclusion of the sultan's portrait within Mihail's portrait then is not merely a wished-for signal of loyalty, but the record of a material award, given from the imperial centre as a dual sign of favour and subjugation. The dematerialisation of the portrait-object within the large-scale work fixes the relationship between the sultan and prince, preserving and advertising it in a concrete way.

7 1848 Revolutions and the Crimean War

Following a series of intrigues, Alexandru was removed from office in 1842. He was replaced as the Prince of Wallachia by his rival, George Bibescu (r. 1843–48), the son of a boyar family, who had received a European education abroad and had positioned himself to be in Kiselev's good graces.[51] A portrait by the peripatetic painter Paul Petrovits (1818–87) shows George in military dress, proudly bearing a series of orders, including the

51 Ion Ghica, *Scrisori către Vasile Alecsandri* (Bucharest: Leon Alcalay, 1905), 592. https://books.google.com/books?id=2_opAAAAYAAJ, last accessed July 11, 2023. See also George Bibescu, *Roumanie d'Andrinople a Balta-Liman (1829–1849): Règne de Bibesco,* 2 vols. (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1893). Vol 1. https://books.google.com/books?id=plQvAAAAYAAJ, Vol 2. https://books.google.com/books?id=MFQvAAAAYAAJ.



FIGURE 79 Paul Petrovits, *Portrait of Prince George Bibescu*, 1844

sash and star of the Russian Order of St. Anne, the cross and star of the Prussian Order of the Red Eagle, the Ottoman *nişān-ı iftiḫār*, and the *taşvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of Sultan Abdülmecid (Fig. 79).[52] In the literature on sultans' portraits and Ottoman orders, it has been doubted that Abdülmecid's

52 For Paul Petrovits, whose name can be found in several variations, including Pavle Petrović, Pavel Petrovits, Paulus Petrovitz, and Pablo Petrovits, see the monograph by Miodrag Marković, *Од Темишвара до Хаваја: ПАВЕЛ ПЕТРОВИЋ – ЗАБОРАВЉЕНИ СРПСКИ СЛИКАР /From Timisoara to Hawaii: Paul Petrovits – A Forgotten Serbian Painter* (Belgrade: Faculty of Philosophy, Institute of Art History, 2015).

portrait was ever actually worn as part of full military dress, though this portrait indicates otherwise. The *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* corroborates the existence of the physical award, reporting that at the time of his installation, George travelled to Istanbul for an official investment ceremony.[53] The event was held on the evening of Tuesday, 23 Ramadan 1259 (October 17, 1843) at the *mābeyn-i hümāyūn*, where the guest of honour received "*bir ḳıṭʿa mücevher taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı meḥāsin-nümūn-ı mülūkāne*" (one bejewelled, beautiful imperial portrait). The formulaic description of the portrait object itself remains consistent with reports published under Mahmud II, despite the fact that the sultan reflected in the embedded portrait had changed four years earlier.

George's term as Prince of Wallachia ended during the series of revolutions that swept Eurasia in 1848.[54] Romanian revolutionaries held power for a brief period under the provisions outlined in the Proclamation of Islaz (1848), but soon it was reclaimed by joint Ottoman-Russian troops. The office of Prince of Wallachia was taken up by another brother of the elite Bibescu family and affiliate of Kiselev's, Barbu Dimitrie Ştirbei (1848–53, 1854–56).[55] Portraits of Barbu that circulated in the international illustrated press, including an example from *L'Illustration* published at the beginning of his second term, clearly show him wearing the portrait of Abdülmecid pinned to the right breast of his frock coat (Fig. 80).[56] In addition to the prince's military dress, a symbolic mace and Hussar's shako in the right foreground symbolize the local power of his office. Barbu's first term as Prince of Wallachia was cut short when he fled to Vienna during the mounting tensions between Ottoman and Russian powers that led to the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853–56).[57] He returned to the position in 1853, serving out his second term under the occupation of Austria until the conclusion of the war under the Treaty of Paris (March 30, 1856) restored full Ottoman power in the area.

In Moldavia, the 1848 Revolution was violently suppressed by Mihail, who arrested and expelled participants.[58] Following Mihail's deposition, his rival, Grigore Alexandru Ghica, was elected to the post of Prince of Moldavia (r. 1849–53; 1854–56). Portraits of Grigore followed the conventions used by his predecessor, picturing the prince as a member of the military elite bedecked with Orders awarded by diplomatic allies (Fig. 81). With the support of nationalist and liberal factions, Grigore attempted a series of reforms, though, like Barbu, he was forced to flee to Vienna at the outbreak of the Crimean War.[59] Following the Russian occupation of the Romanian provinces, Grigore, like Barbu, returned to serve out a second term up until the Treaty of Paris came into effect. In 1859, with the double election of Alexandru Ioan Cuza (Prince of Moldavia 1859–62; Prince of Wallachia 1859–62; Domnitor of Romania 1862–66) to both princely positions, the Romanian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were united. The independence of Romania – a major impetus behind the

53 *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* no. 260, 8 Shawwal 1259 (November 1, 1843).

54 For an overview of the 1848 Revolution in Wallachia, see Lothar Maier, "The Revolution of 1848 in Moldavia and Wallachia," in *Europe in 1848: Revolution and Reform*, ed. Dieter Dowe, Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, Dieter Langewiesche, and Jonathan Sperber, trans. David Higgins (Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 186–209. doi: 10.2307/j.ctv27tctcq.11.

55 Around the same time, one Kantekozin – likely Constantin Cantacuzino (d. 1877), a major boyar who served as *kaymakam* of Wallachia from September 1848–June 1849 – requested his own *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn*. See BOA HR.MKT. 27/20, 17 Shawwal 1265 (September 5, 1849).

56 An undated, oil-on-canvas version of this portrait by Mișu Popp can be found in the collection of the Muzeul de Artă Braşov, Nr. Inv. 70.

57 For a history of the Crimean War centring the role of the Ottoman Empire, see Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853–1856)*, The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage: Politics, Society and Economy, (ed.) Suraiya Faroqhi and Halil Inalcik, vol. 44 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010). https://brill.com/display/title/15553, last accessed July 12, 2023.

58 Maier, "The Revolution of 1848," 195.

59 The "*Boġdān başboyarı*" (Balkan prince) who received the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* of Abdülmecid in 1850 is likely Grigore. BOA İHR 61/2944, 29 Safar 1266 (January 14, 1850). For the manipulation of nationalist and liberal ideals in inter-boyar rivalries, see Maier, "The Revolution of 1848," especially 190–92.

le 20 décembre 1842 (1er janvier 1843). Trois candidats étaient en présence : Barbo Stirbey, son frère Georges Bibesco et le premier boyard Ban-Georges Philipesco. B. Stirbey emporta la majorité absolue des votes, majorité qui, aux termes de la loi, lui donnait le droit d'être proclamé prince de Valachie. Tout à coup B. Stirbey se retira de la lice, et reporta les suffrages dont il disposait sur son frère, qui fut élu. Après l'avénement de son frère, B. Stirbey fut élevé au poste le plus important de l'administration : il eut la direction du département de l'intérieur.

Les troubles survenus en Valachie, dans l'année 1848, amenèrent, d'une part, l'abdication et l'émigration du prince Bibesco, et, de l'autre, une double occupation militaire des Principautés.

Les troupes ottomanes réunies à Giurgewo, sous les ordres d'Omer-Pacha, entrèrent à Bucharest le 13/25 septembre 1848, suivies de près par un corps d'armée russe, et une caïmacamie (lieutenance) fut installée à Bucharest pour administrer provisoirement, sous la direction des deux commissaires impériaux Fuad-Effendi et le général Duhamel.

Le gouvernement provisoire durait depuis environ huit mois, lorsqu'en mai 1849 la Sublime Porte prit en considération la nécessité de mettre fin à cette situation, aussi fausse que précaire, par la nomination définitive d'un hospodar. C'est alors que le Sultan, après avoir pris avis de son ministère, arrêta son choix sur B. Stirbey, qui, durant ce régime provisoire, s'était tenu en dehors des affaires du pays.

Le 16/28 juin B. Stirbey fut solennellement proclamé hospodar ou prince régnant de Valachie, dans la salle de la métropole.

Le prince Stirbey a plusieurs enfants :

L'aîné, Georges, a fait toutes ses études à Paris, où il a acquis les grades de bachelier ès lettres, de bachelier ès sciences et de licencié en droit. Il est actuellement attaché au premier régiment de carabiniers.

Ses frères, Alexandre et Dimitri, font leurs études à Paris.

Le prince Stirbey a, en outre, quatre filles : Phénarète, mariée au vornik Théodore Ghika, de Jassy ;

Aline, mariée au grand logothète Alexandre Plagino ;

Elisabeth, mariée au grand postelnik Etienne Bellio ;

Et Hélène, mariée au comte Léon de Larisch-Moennisch.

La crise orientale, dont les Principautés suivaient les phases avec la plus pénible anxiété depuis la mission du prince Menschikoff, prit, en 1853, une tournure telle qu'il ne fut plus possible de conserver la moindre illusion sur l'occupation imminente par les armées russes de ces pays si malheureux et déjà si éprouvés.



Le prince Démétrius Stirbey, hospodar de la Valachie.

Le divan donna l'ordre au prince Stirbey de quitter Bucharest ; le prince eut le tort de prolonger son séjour dans la capitale de la Valachie. Il n'abandonna les Principautés que devant la dénonciation des hostilités, et se retira à Vienne.

Nous n'avons pas à nous immiscer dans les querelles qui divisent les différents partis dans les principautés ; ce que nous pouvons dire, c'est que le prince B. Stirbey n'est pas populaire dans le parti démocratique, qui lui a reproché, peut-être avec plus de passion que de raison, d'être le représentant secret de la Russie. Le prince Stirbey a repoussé énergiquement ces accusations, et il a écrit à ce sujet à Reschid-Pacha, qui s'est empressé de lui rendre justice.

Cependant une assez vive opposition vient de se manifester à propos de la réinstallation du hospodar de Valachie. Nous lisons dans les journaux allemands que, le jour fixé pour l'entrée triomphale du prince Stirbey, le préfet de police envoya à l'imprimerie de l'Etat le programme de la réception solennelle. Un instant après, un ordre du commissaire ottoman arriva pour arrêter l'impression du programme. Les Autrichiens, l'ayant su, envoyèrent à leur tour l'ordre de continuer l'impression. Alors Muzza-Pacha fit placer deux sentinelles et six officiers à la porte de l'imprimerie, avec ordre de l'avertir immédiatement si les Autrichiens persistaient dans leur dessein. Pour éviter un conflit dont les résultats eussent été déplorables, les choses en restèrent là. Le 1er octobre, l'ordre suivant a été envoyé au préfet de police de Bucharest :

« Monsieur le préfet de police,

« Vu les accusations « graves et officielles qui « pèsent sur le prince « Stirbey ; vu la haine de « la majorité des habi- « tants notables de la ville ; « vu surtout les circons- « tances au milieu des- « quelles s'accomplit le « retour du prince, j'ai « cru devoir me confor- « mer à l'opinion publi- « que, en vous ordonnant, « Monsieur le préfet, « d'empêcher qu'on n'é- « lève des arcs de triom- « phe, qu'on lise des a- « dresses ou autres dis- « cours, enfin qu'aucune « manifestation inconve- « nante n'irrite le peuple « et ne fasse naître le dé- « sordre.

« Pour le commissaire « impérial ottoman,

« MUZZA-PACHA. »

Il est évident, après ce qui vient de se passer à Bucharest, que la Porte a voulu la réinstallation pure et simple des hospodars, pour que tout fût remis en son lieu et place, mais qu'elle avisera prochainement à prendre un parti au sujet de la réorganisation définitive des deux Principautés.

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PARIS. — TYPOGRAPHIE DE FIRMIN DIDOT FRÈRES, RUE JACOB, 56.

FIGURE 80 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Prince Barbu Dimitrie Ştirbei*, nineteenth century



FIGURE 81 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Prince Grigore Alexandru Ghica*, nineteenth century

1848 revolution – would be officially recognised (along with that of Serbia and Montenegro as well as the creation of the principality of Bulgaria) after yet another Ottoman-Russian war (1877–78) ending in the Treaty of San Stefano (1878).[60]

8 Conclusion

The dynamic period between the first Serbian Revolution of 1815 and the Treaty of San Stefano in 1878 encompassed an incredibly complex series of wars, revolutions, and political events in the areas of southeast Europe that would become recognised as Serbia and Romania by the turn of the century. The goal of this chapter was not to unravel this tangled web, but rather to provide a brief socio-political sketch against which images of Ottoman-Balkan princes could be more fully understood. Surely, the portraiture that I have addressed is but a small fraction of what once existed during a period of rapidly changing leadership under Ottoman-Russian-Austrian spheres of power; however, this body of artwork does provide some insight with respect to the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter.

Prince Miloš – an insurgent leader and personification of the earliest phases of the Serbian nationalist movement – was pictured wearing the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* of the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II for complex reasons. One reason was that it allowed him to harness the power of imperial visual productions to promote his own political agenda and personal career. At the same time, as I have shown, such portraits have obvious ties to the world beyond the sultan's power. Miloš was interested in maintaining friendly diplomatic ties with the Porte while strengthening the political relationships that he was cultivating with Russian and Austrian actors, connecting his motivations to international networks of diplomatic and military dealings.

Miloš' contemporaries in the Romanian principalities – the princes Alexandru of Wallachia and Mihail of Moldavia – used some of the same visual strategies to shore up their own volatile power bases. However, the Romanian milieus were decidedly more Russian-dominated due to the legacy of Kiselev and the Organic Regulation, while the tenures of their respective posts were comparatively shorter. In all three cases, these local rulers decided to commission images of themselves featuring a symbol of the sultan's support – the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* – alongside other potent imperial symbols. Their successors following the Revolutions of 1848 and during the period of the Crimean War – the princes George and Barbu in Wallachia and Grigore in Moldavia – followed the trend of having their portraits made while wearing full military uniform including the sultan's

60 "Treaty of San Stefano," *Encyclopedia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-San-Stefano, last accessed July 12, 2023.

portrait, though by this time, the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* was that of Sultan Abdülmecid.

The political and diplomatic conditions of the Ottoman Balkan and Danubian provinces in the early- to mid-nineteenth century, in combination with social and cultural factors such as the popularisation of portraiture and military uniforms among the bourgeois and boyar classes, created the conditions in which these referential portraits could serve a particular purpose. This purpose can be understood as having propagandistic value, both in terms of centre-periphery and multi-centred relations, wherein Belgrade, Bucharest, and Iași are in conversation with those in Istanbul, St. Petersburg, and Vienna. Therefore, as stated above, I have argued that these portraits functioned to legitimise the rule of provincial power-holders while shaping new conceptions about what it meant to be a modern leader. By situating the princely portraits in dialogue with the multifaceted identities of their respective sitters on one hand, and the sultan's centralising reform campaigns on the other, art historians can begin to locate the Ottoman Balkans within the wider landscape of nineteenth-century political portraiture.

CHAPTER 5

The Sultan's "True Likeness" in the Press

In the early 1860s, a trio of Ottoman-Armenian brothers – Viçen, Hovsep (1830–1908), and Kevork Abdullahyan (1839–1918) – rapidly rose to fame for their successful commercial photography studio known as Abdullah Frères.[1] The popularity of their firm, based in the Pera district of Istanbul, caught the attention of Grand Vizier Mehmed Fuad Pasha (1815–69), a leading bureaucrat of the Tanzimat era, who played an important role in introducing the brothers, as well as other artists, into imperial service.[2] Upon Fuad Pasha's recommendation, Sultan Abdülaziz invited the Abdullah brothers to the *av köşkü* (imperial hunting lodge) in İzmit to take the sultan's photographic portrait in 1863.[3] The sultan was impressed by the results, declaring, "My countenance and true likeness is as in the photograph taken by the Abdullah brothers."[4] The favoured portraitists were then collectively bestowed with the esteemed title of *ressām-ı ḥażret-i şehriyārī* (Artists to His Majesty the Sultan), and their photographs of the sovereign from this and later sittings circulated throughout diplomatic and commercial spheres (Fig. 59).[5]

With the intention to standardise an "'*aṣıl görüntü*" (true likeness) of the sultan for dissemination, Abdülaziz and his advisors, including Fuad and Ali Pashas, were following the precedents for ruler visibility that had already been established by Mahmud II and Abdülmecid in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Age-old tropes linking truth and beauty continued to play a significant role in shaping the relationship between the presentation of the sultan's external appearance and assumptions about his character. The crucial difference in the visual campaigns of the second part of the nineteenth century was in their engagement with the popularisation of the illustrated press and photographic technologies – and by extension, claims to modern modes of seeing and being seen. This new image-making mode resonated with scientific and technological trends while employing

1 The brothers started their business in a daguerreotype studio in Beyazıd, where Viçen had been working in the late 1850s. In 1867, they sold that studio to Nikolai Andreomenos (1850–1929), another commercial photographer recognised for his work by Sultan Abdülhamid II. For more on the Abdullahyan family and their rise to fame, see Engin Özendes, *Abdullah Frères: Ottoman Court Photographers*, trans. Priscilla Mary Işın (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Culture, Art, Publications, Inc., 1998). See also Kürkman, *Armenian Painters*, 1:90–91. The commercial success of Abdullah Frères is documented through recommendations in tourist guides, such as *Murray's Hand-Book for Travellers*, as well as advertisements in local periodicals, such as *Muṣavver Medeniyet*. Other professional photographers in Istanbul, including Pascal Sébah, Vassilaki Kargopoulo, James Robertson, Ernest-Edouard de Caranza, Alphonse Durand, and Jules Derain, enjoyed similar commercial success, starting in the mid-century.

2 Fuad Pasha was also responsible in part for bringing the Polish Orientalist painter Stanisław Chlebowski to the attention of the palace. Kaya, "Sultan Abdülaziz Portreleri," 66. Established statesmen such as Fuad and Ali Pashas (1815–71) helped to facilitate political stability and open diplomatic channels during Abdülaziz's early reign.

3 For Kevork's first-hand account of the commission, see Engin Özendes, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi İstanbul Fotoğrafçıları," *Millî Saraylar Sanat-Tarih-Mimarlık Dergisi* 18 (2019): 22–36, 30–31.

4 The sultan's declaration, as quoted by Özendes and translated by Priscilla Mary Işın, continued:

"I command that henceforth only the photographs taken by them shall be recognized as official photographs to be distributed throughout the land." *Abdullah Frères*, 39.

5 Wendy Shaw points out that the noun "ressām" is not specific to those who practice photography, *Ottoman Painting*, 30. Redhouse translates the term as "a draughtsman, painter, an artist," whereas "'*akkyās*" is given for "one who takes a reflection on a plate, a photographer," and "'*akkyās başı*" for "A chief photographer (to a sovereign, etc.)," 972, 1313. The discovery of photography was first announced within the Ottoman Empire in *Takvīm-i Vekāyi'* no. 186, 19 Sha'ban 1255 (October 28, 1839), 3.

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the tools of a modern, dynamic, and internationally recognised visual vocabulary.

Cultural and art historians have noted the significance of this transformative shift as a marker of modernism more broadly conceived. Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem, for example, have organised critical inquiries into the interconnected social, cultural, and technical networks linking photography with modernisation projects in the Ottoman sphere.[6] Wendy Shaw has argued that the Ottoman engagement with the medium of photography was in itself a signifier of modernisation that could be transferred to other recently-adopted media, such as oil painting.[7] Through close examination of Abdülaziz's hands-on engagement with painting and photography, Mary Roberts has demonstrated how the visual arts played a significant role in shaping the image of the Ottoman empire as a modernising state.[8] Undoubtedly, the advent of photographic technologies brought in their wake novel forms and new expectations for the depiction and understanding of power. As photographic and printmaking technologies advanced, social trends such as exchanging *cartes de visite*, compiling albums, and reading illustrated journals became internationally popular, expanding the audience for all types of portraiture and images of rulers. This chapter demonstrates some of the ways in which versions of the official sultan's portrait were disseminated on an international level through photographic and reproductive prints published in the illustrated press.

Despite the novelty of its use, official photographic portraits of sultans preserved ties with established image-making practices at the Ottoman court. Photographs existed alongside of and served as models for miniature medallion portraits on ivory, luxury large-format prints, and wall-hanging oil-on-canvas paintings. The portrait of Abdülmecid attributed to Pollet, for example, was reproduced in photographic and engraved versions (Fig. 47). A portrait of Abdülmecid by the Ottoman-Greek photographer Vassilaki Kargopoulo (1826–86) likewise found itself made and remade in multiple formats, including the *carte de visite* (Fig. 82).[9] At the same time, idioms and aesthetics that had been popularised in rulers' images (such as poses, ostentatious military dress uniforms, compositions, and the use of stately furniture, velvet curtains, and romantic backdrops) continued to be used as symbols of wealth, stability, and power. Starting in the 1830s, new technologies including the invention of the steam press, cheaper paper, wood engraving, and stereotypes, led to the popularisation of the illustrated universal survey periodical in Britain and France.[10] By the 1840s, popular journals such as *The Illustrated London News* and *L'Illustration* were in the hands of a relatively large readership, which would have seen images of Sultan Abdülmecid (who famously kept abreast of the illustrated press) alongside his European contemporaries. During the period of the Crimean War – the only war in which Britain and France fought against Russia on the side of the Ottoman Empire – the sultan appeared in composite group portraits with his allies Queen Victoria (r. 1837–1901), Emperor Napoleon III (President of France 1848–52; Emperor of the French 1852–70), and Franz Joseph (Emperor of Austria 1848–1916; King of Hungary 1867–1916) (Figs. 83 and 84).

6 Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem eds. *Camera Ottomana: Photography and Modernity in the Ottoman Empire, 1840–1914* (Istanbul: Koç University Publications, 2014). See also Ahmet A. Ersoy, "Ottomans and the Kodak Galaxy: Archiving Everyday Life and Historical Space in Ottoman Illustrated Journals," *History of Photography* no. 40, vol. 3 (2016): 330–57.

7 Wendy Shaw, "Ottoman Photography of the Late Nineteenth Century: An 'Innocent' Modernism?" *History of Photography*, 33, no. 1 (February 2009): 80–93.

8 Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft."

9 For more on Vasilaki (Basile) Kargopoulo, see Bahattin Öztuncay *Vassilaki Kargopoulo: Photographer to His Majesty the Sultan* (Istanbul: BOS, 2000).

10 Patricia Mainardi, "The Invention of the Illustrated Press in France," *French Politics, Culture & Society*, vol. 35, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 34–48. doi: 10.3167/fpcs.2017.350104.



FIGURE 82 Basile Kargopoulo, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid*, *c.*1850



FIGURE 83 Marie Alexandre Alophe, *Group Portrait of European Leaders during the Crimean War*, 1854

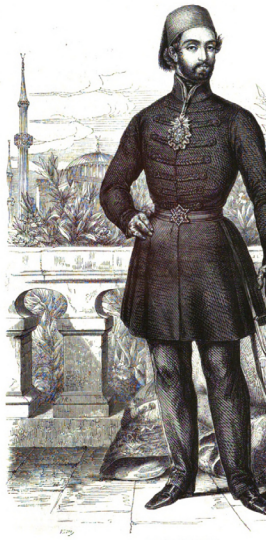


FIGURE 84 Artist unknown, paperweight with Abdülmecid, Napoleon III, and Victoria, nineteenth century

Even as the international press and commemorative war-souvenir markets propagated their own versions of the sultan's image, efforts from the Ottoman centre to shape and manage official forms continued throughout the second half of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. The campaigns of sultanic visibility pioneered by Selim III and pushed to new extremes under Mahmud II were sustained in the mid-nineteenth century by Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz. When Sultan Abdülhamid II ascended the throne in 1876, however, a new campaign of strict image control resulted in a markedly different relationship between power and visibility. While taking this dynamism into account, this chapter argues that Ottoman imperial portrait photography and its copies in the illustrated press, as modern image-making practices, signalled sultanic engagement with new international modes of visual communication while retaining important continuities with the centuries-old dynastic tradition of sultans' portraiture.

1 Models, Copies, and Reproductions

A quick study of the differences between and confluences of these modes may be made by considering, for example, the reproductions of Portet's portrait of Abdülmecid in the Millî Saraylar collection. The etching, likely produced in Paris, is relatively large in scale, captures the modelling of the figure's form through the skilful placement of incised lines and etched areas, and lends a richness to the shadows through the use of a velvety black ink. The Abdullah Frères photograph of Portet's portrait is based on the same model, but manages to include a wider range of nuanced tones, even though the image itself is overall much lighter in effect – an altogether different sort of technical mastery. Both copies – the photographic print and the intaglio print – are not, strictly speaking, images of the sultan himself, but rather images of an image of the sultan. In the photograph especially, the sultan's smooth skin and symmetrical features, combined with the crisp and even details of the military orders and embroidery of his jacket, offer a sense of clarity and control beyond the expectation of optical reality reproduced by the camera's lens. In other words, it is immediately identifiable as a photograph of a painting rather than a photograph of a living, multi-dimensional subject in real space under natural lighting conditions. At the same time, the photograph's overall contrast balance and the subtlety of its modulated tonality – hallmarks that would come to mark the work of Abdullah Frères as exceptional – show how photographic reproductions produced in Istanbul were some of the most technically and



Le sultan Abdul-Medjid.

FIGURE 85 Artist unknown, Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid, *L'Illustration*, March 25, 1854, 180



L'empereur Nicolas.

FIGURE 86 Artist unknown, Portrait of Czar Nicholas I, *L'Illustration*, March 25, 1854, 181

aesthetically advanced in the world in the 1860s and 70s.

The reproductive function of the above examples demonstrates how photography was quickly put to use as a tool for disseminating images of previous sultans, a function not totally unlike the historiographic and dynastic albums of centuries past (though of course scale and audience had undergone significant shifts). While their preciousness remained prized at court and in diplomatic spheres, larger numbers of viewers would have come into contact with images of Abdülmecid as they appeared in mass publications. The illustrated press of the mid-century often used the durable and economical wood engraving technique to translate images into a format compatible with the relief printing method of letterpress type, resulting in novel compositions combining text and image.[11] Images of Abdülmecid, sometimes surrounded with relevant text, were thus put into conversation with other rulers' images, continuing in some form the presentation of a cosmopolitan, modern sultanic identity as it was conceived under his forebear Selim III.

Driven by the curiosity of Euro-American readership on the subject of the Crimean War, illustrated journals reported on the person and policies of Abdülmecid, sometimes juxtaposing his portrait alongside that of his adversary, Czar Nicholas I. *L'Illustration*, for example, published

11 Gerry Beegan, "The Mechanization of the Image: Facsimile, Photography, and Fragmentation in Nineteenth-Century Wood Engraving," *Design Issues*, vol. 23, no. 4 (Autumn, 2007): 46–61. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1316021, last accessed July 12, 2023.



FIGURE 87 Artist unknown, Portrait of Sultan Abdülmecid, *Gleason's Pictorial*, April 1, 1854, 196

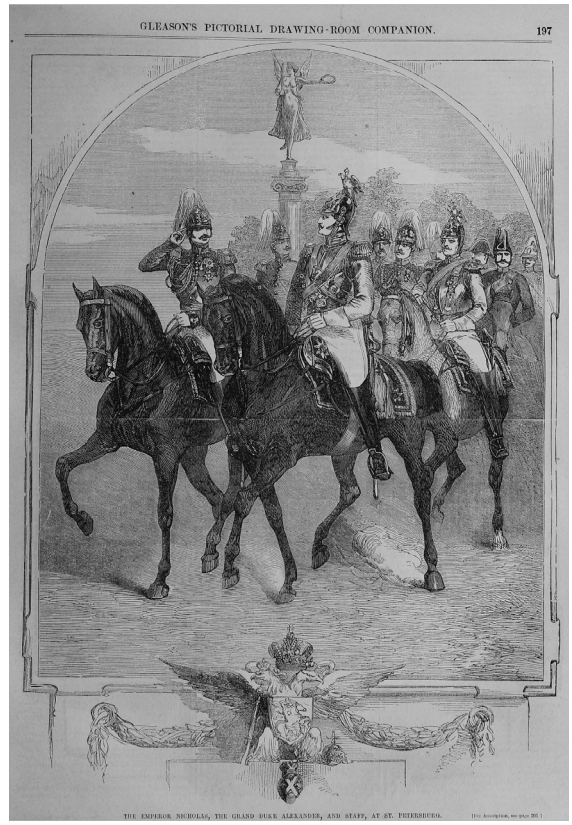


FIGURE 88 Artist unknown, Portrait of Czar Nicholas I, *Gleason's Pictorial*, April 1, 1854, 197

side-by-side portraits of the rulers literally framed with explanatory text touching on the conflict brought up by the czar's invoking the right of a protectorate over the Orthodox Christian subjects living in the Ottoman Balkans (Figs. 85 and 86). The images mirror each other: both are full-length, formal portraits of their respective subjects in military uniform, standing before a curtain. The sultan stands in front of the silhouette of an imperial mosque, while the czar is beside a table spread with a map of Russian, Balkan, and Ottoman territories – a suggestion of the contemporary conflict over domain.

Another portrait pair, published in the American journal *Gleason's Pictorial*, uses equestrian portraits of the sultan and czar, surrounded by their retinues on parade in their respective imperial capitals (marked by Hagia Sophia and the Alexander column, respectively) (Figs. 87 and 88).[12] Neither image pair seems to flatter one ruler over the other, and it is likely that all four engravings were based on some version of official, large-scale oil-on-canvas portraiture. While the originals may not have been designed with this particular juxtaposition in mind, similarities in their compositions and martial styles demonstrate the continued exchange of ruler and military-elite portraiture among Ottoman, Russian, and (eastern and western) European courts in the mid-nineteenth century.

A related, but singular, image of Abdülmecid published in a later edition of *L'Illustration* further supports this point while suggesting connections

12 *Gleason's Pictorial* 6, no. 13, April 1, 1854.



FIGURE 89 After Charles Doussault, *Sultan Abdülmecid, L'Illustration*, October 14, 1854, 261

between reportage-style draughtsmanship and imperial surveillance (Fig. 89).[13] The image was published alongside a letter from the artist himself, Charles Doussault (1814–80), originally written in December of 1846 to Adolphe Billecocq, who served as French Consul to the Romanian principalities (1839–46) before the war.[14] In the text, Doussault describes his arrival at the sultan's library at Çırağan Palace for a "*tête à tête*" (private) portrait sitting with Abdülmecid. During their meeting, the sultan asked for and examined sketches that the artist had made of Syria and the Romanian provinces, handling them with care and becoming lost in thought. When asked for his opinion on the composition of his portrait, the sultan replied that he wanted the image to resemble life "*le plus ressemblant possible*" (as closely as possible), but left all other decisions up to the artist.[15] Here, Doussault claims that it was his idea to have the sultan's cape flung back over his shoulders in order to show off the gold embroidery and diamonds of the ceremonial uniform, simultaneously revealing the silhouette of the man underneath the finery. He even takes credit for this new, less-concealed style when it was adopted by the sultan as he appeared in public for a *bayram* procession held two days later.[16]

Writing retrospectively, Doussault probably gave himself too much credit, both for bringing information on the Ottoman periphery to the attention of the sultan and for having an influence on the sultan's manner of wearing his cape. However, the artist's commentary does seem to align with larger truths about the sultan's continued concern with public visibility. For example, Abdülmecid continued to appear frequently in public processions in Istanbul for holidays, military reviews, and *selāmlık* ceremonies. While sultans of previous centuries did make public appearances under similar circumstances, barriers such as cordoning banners and the fan-like headgear of the Imperial Guard shielded more of the imperial visage from view. Commemorative paintings in the Resim Müzesi's collection document Abdülmecid's close proximity to the assembled crowds, his royal body

13 *L'Illustration*, vol. 14, no. 607, October 14, 1854, 261. The ÖNB holds two printed copies labeled "After M. Auer's 'Faust'" – a German-language illustrated magazine: PORT_00034292_01, http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/baa4165313 and PORT_00034293_01, http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/baa4165319, last accessed August 23, 2024.

14 For Doussault's travels in the Romanian provinces and his work for Billecocq, see Nicoleta Roman, "Iordache Filipescu, the 'Last Great Boyar' of Wallachia and His Heritage: A World of Power, Influence and Goods," *Cromohs* (*Cyber Review of Modern Historiography*) 21 (2017–2018): 106–22.

15 "*Je désire qu'il soit le plus ressemblant possible ; pour le reste, vous êtes artiste, et je m'en rapporte entièrement à vous.*" *L'Illustration*, vol. 14, no. 607, October 14, 1854, 261.

16 *L'Illustration*, vol. 14, no. 607, October 14, 1854.

still shielded by the Imperial Guard as dictated by convention, as well as by his voluminous cape. Yet the very fact of his in-person, public appearances and the artistic patronage for representative paintings commemorating such events shows that the sultan himself had already begun to "fling back" the mantle of occlusion from the moment that he took the throne. Like his father before him, Abdülmecid maintained his policy of visibility up until his death by tuberculosis in June of 1861, when the Ottoman throne passed to his half-brother, Abdülaziz.

2 Photography, Truth, and Beauty

Sultan Abdülaziz's declaration that Abdullah Frères had captured a "true" image during the 1863 photoshoot was in line with widely held assumptions of the camera as an instrument of science and veracity. That the value of the "pencil of nature" was in its ability to capture an unmediated visual record reflected the positivist ideals of the Enlightenment as they were established in western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Photographic "truths," of course, were always framed by a fallible human photographer who made decisions about subjects, posing, lighting, and timing.[17] Furthermore, variables in production, such as cropping, fragmenting, cutting, dodging, overexposing, re-touching negatives, and re-photographing provided even early practitioners with the ability to manipulate photographs.[18] Despite the use of these tricks of the trade, early photography did not produce the level of idealisation found in sultans' portraits of the earlier part of the century.

Its indexical nature made photographing live models risky; there was always the chance of catching unflattering or extemporaneous details. The danger in capturing these details through the lens was in their becoming fixed as reality, a particular vulnerability when working within a portraiture genre that had for centuries relied on the presentation of idealised physical and physiognomic markers as indicators of cosmic truths. Indeed, as Engin Özendes has pointed out, the first photographic images of Abdülaziz, taken by Jules Dérain, did not meet those standards and were rejected by the sultan and his ministers.[19] The rejection of an unbecoming photograph may seem a natural and perhaps even vain reaction from any sitter, but in the case of the sultan, whose body represented the manifestation of his inherent good character, any misrepresentation could have overt moral, spiritual, and political consequences.[20] In a photographic image of a modern sultan – just as in the case of a painted portrait, a poetic eulogy, or the physical body as it was presented during an official ceremony – truth and beauty went hand in hand. When Abdülaziz later accepted the Abdullah Frères portraits, it was for their ability to elegantly present the sultan simultaneously as a dignified member of a centuries-old dynasty and contemporary leader who embraced the latest technologies.

Portraits taken by Abdullah Frères became some of the most well-known and widely circulated images of the Ottoman sultan in the 1860s and 70s, transgressing the boundaries of genre and form as noted above. In a *carte de visite* found in

17 In the era of rapidly advancing artificial intelligence technologies, we are perhaps hyper-aware of the risks of trusting images, despite our reliance on them to navigate our image-saturated world.

18 For the tension between indexical reality and its manipulation, particularly with regard to ontological realisms used to categorise human subjects in the nineteenth-century, see Christopher Pinney, "Notes from the Surface of the Image: Photography, Postcolonialism, and Vernacular Modernism," in *Empires of Vision* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014): 450–70. See also Zeynep Çelik's chapter in the same volume, "Speaking Back to Orientalist Discourse," 395–414. A classic text on this topic is Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 3–64.

19 Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*, 39. See also Özendes, "Sultan Abdülaziz Dönemi İstanbul Fotoğrafçıları," *Millî Saraylar Sanat-Tarih-Mimarlık Dergisi* 18 (2019): 22–36, 30.

20 See Chapter 3.



FIGURE 90 Marguerite-Maria Chenu, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz, L'Exposition Universelle de 1867*, 1867, 305



FIGURE 91 Artist unknown, *Portrait of Sultan Abdülaziz*, 1867

multiple national and private collections (Fig. 59), the sultan is seated in a chair, looking off camera and to his left, holding his sword against his knee. The dignified pose, common in formal portraiture, is an idiom carried over from oil portraits.[21] In particular, it recalls David Wilkie's 1840 oil painting of Abdülmecid sitting on a sofa, his sword across his lap (Fig. 56). In both instances, each brother wears his respective military uniform complete with jacket, belt, fez, and military decorations. Their sartorial choices emphasize their physical differences: the tall *Mecīdiye* fez worn by Abdülmecid seems to accentuate his thin frame, whereas the squat *ʿAzīziye* fez emphasizes the rotund, wrestler's physique of Abdülaziz.[22] Additionally, Abdülaziz wears the first-class badges of the orders of *ʿOṣmānī* and *Mecīdī* pinned to his breast, with the *ʿOṣmānī* sash over his right shoulder. The *carte de visite* is a black-and-white image, yellowish in tone owing to the albumen print process, but colour versions of the portrait, produced by painting over the print, do exist.[23] Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the artist copied this image onto ivory, reattributing the precious quality of the miniature medallion format to the photographic model (Figs. 48 and 49).[24] Josef Manas, a younger cousin to the brothers Rupen and Sebuh, probably also

21 Fuad Pasha, for example, was posed similarly in a photograph by M. Legray later reprinted in *L'Illustration, Journal Universel* no. 802, vol. 32 (July 10, 1858): 1. https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.c046857811.

22 He was given the nickname "*pehlivān*" (champion) for his wrestling talent. Edhem Eldem, *Pride and Privilege: A History of Ottoman Orders, Medals and Decorations* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası, 2004), 216.

23 See for example TSM 17/228. The addition of colour highlights the symbolic use of red and green in the sash and orders. Edhem Eldem points out the ability of these colours to emphasize and make official "the dual character of Ottoman rule: caliphate and sultanate." See *Pride and Privilege: A History of Ottoman Orders, Medals and Decorations* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası, 2004), 217. This symbolism was also picked up in the history paintings on which Abdülaziz and Chlebowski collaborated. See Mary Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft and the 'Pencil of Nature': Photography, Painting, and Drawing at the Court of Sultan Abdülaziz," *Ars Orientalis* 43 (2013): 10–30, 23.

24 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 460.

used the photograph as a model when producing his miniatures of Sultan Abdülaziz in the 1890s.[25] Translating the sultan's image into the medallion format had dynastic connotations as well, since the form followed the "tradition" established by his father, Mahmud II.

3 Imperial Power on the World's (Fair's) Stage

In 1867, Abdülaziz made history by becoming the first Ottoman sultan to visit Europe, embarking upon a tour that included stops in Paris, London, and Vienna.[26] The impetus for the tour was an invitation from Emperor Napoleon III to attend the 1867 Paris Universal Exposition. The sultan's portrait as well as reportage images documenting his attendance at official events were circulated internationally through commemorative publications and the illustrated press.[27] For example, wood engravings based on the Abdullah Frères portrait appeared in an official catalogue of the exposition published in Paris (Fig. 90) as well as the popular newspaper *Illustrirtes Extrablatt* in Vienna (Fig. 91). Images of the sultan's arrival at Dover and Charing-Cross rail station were published in *The Illustrated London News* (Figs. 92 and 93) and his visit with Prince Louis-Napoleon (1856–79) was printed in a commemorative album the following year (Fig. 94). Print media and photography therefore took on new roles in addition to distributing the approved version of rulers' portraits, highlighting friendly diplomatic relationships by documenting interactions between representatives of the Ottoman Empire and Western-European nations.

While reportage illustrations such as those mentioned above give the impression of a snapshot, they are not based on instantaneous photographic captures and in many cases depict moments of action that would have been beyond the technical abilities of shutter speeds for documenting moving subjects in the 1860s. Talented engravers managed to suggest a sense of movement in gathered crowds while preserving the decorum of powerful leaders and royal subjects. These depictions satisfied the curiosities of interested readers, simultaneously having the effect of incorporating the sultan into modern modes of ceremony hosted by members of the Council of Europe, of which the Ottoman Empire was also a member at the time.

The arts section of the Ottoman Pavilion at the 1867 Paris Universal Exposition itself played host to several official images of Abdülaziz, displayed among images of other Ottoman and French political, diplomatic, and religious leaders.[28] Mary Roberts has argued that this display "formed a hinge between the long-standing tradition of representing the Ottoman sultans through painting and the current sultan's embrace of the modern medium of photography."[29] This assertion fits well within the goals of the Ottoman propaganda projects designed to bolster the legitimacy of the dynasty through formal and visual continuities, but it is also specific to the level of amplification encountered between the third and seventh decades of the nineteenth century. When considered alongside photography's reputation for veracity, it has the further effect of retroactively legitimising historical works as they had been witnessed (or as they were imagined to have existed) in the eyes of elite diplomatic audience members.

In 1869, a commemorative bronze portrait was struck to commemorate the sultan's historic visit

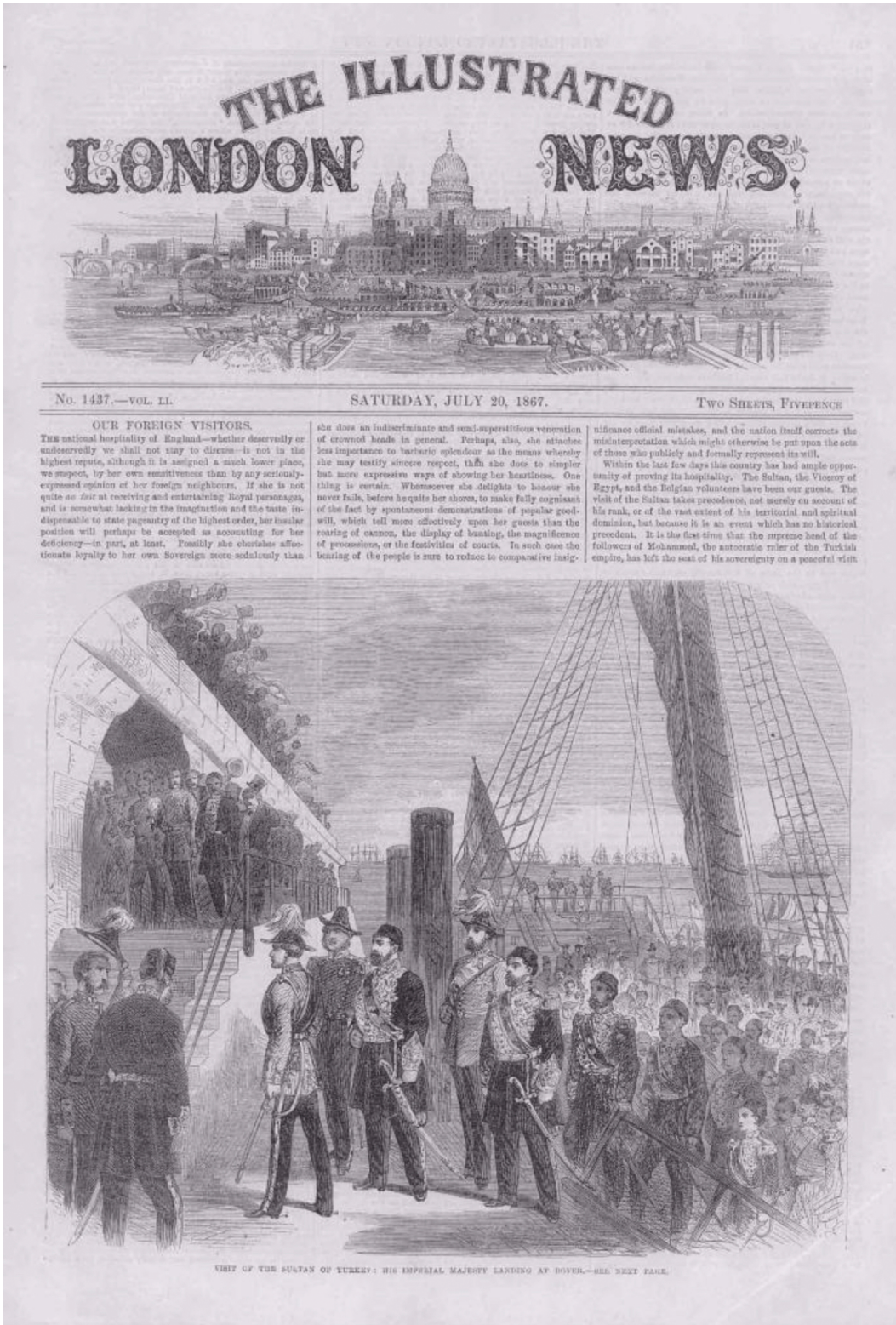
25 Renda, "Portraits, the last century," 524.

26 Abdülaziz was also the first to organise a universal exhibition in Istanbul: *sergi-i ʿumūmī-i ʿoṣmānī* (the Ottoman General Exhibition). Held in Sultanahmet Square in 1863, the fair featured products of Ottoman agriculture, industry, and arts. The arts section included drawings, paintings, wood and metal engravings, printing, and photographs by Abdullah Frères. However, the photographs were mostly scenic and did not include portraits of the sultan. Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*, 39.

27 Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft," 17.

28 Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft," 17.

29 Roberts, "Ottoman Statecraft," 17. The Abdullah Frères photographs on display also included panoramas of Istanbul.



THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

No. 1437.—VOL. LI. SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1867. TWO SHEETS, FIVEPENCE

OUR FOREIGN VISITORS.

THE national hospitality of England—whether deservedly or undeservedly we shall not stay to discuss—is not in the highest repute, although it is assigned a much lower place, we suspect, by her own sensitiveness than by any seriously-expressed opinion of her foreign neighbours. If she is not quite *au fait* at receiving and entertaining Royal personages, and is somewhat lacking in the imagination and the taste indispensable to state pageantry of the highest order, her insular position will perhaps be accepted as accounting for her deficiency—in part, at least. Possibly she cherishes affectionate loyalty to her own Sovereign more sedulously than she does an indiscriminate and semi-superstitious veneration of crowned heads in general. Perhaps, also, she attaches less importance to barbaric splendour as the means whereby she may testify sincere respect, than she does to simpler but more expressive ways of showing her heartiness. One thing is certain. Whomsoever she delights to honour she never fails, before he quits her shores, to make fully cognisant of the fact by spontaneous demonstrations of popular goodwill, which tell more effectively upon her guests than the roaring of cannon, the display of bunting, the magnificence of processions, or the festivities of courts. In such case the bearing of the people is sure to reduce to comparative insignificance official mistakes, and the nation itself corrects the misinterpretation which might otherwise be put upon the acts of those who publicly and formally represent its will.

Within the last few days this country has had ample opportunity of proving its hospitality. The Sultan, the Viceroy of Egypt, and the Belgian volunteers have been our guests. The visit of the Sultan takes precedence, not merely on account of his rank, or of the vast extent of his territorial and spiritual dominion, but because it is an event which has no historical precedent. It is the first time that the supreme head of the followers of Mohammed, the autocratic ruler of the Turkish empire, has left the seat of his sovereignty on a peaceful visit

VISIT OF THE SULTAN OF TURKEY: HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY LANDING AT DOVER.—SEE NEXT PAGE.

FIGURE 92 Artist unknown, Abdülaziz arriving at Dover, *Illustrated London News*, July 20, 1867, 51



FIGURE 93 Artist unknown, Abdülaziz arriving at Charring Cross, *Illustrated London News*, July 20, 1867, 56



FIGURE 94 Trichon, Abdülaziz's visit with the Imperial Prince at Élysée Palace, *Grand album de l'Exposition Universelle 1867*, 1867

to London two years earlier. Designed by the British engravers Joseph Shepherd Wyon (1836–73) and Alfred Benjamin Wyon (1837–84), the portrait is based on an Abdullah Frères photograph in which the sultan is in profile, wearing an overcoat and fez.[30] The reverse was decorated with an allegory representing London and the Ottoman Empire, underscoring the continued diplomatic relationship between the allies.[31] The medallion format connects Abdülaziz's "true" photographic image to other ruler medallions, situating the sultan simultaneously as belonging among the other European rulers present at the exposition and within the long line of Ottoman sultans commemorated in series such as the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* and the genealogical trees that continued to be reproduced through the twentieth century.[32] Abdülaziz and his advisors' recognition of the capacity for world's fairs to improve the visibility of the sultan as well as the artistic, cultural, economic, and industrial products of the Ottoman Empire was demonstrated in its continued participation in exhibitions abroad, including the extensive artistic commissions of the 1873 International Exposition in Vienna.[33]

4 The Restricted Image: Abdülhamid II

In a reversal of the visibility campaigns supported by his predecessors in the early part of the nineteenth century, Sultan Abdülhamid II did not allow his image to circulate freely within the empire during the majority of his reign. After taking the throne in 1876, Abdülhamid II initially renewed Abdullah Frères' title as Photographers to His Majesty, though no photographs of the sultan by the brothers exist.[34] By this time, the Abdullah Frères had achieved great fame and enjoyed patronage from an international clientele. They were so well known that a group of Russian officers who were staying near Istanbul at the conclusion of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877–78 invited Kevork to make their portraits.[35] Hearing of the brothers' cordial attitude toward the enemy, Abdülhamid II withdrew their title, granting it to their competitor, Kargopoulo. Kargopoulo likewise made no images of the reigning sultan, though he did take photographs of the future Mehmed V and VI as princes.[36]

In 1880, an imperial rescript was issued forbidding unauthorized portraits of the sultan and the Abdullah Frères' studio was raided on the grounds that they had taken one.[37] A glass plate negative of the sultan's image was confiscated and all

30 Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 226.

31 For the date of the photograph, June 18, 1869, see Bahattin Öztuncay, *Dersaadet'in Fotoğrafçıları. 19.Yüzyıl İstanbulunda Fotoğraf: Öncüler, Stüdyolar, Sanatçılar*, 2 vols. (Istanbul: Aygaz, 2003), 1:208. See also Eldem, *Pride and Privilege*, 229.

32 The form has echoes reaching back the medallions of Sultan Mehmed II in the fifteenth century.

33 For more on the official use of photography in the 1873 International Exposition in Vienna, see Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-century World's Fairs*, Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); and Ahmet Ersoy, "A Sartorial Tribute to Late Tanzimat Ottomanism: The *Elbise-i 'Oşmānīyye Album*," *Muqarnas* 20 (2003): 187–207.

34 Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*.

35 Following their victory over the Ottomans, the Russian troops advanced as far as San Stefano (present day Yeşilköy). Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*, 83.

36 For more on Vasilaki (Basile) Kargopoulo, see Bahattin Öztuncay *Vassilaki Kargopoulo: Photographer to His Majesty the Sultan* (Istanbul: BOS, 2000).

37 Özendes argues that the rescript was a retaliatory measure against the firm for the Russian incident, *Abdullah Frères*, 83. An alternative explanation for the ban was conjectured in *The Daily Telegraph*. According to their report, Abdülhamid II's patronage of the painter Osman Hamdi Bey (1842–1910) popularised the fashion for having one's portrait taken among the Muslim faithful of Istanbul. Some conservative actors "caused caricatures of the Sultan and of certain unpopular statesmen to be printed on cigarette-paper, and brought into rapid circulation by fanatical tobacconists and Kafedjis," whereupon the images were confiscated and forbidden. *The Daily Telegraph* no. 7,951, November 24, 1880, 5. A similar claim that an official notice "prohibiting the sale of match-boxes ornamented with the Sultan's portrait, as also cigarette papers enclosed in envelopes bearing the likeness of the ancient Kings of Armenia" was passed



FIGURE 95 Abdullah Frères, *Sultan Abdülhamid II* (as a prince), 1869



FIGURE 96 William Downey, *Sultan Abdülhamid II* (as a prince), 1867

copies destroyed, though it is unclear from the document if the issue was with the image itself, the lack of permission, or Kevork's relationship with the Russians.[38] Viçen eventually reclaimed the title of Photographer to His Majesty, but Abdülhamid II never relinquished control over the imperial image.[39] The reasons behind the sultan's restriction of his own photograph were known fully only to the sultan himself, though we might assume that there were a variety of factors that contributed to this tendency, including the idea that depictions were inappropriate for his office as Caliph, security concerns, and mental health issues.[40] The few painted portraits of Abdülhamid that exist within palace collections were probably only seen by the elite and foreign visitors and would not have raised the same concerns.[41] Whatever the reasons, the scarcity of

was reported in *The Examiner* no. 3,800, November 27, 1880, 10.

38 Engin Özendes, *Abdullah Frères*, 83–87.

39 Viçhen was named "Chief Photographer to His Majesty the Sultan" in 1889. Bahattin Öztuncay, *Dersaadet'in Fotoğrafçıları*, 225.

40 For a recent biography of the sultan touching on the politics of his position as Caliph and the question of his "fanatical" convictions, see François Georgeon, *Abdülhamid II: Le sultan calife* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

41 TSM 17/126, 17/397. Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 530–31.

the sultan's image at the end of the nineteenth century increased the power of any available image – official or unofficial – to lay claim to shaping verifiable reality.

Because no new photographic portraits were made of Abdülhamid II after he ascended the throne, when foreign publishers wanted to illustrate a story about the sultan, they had to make do with one of the three photos taken before he took the throne.[42] These included the Abdullah Frères photo of 1869 (Fig. 95) as well as two photos taken during the London visit of 1867 (Fig. 96). In the former, the young prince stands before the camera, one hand resting on a marble tabletop, returning the gaze of the viewer. His frock coat is unbuttoned slightly, revealing a pocket watch, itself a symbol of modernity, technical precision, and an interest in international commerce. Through his pose and outfit, the prince presents himself as a cosmopolitan, modern gentleman in line with the ways in which the Ottoman elite (including Ottoman-Balkan princes) were presenting themselves in the 1860s and 70s. In a case study on this image, Erin Hyde Nolan has shown how it was copied, appropriated, and disseminated in various formats, including an "aged" image of the sultan with a full beard, produced seven years later. The ability of a photograph like this to include a changing identity beyond its original circumstances is reminiscent of the "double Mahmuds" examined in the first chapter of this book – multiple and subjective, the sultan's image encompassed the possibility of change as it was circulated.

In 1867, while travelling across Europe with his uncle, Sultan Abdülaziz, Prince Abdülhamid and his brother, Prince Murad, were photographed by Queen Victoria's favourite photographer, William Downey (1829–1915), in Buckingham Palace. Like the photographers of Abdullah Frères, Downey was a partner in the family-run commercial photographic firm W. & D. Downey.[43] In the 1867 portrait, Prince Abdülhamid is seated in a chair, wearing a heavily embroidered military uniform and fez. He is posed with the accoutrement of a modern leader – the kid gloves representing civil diplomatic discourse as well as the sword representing martial strength. Due to the 1880 restriction on his image, this photograph became the most widely reproduced portrait of Abdülhamid outside of the empire, even after he became sultan. In a poignant example, the French magazine *Le Petit Journal* reprinted a colourised version of the image on the cover of their February 21, 1897 issue, even though it was 30 years out of date by this time (Fig. 97). On October 22, 1898, an "aged" version of the photograph, showing the Sultan linked arm-in-arm with Kaiser Wilhelm II (r. 1888–1918), appeared on the cover of *L'Illustration* (Fig. 98), hinting at the growing anxieties of France and Britain over the alliance of the Ottoman and German empires at the turn of the century.

5 Hamidian Albums

While Abdülhamid II did not commission photographic portraits of himself, he was fascinated with photography's ability to represent and catalogue information. The sultan kept an extensive library of tens of thousands of images and, from 1894 onwards, a photo studio at Yıldız Palace.[44] These

42 It is of course possible that photographic portraits were taken of Abdülhamid II as reigning sultan, but none have survived. Bahattin Öztuncay suggests that a "glass dispositive" based on a photograph by Abdullah Frères in 1875–76 exists. See Öztuncay, *Hanedan ve Kamera: Osmanlı Sarayından portreler, Ömer M. Koç Koleksiyonu / Dynasty and Camera: Portraits from the Ottoman Court, Ömer M. Koç Collection* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2011), 59. See also Erin Hyde Nolan, "Two-Faced," 38.

43 Similarly, once appointed as the official photographer of the British royal family, Downey took portraits of many contemporary rulers, including Naser al-Din Shah Qajar of Persia (r. 1848–96), who visited London for the first time in 1873, when he was bestowed with the Order of the Garter by Queen Victoria.

44 Engin Özendes, *Photography in the Ottoman Empire 1839–1923* (Istanbul: YEM Yayın, 2013).



FIGURE 97 Artist unknown, Cover of *Le Petit Journal*, February 21, 1897

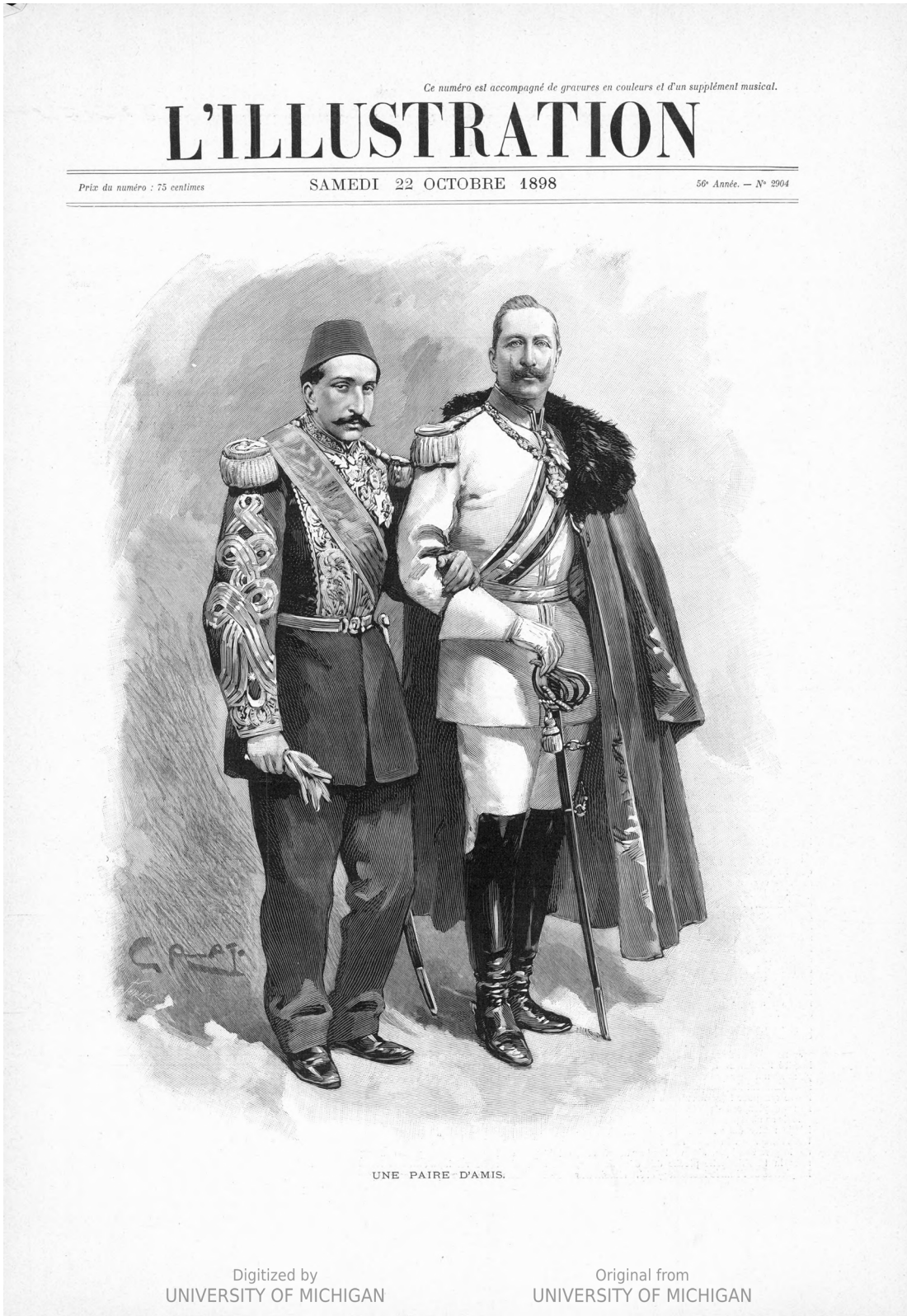


FIGURE 98 Artist unknown, Cover of *L'Illustration*, October 22, 1898

photographs allowed the sultan to "see" his empire by collecting visual information about regions, people, monuments, institutions, resources, and developments. They also increased the visibility of these subjects when they were circulated abroad as part of a series of albums representing the identity of and emphasising the modernisation projects within the Ottoman Empire. The sultan actively commissioned photographers to document important diplomatic events such as the official visit of Wilhelm II and Augusta Victoria in 1891,[45] the Kaiser's meeting the Ottoman fleet in the Dardanelles in 1889, and his 1898 trip to the Holy Lands.[46] The photographic documentation of these events was important in framing the sultan as an important player in international politics, even as the Ottoman Empire was experiencing territorial and political instability. Ottoman photography in this context therefore represents at least two different modes of visibility: the enactment of surveillance and the presentation of a controlled, outward-facing image of the empire.

In the early 1890s, Abdülhamid II worked with his advisors, including the military photographer Ali Rıza Bey, to commission six different photographic firms, including Abdullah Frères, to prepare a series of albums culminating in two 51-album sets containing albumen prints.[47] The albums displayed a selective slice of the cultures, customs, and religious rituals to which the empire could make an exclusive claim on the world stage. At the same time, they demonstrated a clear effort to promote the successes of modernisation projects, emphasizing military, healthcare, and educational institutions though images of soldiers, hospital workers, and students. The emphasis on government buildings and the orderly, loyal subjects who populate them was not exclusive to photography, and idioms developed in earlier paintings and drawings can be detected. For example, photographs of the Ottoman navy – one of the largest in the world at the time – continued an interest in ship "portraits" and glorified paintings of marine battles, arsenal buildings, and shoreside ceremonies that had already been established in the palace painting collections. The Bosphorus was given particular emphasis as a marker of Istanbul's identity, its strategic military, commercial, and cultural importance clearly articulated in a variety of other media in the Ottoman context, including murals, oil-on-canvas paintings, pocket watches, and snuff boxes. Such visions looked forward as well as backward to document, display, and order the Ottoman Empire.

About 30 years after Abdullah Frères took the "true likeness" of Abdülaziz, following the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the photographic albums were sent as diplomatic gifts to the United States and the United Kingdom (in 1893 and 1894, respectively).[48] Abdülhamid II's engagement with such diplomatic exchanges and his collection of vast amounts of visual information highlight the contradiction of a sultan who loved photography but refused to be photographed himself.

6 Conclusion

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the genre of sultans' portraits incorporated new media, models, and techniques. Yet members of

45 The arrival is documented by Viçhen as having occurred on November 2, 1891. See Erin Hyde Nolan, "The Gift of the Abdülhamid II Albums: The Consequences of Photographic Circulation," *TransAsia Photography* Vol 9, issue 2: Circulation, Spring 2019, n.p. footnote 50. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.7977573.0009.207, last accessed July 13, 2023.

46 The visit to the Holy Lands is documented in *The Levant Herald*, October 24, 1889. Cited by Darin Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility and Popular Belonging in the Ottoman Empire, 1808–1908* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), 151.

47 The military photographer Ali Rıza Bey played an important role in bringing the project to light, running the photo studio at Yıldız. For Ali Rıza, see Bahattin Öztuncay, *Dersaadet'in Fotoğrafçıları*.

48 For the albums going to the fair, see Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 45. Digital images of the American albums can be accessed here: https://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/ahii/, last accessed July 13, 2023.

the House of Osman, their ministers, and the artists employed by them never relinquished the vital visual ties to established image-making practices, legitimising contemporary systems of power by citing Ottoman forebears. The rise of the illustrated press and of photographic technologies in particular marked a new chapter in the expanded visibility of the sultans of the mid-century. For practitioners and audiences alike, these media signalled new ways of gathering and dispersing visual information about the person of the sultan, the Ottoman Empire, and the international political and cultural systems in which they were fully engaged.

As the events of the Crimean War drew attention from international audiences, portraits of Sultan Abdülmecid were adapted from grand-scale oil paintings to be printed in the illustrated press. Publications such as *L'Illustration* and *Gleason's Pictorial* reproduced these unofficial images beside those of Czar Nicholas I, taking both portraits out of their original context while inadvertently enforcing the idea that both the Ottoman and Russian empires were on comparable journeys toward modernisation on a Western-European model, albeit at the behest of their respective autocrats. Even when official versions of rulers' portraits were employed as models, the foreign press did not always picture rulers as their respective centres of power would have wished them to be seen.

The rise to fame of Abdullah Frères, in combination with the networking role of political actors such as Fuad and Ali Pashas, brought the "true likeness" of Abdülaziz to elite diplomatic circles in *carte de visite* form. Wood engravings based on their model joined the cacophony of the international illustrated press and were reproduced on the pages of publications including *The Illustrated London News* and *Illustrirtes Extrablatt*. Reportage images documenting the sultan's arrival in Paris, London, and Vienna during his European tour of 1867 increased the visibility of the sultan as an embodied presence. Together, such images worked to expand the audience for official spectacle, bringing the sultan's image to readers beyond the crowds who packed into the events of the Paris Universal Exhibition to see His Imperial Majesty in person.

Under Abdülhamid II, the foreign press continued to publish images of the sultan. From 1880 onwards, however, political events and other conditions resulted in the strict control of his photographic likeness within the Ottoman Empire. Publications such as *Le Petit Journal* and *L'Illustration* used creative means to age and alter Downey's 1867 portrait of then-Prince Abdülhamid in their coverage of the political events of the pre-war era. In this way, a graphic reproduction of a photograph of an Ottoman prince from 30 years ago was seen walking arm-in-arm with Kaiser Wilhelm on the cover of a Parisian publication on the eve of WWI. Once again, the image of the modern sultan had undergone a series of radical shifts at the hands of many actors.

Conclusion: Legacies of Aesthetic Shifts and New Approaches

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the image of the modern sultan underwent aesthetic shifts in response to the visibility campaigns of individual sultans and their propagandists, internal reform measures, and external pressures. The turn of the century saw the increase in the diplomatic exchange of sultans' portraits under Selim III, who exchanged images with Napoleon I in a show of "friendship and sincerity." The success of Selim III's printed image was rolled into a new project of dynastic legitimacy that took advantage of advances in printmaking technologies – the *Kapıdağlı-Young Album* completed under the auspices of Mahmud II. This series would have a lasting impact throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, variations being reproduced in formats including lithographs, *cartes de visite*, embroidery, furniture, postcards, and even poster formats (Fig. 99) under Abdülhamid II and Mehmed V Reşad.[1] Even as the power and influence of the sultan shifted drastically during the First and Second Constitutional Eras (1876–78; 1908–22), stately visual representations and dynastic series acted as templates for ordering the rulers of the House of Osman within a stable dynastic narrative.

New approaches and surprising turns in the dynastic album form, such as the "Double Mahmuds" produced around the middle of the century, bore witness to changes in sartorial presentation and accompanying shifts in the visibility of the sultan's body during Istanbul-based ceremonies held under Mahmud II and Abdülmecid. New forms in Ottoman ceremony itself played an important role in the distribution of the image of Mahmud II across Istanbul's cityscape in both miniature-scale medallions and large-scale oil-on-canvas *taṣāvīr-i hümāyūn*. The "order" of the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı*, first distributed under Mahmud II and later, on a smaller scale, under his sons, Abdülmecid and Abdülaziz, served variously and simultaneously as a marker of loyalty, merit, and rank. Its distribution to Ottoman military men, bureaucrats, religious-judiciary experts, and foreign rulers and their representatives was recorded and published in the state newspaper *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ*. The same outlet published reports of Mahmud II's portrait-inauguration ceremonies – perhaps the most controversial, surprising, and extreme version of sultanic visibility and proxy portraiture to have ever been seen in the Ottoman context.[2] In Istanbul, these ceremonies reinscribed the imperial presence onto the capital city, highlighting the military barracks, schools, and government offices in which they were installed. Reports picked up in the international press – in combination with the proxy function of the sultan's portrait at the newly-re-established permanent embassies in London, Paris, and Vienna – framed the sultan's new look as an indication of his interest in participating in the established diplomatic systems of Europe as well as of the plans for modernising changes to come.

The reach of the sultan's authority was underlined by the distribution and re-presentation of the "embedded" *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn nişānı* within Balkan princely portraits. Here, the sultan's image was framed as a symbol of legitimisation for semi-independent actors governing the "buffer" territories between the Ottoman, Russian, and Austrian empires. Prince Miloš of Serbia wore the decoration despite the fact that he had ascended to political power while leading local rebellions against the sultan's imperial authority during the Serbian independence movement. Similarly, Princes Mihail and Alexandru in the Romanian provinces

1 Roberts, *Istanbul Exchanges*, 33–35; Avcıoğlu, "Immigrant Narratives"; Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 462.

2 For more on the short-lived phenomenon of Ottoman portraiture-inauguration ceremonies, see my forthcoming article, "Mapping the Miracle-Showing Portrait in Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 41 (2025).

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FIGURE 99 Artist unknown, Poster with Ottoman Sultans' Portraits, *c.*1908–09

of Moldavia and Wallachia used sartorial choices to shore up their own political ascendancy and the power that they derived from their joint appointment by the courts of Istanbul and St. Petersburg.

Images of these local leaders as well as unofficial portraits of the sultan were published in the illustrated press of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Newspapers, journals, and magazines shared and reprinted images, juxtaposing them with text in ways that complicated the original intentions of sultans' portraits, often putting them in conversation with representations of other contemporary rulers in the context of the Crimean War and other international conflicts. While the international press continued to print images of Abdülhamid II throughout the 1880s, the image of the sultan was tightly controlled at home. The message of this new turn towards occlusion was received differently by various audiences: for some Ottomans and other members of Islamic nations, the restriction of his photograph helped to bolster the image of a pious spiritual leader. For others, especially foreign viewers from Western-European contexts, the restriction played into notions of despotism and the long-established illusion of an unchanging, mysterious leader. Despite this restriction, Abdülhamid II clearly understood the power of the curated image, commissioning Ottoman artists including Halil Pasha (1857–1939) and Hasan Rıza (1860–1912) to make copies of the portraits of his forbears for his museum complex at Yıldız Palace.[3]

After the deposition of Abdülhamid II, series and singular portraits of Ottoman sultans continued to be produced into the first decades of the twentieth century. Sultan Mehmed VI Vahdeddin, the last sultan of the Ottoman Empire, was photographed often and his image appeared in the international press coverage of the Turkish War of Independence (1919–23). Abdülmecid Efendi, who served as caliph after the sultanate was abolished, was an artist himself and painted portraits of former sultans as the final chapters of the Ottoman Empire came to an end.

In 2021, many of the dynastic portraits from the palace collections were transferred from the Topkapı Palace to the Millî Saraylar Resim Müzesi on the grounds of the Dolmabahçe Palace. They hang as a more-or-less continuous series within a secure, darkened chamber. Individually, the portraits command reverence, but together, the weighty power of dynasty, history, and legacy addresses the viewer directly. Looking back as viewers today, having never laid eyes on or spoken with these historical figures, we remain susceptible to the power of such works to conflate notions of beauty, good moral qualities, and power – ideas that were central to the propaganda campaigns of their own time. The appearance of the modern sultan lives on, giving form to our collective ideas about what a leader should look like on a global stage, even within our contemporary consciousness.

3 Renda, "Portraits: the last century," 462.

APPENDIX 1

Transcription of *Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ* No. 133

Taḳvīm-i Veḳāyiʿ
defʿa 133
fī r [Rabiʿ II] 25
sene 1252
[…]
Mevādd-ı ʿAskeriyye
Cenāb-ı ziynet-baḫşā-yı vucūh-ı maḫlūḳāt tenezzehu ẕātuhu ʿan eṣ-ṣuveri ve'l-hey'āt şevketlü
kerāmetlü mahābetlü pādişāhımız pādişāh-ı mebẕūlü'l-ʿināyāt efendimiz ḥażretleriniñ
vücūd-ı lāzımü'l-mevcūd-ı mülūkānelerini ʿilel ve emrāżdan maṣūn ve kemāl-i tendürüstī
ve ʿāfiyetle ḳalb-i ilhām-ı nebʿ-i şāhānelerini envāʿ-ı ṣafā ve inşirāḥa maḳrūn ve ẓıll-ı
ẓalīl-i ʿadīmü'l-ʿadīl-i şehrīyārānelerini mufāriḳ-i ʿubbādda ebed-nümūn buyursun āmīn.
Her-bār aḳdem-i efkār-i cihāndārīleri talṭīf-i bendegān-ı ṣıdḳ-rehīn ve teşvīḳ
ve taṭyīb-i ḳulūb-ı ʿasākir-i ġayret-güzīn ḫuṣūṣlarına maṣrūf ve himem-i
bülend-tev'em-i tācdārīleri nev-be-nev āṯār-ı ḥasene īfā ve iẓhārına maʿṭūf
buyurula geldigi emr-i müsellem ve cünūd-ı ẓafernümūd-ı mülūkāneleri eṣnāf-ı niʿem ü nevāziş
ve elṭāf-ı bī-pāyān-ı şehrīyārāneleriyle mütenaʿim ve pür-mesārr ve edʿiye-i ḫayriyye-i ʿömr ü iḳbāl
ve şevket-i cihānbānīleriyle güẕārende-i leyl ü nehār olduḳları vāreste-i ḳayd-ı raḳam iken
iltifāt-ı seniyye-i sābıḳa-ı mā-lā-nihāyeye bir iʿtiṭāf ve ʿināyāt lāḥiḳa-ı cihān-behā olmaḳ
üzere sene-i sābıḳada Maçḳada kā'in Mekteb-i ʿUlūm-ı Ḥarbiyye-i Şāhāneye ve māh-ı
sābıḳda yaʿnī işbu sene-i mübāreke şehr-i rebīʿül-evvelinde Rāmīde vāḳıʿ ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūn-ı
pādişāhāneye ʿināyet ve iḥsan buyurulan taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı muʿciz-nümūn-ı şehinşāhī
miṣillü Selīmiyede kā'in ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūna daḫī bir ḳıṭʿa taṣvīr-i şems-naẕīr-i mülūkāne
ʿināyet buyurulacaġı devletlü Müşīr Paşa ḥażretlerine tebşīr ve beyān ve māh-ı
meẕkūruñ yirmi ṭoḳuzcu perşembe günü irsāli taṣmīmāt-i ʿaliyye iḳtiżāsından
idügi emr ü fermān buyurulmuş idügine binā'en ṣūret-i emr ü fermān-ı ḥażret-i
mülūkāne ṭaraf-ı vālā-yı ḥażret-i serʿaskerīye ve dāmād-ı cenab-ı cihānbānī
devletlü Saʿid Paşa ḥażretlerine müşīr-i müşārunileyh ḥażretleri ṭaraflarından
daʿvet-nāmeler taḫrīriyle beyān ve teşrīfleri ḫuṣūṣu istidʿā ve ümerā ve żābiṭān-ı
ʿAsākir-i Manṣūre-i Şāhāneniñ ve Ṭopḫāne-i ʿĀmire ve Ḫumbaraḫāne-i Maʿmūre ʿAsākir-i
Manṣūresi żābiṭānınıñ yevm-i meẕkūrda sāʿat birde iken Mābeyn-i Hümāyūn
ittiṣālında kā'in sāḥilḫāne-i müşīrīde bulunmaları iltimās ve imbā' olunmuş ve Tersāne-i
ʿĀmire Sancāḳ Beyleri ve ʿAsākir-i Baḥriyye żābiṭānınıñ gelmeleri daḫī kendilere
ifāde ḳılınmış olduġundan müşārunileyhimā ḥażarātı erkence teşrīf-birle
żābiṭān-ı mūmāileyhim seḥrī-nişān ve ṣırmalı aġır elbise-i resmiyye ve apoletleriyle
gelmiş ve müşīr-i müşārunileyh ḥażretleriniñ deryā *ḳapūdānlıġı* ḳā'immaḳāmlıġına me'mūriyetleri
olmaḳ ve ʿasākir-i şāhāneniñ ṭopu bir bulunmaḳ ḥasebiyle ʿAsākir-i Muntaẓama-ı Baḥriyyeden
tam bir ṭabur daḫī nev-resm sancāḳlı ṣandallarla uṣūl-ı merġūbe-i baḥriyye vechle
civār-i sāḥilḫāne-i meẕkūra geçirilmiş ve merāsim-i istiḳbal ve alḳışıñ icrāsı
żımnında ʿAsākir-i Ḫāṣṣa-ı Şāhāneniñ iki ṭabru ṣaġ ve ṣol başlarında
üçer ḳıṭʿa ṭop ve mükemmel alay muziḳası ile Beylerbeyi Sāḥilsarāy-ı
ʿĀlīsi verāsında Fıstıḳlı Bayır nām maḥalle ve bir ṭaburu maḥall-i meẕkur ile Nuḥ
Ḳuyusu beyninde vāḳiʿ cāddeye ve diger iki ṭaburu keẕālik altı ḳıṭʿa ṭop
ve muziḳa ile Tazıcılar Meydānına ve iki ṭaburu dört ḳıṭʿa ṭop ile Meḥmed

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Paşa Ḳaṣr-ı Vālāsı pişgāhına ve Mekteb-i ʿUlūm-ı Ḥarbiyye-i Şāhāneden müretteb
bir ṭabur daḫī derūn-ı ḳışlaya ve altı ḳıṭʿa ṭop ve kendülere maḫṣūṣ
atlı muziḳasıyla bir alay süvārī Ṣıraselviler taʿbīr olunur Ḥaydar Paşa Ṣaḥrāsı
fevḳine ve sālifü'ẕ-ẕikr baḥriye ṭaburu daḫī iki ḳıṭʿa ṭop ve baḥriye
muziḳasıyla Bağlarbaşı taʿbīr kılınur ṭarīḳe iʿzām birle ṣaff-beste-i selām
ve muntaẓır-ı taṣvīr-i hümāyūn-ı Pādişāh-ı dārā-ġulām olaraḳ sāḥilsarāy-ı muʿallā-yı
meẕkūrdan ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūna varınca degin ḳırḳar adım fāṣıla ile
süvāri ve piyāde ḳaraḳolları daḫī vażʿ ve taḫṣīṣ kılınmış olduġu ḥālde
tertīb-i ālāya mübāderetle mārrü'ẕ-ẕikr ümerā ve żābiṭān-ı mūmāileyhim esb-süvār ve ʿasākir-i
ḫāṣṣa-ı merḳūmeden altmış nefer mülāzım ve altmış nefer çavuş māşīyen pīşrev-i alāy-ı
behcet-niṣār olmuş ve taṣvīr-i ʿālī-i şāhāne istiḥżār olunmuş olduġuna mebnī
taḫṣīṣ ḳılınān fayṭon seng-i rikāba yanaştırılaraḳ muʿazzezen maḥalline vażʿ birle
ferīḳ-i ḫaṣṣa-ı şāhāne ʿaṭūfetlü Fetḥī Paşa ve Çirmen Sancāġı mutaṣarrıfı
devletlü Muṣṭafa Nūrī Paşa ve ḫaṣṣa ve manṣūre müşīrleri müşārunileyhimā ḥażarātı
fayṭon-ı meẕkuruñ öñünde ve bu ḫıdmet-i müstelzimü'l-mefḫarete meʾmūr buyurulan
ḫavāṣṣ-ı muḳarrebīn-i ḥażret-i mülūkāneden ʿutūfetlü ʿİzzet Bey ḥażretleriyle
ẕāt-ı ḥażret-i serʿaskerī daḫī arḳasında olaraḳ ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūn-ı meẕkūra
ʿazīmet olunmuş ve kemāl-bende-i nüvāzī ve merāḥim-sāzī-i cenāb-ı mülūkāneden nāşī
ẕāt-ı firişte-ṣıfat-ı ḥażret-i şāhāne ālāy-ı vālā-yı meẕkūruñ temāşāsı içün
iḥsān ʿale'l-iḥsān olmaḳ üzere baḥren ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūn-ı meẕkūra ʿazīmet
ve sāye-i şevket-vāye-i cenāb-ı cihān-bānīde inşā olunan maḳrūniye ḫāneyi teşrīfe
raġbet buyurulmuş olmaġla ālāy-ı vālā-yı mezbūr maḥāll-i merḳūmeye iḳāme olunan
ṭaburlara meḥāẕi olaraḳ taṣvīr-i ḳamer-naẕīr-i mülūkāneyi ḥāmil olan fayṭon-ı
meẕkūr müşāhede olunduḳça muziḳalarıyla resm-i selām ve taʿẓīm icrā ve kemāl-i sürūr
ü ṣafā ile "Pādişāhım çok yaşa!" duʿāsı yād ve īfā olunaraḳ ḳışlaḳ-ı meẕkūra taḳarrübde
meʾmūr ālāyı olan żābiṭān ve erkān ve mīrlivā-yı ṣıdḳ-nişān ve ferīḳ-i maʿālī-ʿunvān
ve vūzerā-yı müşārunileyhim esblerinden nüzūl ve tekrār istiḳbāl ve fayṭon-ı meẕkūrı maḥalline
īṣāl eylediklerinde taṣvīr-i ʿālī-yi meẕkūr aḫẕ ve derūn-ı ḳışlaḳda aġır üstüfe
ve şāl ile tezyīn ve tehyīʾe olunan cāy-ı muʿallāya vażʿ ve ḳılāde olunduġu ve istiḥżār
ḳılınan ḳarābīn daḫī meʾmūru maʿrifetiyle zebh ettirildiğini müteʿāḳib medīne-i Üsküdarda
dāḫil-i sarāy-ı ʿilliyyīn ve vāṣıl-ı feżā-yı berīn olmuş olan Hüdāyī Maḥmūd Efendi
dergāh-ı feyż-iktināhında post-nişīn-i zühd ü ṣalāḥ ve reh-nümā-yı ṭarīḳ-i fevz ü felāḥ
bulunan efendi dest-ber-dāşte-i cenāb-ı kibriyā olaraḳ füzūnī-i ʿömr ü iḳbāl
ve şevket-i şāhāne ve manṣūre-i ʿasākir-i ġayret-meʾāṣir-i pādişāhāne edʿiye-i müstecābesini
taʿbīrāt-ı bedīʿa ile refʿ-i bār-gāh-ı ḥażret-i vāhibü'l-ʿaṭāyā ve meşāyīḫ-i kirāmdan ve āṣdıḳā-yı
dāʿīyān-ı Devlet-i ʿAliyyeden Şeyḫ Yūnus Efendi daḫī fātiḥa-ı şerīfi īfā ederek
bi'l-cümle ḥużżār duʿā-yı āmīni gūyā birle derḥāl yirmi bir pāre ṭop daḫī endāḫt
ḳılınaraḳ tekmīl-i taʿẓīm ve tekrīme iʿtinā ḳılınmış ve bir miḳdār arāmdan ṣoñra olunan
işāret ve ḳumandayı taʿḳīben maḥāll-i merḳūmede kāʾin ʿAsākir-i Ḫāṣṣa piyāde ṭaburları
ve süvārī ālāyı ve baḥriye ṭaburu nevbet-i ateşe bedʾ ve şürūʿ birle bir çāryek miḳdārı
başlı taʿlīm olunmuş olduġundan tekmīl-i ateşde ʿasākir-i merḳūme ṭaḳım ṭaḳım
ḳışlaḳ-ı hümāyūna celb ve taṣvīr-i ʿālī-yi meẕkūr pīşgāhından imrār ettirilerek
şeref-i temāşā ve ziyāretiyle istiḥṣāl-i sürūr-ı evfā ve velī-niʿmetleriniñ kendilere
bu vechle daḫī sezāvār buyurulan luṭf u ʿināyet-i mülūkānesiniñ edā-yı teşekkürünü

mūcib olur ḫadimāne muvaffaḳiyetlerine kemāl-i
taẕarruʿ ve ibtihāl ile cenāb-ı Ḥaḳḳ'dan temennā
ve bölük bölük "Pādişāhım çoḳ yaşa!" duʿāsını
be-tekrār āvāz-ı bülend ile resīde-i ṭāḳ-ı
muʿallā eylemişlerdir. Yevm-i meẕkūr ʿasākir-i
merḳūmeye eyyām-ı ʿīddan maʿdūd ve aʿyād-ı
şerīfe gecelerinde icrā-yı şādmānī ve şenlik oluna
geldigi meczūm ve rū-nümūd
olmaḳdan nāşī yevm-i merḳūmuñ aḫşamında ḳış-
laḳ-ı hümāyūn-ı mezbūruñ eṭrāf-ı
erbaʿası tezyīn olunmaḳ üzere külliyetlü ḳanādil
tertīb ve tedārik olunmuş ise de
tezāyüd-i şevḳ ve zīnet żımnında lāzım miḳdār
havāyī fişenk ʿināyet ve iḥsān buyurulması
daḫī żābiṭān ṭarafından niyāz ve ricā ḳılındıġına ve
keyfiyet-i niyāzları ḫāk-pā-yı
hümāyūn-ı mülūkāneye ʿarż ve ifāde olunduġun-
dan ẕāt-ı şevket-simāt-ı ḥażret-i şāhāneye
mevhibe-i rabbānīye olan raḥm ü şefḳat ve kemāl-i
ʿasker-perverī ve ʿāṭıfet iḳtiżāsı
üzere ber-vech-i istidʿā lüzūmı miḳdārı fişenkiñ
Tersāne-i ʿĀmirelerinden iʿṭāsı
ḫuṣūṣuna müsāʿade-i seniyye-i ḥażret-i şāhāne
müteʿalliḳ buyurulduġuna binā'en ẕikr olunan
fişenkler derḥāl tertīb ve tesyār ettirilerek ʿasākir-i
merḳūme bu vechle daḫī
talṭīf buyurulmuş ve farīża-ı ẕimmet-i ʿubūdiyet
bulunan edʿiye-i ḫayriyye tekrār-be-tekrār
yād ve teẕkīr ḳılınmışdır.

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Arts and Archaeology
of the Islamic World
Volume 24

Over the course of the dynamic nineteenth century, the image of the Ottoman sultan maintained a complex relationship with ideas surrounding the modernisation of the Empire. This book investigates that relationship by situating the *taṣvīr-i hümāyūn* (imperial portrait) within the wider program of top-down modernisation movements initiated at the end of the eighteenth century under Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) and culminating in the *Tanẓīmāt* (Reorganisation) era (1839–76). The study breaks new ground by considering the use of new image-making technologies and aesthetic trends – including oil-on-canvas paintings, lithographic prints, and photographs – primarily at the imperial court in Istanbul, but also at the provincial courts of the Ottoman Balkans.

Alison Terndrup, Ph.D. (2021), Boston University, is a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware. She has also taught at Northeastern University, where she developed a course in Dynamism and Diversity in Islamic Visual Cultures.

Focusing on newly developed strategies for disseminating the sultan's image, Alison Terndrup offers a compelling reassessment of one of the most politically and artistically consequential moments in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Both assured and nuanced in its framing, her study situates the portraits – together with their ideological, ceremonial, and diplomatic motivations – against the backdrop of larger transnational shifts while also elucidating the specifically Ottoman concerns that shaped such imagery. This is an original, adroit approach to the thorny question of Ottoman modernity that will benefit readers from across disciplines.
– Ünver Rüstem, Second Decade Society Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture, Department of the History of Art, Johns Hopkins University

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