

## THE PORTRAITS OF MURAD III \*

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It is well known that the art of portrait painting existed at the Ottoman Court and that the European artists like Gentile Bellini, Costanza da Ferrara and Matteo de'Pasti, who came to Istanbul to make portraits of Mehmed II and who worked in the court atelier, made a considerable impact on Ottoman portrait painting.<sup>1</sup> After Mehmed II's reign, portraiture, although not much encouraged by the court, continued to be practised by certain individual artists.<sup>2</sup> However, in the reign of Murad III, a revival took place, one in which a new approach was taken to portrait painting. From the fifteenth century onwards, representations of the Ottoman Sultans had become widely popular in Europe as a result of the growing interest in Turkey and Turkish affairs. They were collected and also reproduced in print, generally with an accompanying text on the Turks. The authenticity of these portraits, and the identities of artists who made them, have long been controversial. In this study, I shall try to make an iconographic and documentary survey of some of the portraits of Sultan Murad III available in the museums and libraries in Turkey and in Europe and in printed works, and will attempt to consider the problem of their reliability and to discuss the connections between Ottoman portrait painting and European artists, with special reference to the information given by *Seyyid Lokman* in the '*Şemâilnâme*'.

\* This study was the subject of a paper, presented by the writer at a symposium held at the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London, in May 1982 and is included in abbreviated form with comments in the writers book (*İngiliz Gezginlerine göre XVI Yüzyılda İstanbul'da Hayat: 1583-1599*, Ankara 1983).

<sup>1</sup> B. Gray, "Two portraits of Mehmed II", *The Burlington Magazine*, LXI (July, 1932), pp. 4-6; *idem*, "Portraits of Mehmed II, Fatih", *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi, İstanbul 1973 Tebliğler*, vol. 3: Türk Sanatı Tarihi, İstanbul 1979 (*MTK*), pp. 765-71; S. Eyice, "Sultan Cem'in Portreleri Hakkında", *Belleten*, XXXVII (Ocak, 1973), pp. 1-50; T. Bertele, *Il Palazzo Degli Ambasciatori di Venezia a Constantinopoli*, Bologna 1932-40, pp. 71-72, note: 40; J. von Karabacek, "Abendlandische Künstler zu Konstantinopel im XV und XVI Jahrhundert: Italienische Künstler am Hofe Muhameds II des Eroberers, 1451-1481", *Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Phil.-hist. Klasse*, LXII (1918); A. Campana, "Una ignota opera di M. de 'Pasti e la sua missione in Turchia", *Riv. Municip. Ariminum*, Rimini, V (1928), pp. 106-108.

<sup>2</sup> N. Atasoy-F. Çağman, *Turkish Miniature Painting*, İstanbul 1974.

Although the reign of Murad III (982/1574-1003/1595) can be characterized as the beginning of the internal and external weakening of the Empire, Ottoman art was highly prolific and in its most mature phase under his patronage. Like many of his predecessors, the Sultan was a poet; he used the *nom de plume* Muradi.<sup>3</sup> Domenico Hierosilimitano, an Italian doctor (*medico della persona di Sultan Murad*), in his account of the court (British Library, Harleian Mss. 3408) refers to Murad's constant reading and mentions two libraries by the privy chamber in the Harem (f. 103b). In one of these rooms, there were two cabinets with crystal doors, housing two dozen illustrated manuscripts which he regularly read. The other library contained books in various languages and of great beauty, especially 120 pieces which had belonged to Constantine the Great. Each one of these measured two cubits in width and a little more in length. Other books, written in gold letters, had silver gilded covers wrought and bejewelled, inestimable in value; he did not allow anybody to touch them.

Inscriptions in the Topkapı Palace, indicate that, in this period, there was much architectural activity in the *Harem*, directed by the chief architect, Sinan, and later by Davud Ağa<sup>4</sup> (Pic. 1). Among the pavillions and palaces built on the seashore, upon the walls of the *Saray* and in the gardens,<sup>5</sup> the kiosk built by Sinan in 986/1578 and known as the 'bedchamber of Murad III',<sup>6</sup> has survived with its original decoration; it is still one of the most delightful spots of the *Harem* (Pic. 2, 3, 4, 5).

For all the splendour and pomp that surrounded him, Sultan Murad's authority began to wane owing to the influence of the courtiers and that of his mother *Nurbânû* and his *Haseki Safiye Sultan*.<sup>7</sup> The ceremonies arranged for the circumcision of his son Şehzâde Mehmed in 1582, in order to

<sup>3</sup> E.J. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, London 1904, v. III, pp. 169-170; *British Library, Mss. Add. 5964*.

<sup>4</sup> These inscriptions are above the arch in the entrance hall to Murad III's kiosk and on the entrance to the Harem in the department of halberdiers sec, Abdurrahman Şeref, "Topkapı Sarayı Hümâyûnu", *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*, 1-6, 1329/1911; N. Atasoy, "Topkapı Sarayı, Zülüflü baltacılar koğuşu", *MTK*, pp. 627-50; For the discussion of the dating of the Harem, see, M.A. Eyüboğlu, "Fatih devrinde Yeni Sarayda Harem Dairesi Var mıydı?" *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı*, VIII (1978), (*STY*), pp. 23-37.

<sup>5</sup> For the palaces and kiosks of Topkapı Palace, see, S.H. Eldem, *Köşkler ve Kasırlar*, İstanbul 1973, 2 vols.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*; G. Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, London 1971, pp. 325-26; *Türk Mimarîsinin Gelişimi ve Mimar Sinan* (ed. M. Sözen), İstanbul 1975, p. 234.

<sup>7</sup> S. Skilliter, "Three Letters From the Ottoman 'Sultana' Safiye to Queen Elizabeth I", *Documents from Islamic Chanceries*, Oxford 1965, pp. 119-158.

announce to the world the wealth and power of the Ottoman Empire, was a major social event which lasted from May to July, 55 days and 54 nights.<sup>8</sup> The 'Sûrnâme of Murad III gives an account of the festivities and of the processions representing aspects of the social and economic life of the Ottoman Empire. It was illustrated by a large team of artists under Nakkaş Osman (Pic. 6, 7, 8). This work introduced a completely new narrative and documentary style into Ottoman painting.

In this period, which is considered to be the Renaissance of Ottoman painting, a special interest was taken in the search for alternative compositional schemes for portraiture within a realistic framework. Sultan Murad's love for the arts played an important role in the flourishing 'art world'. He was one of the Sultans most frequently painted both by Ottoman and European artists. Ottoman painters depicted him in two main different manners. Firstly, the Sultan was often shown participating in public and private ceremonies — on going to the mosque, giving audience to foreign ambassadors, at his mother's funeral, his son's circumcision etc.<sup>9</sup> (Pic. 9, 10, 6). These are in the customary tradition of Ottoman 'genre' painting. Secondly, he was at times portrayed in a more private manner. In the latter case, the subject matter is the Sultan himself; here he is often set in more informal settings which illuminate his physical presence as well as his character. There are many examples of this type of portrait. For instance, in a painting in the *Cami al-Kamâlât*, dated 1584 (National Library of Scotland) (Pic. 11), the Sultan appears in his private chamber, praying on a 'seccade'. Judging from the decoration and the tile panels, the room might well be in the kiosk of Murad in the Harem. There are three attendants in the room, one of whom, dressed in white and green, is opening a curtain on the arch leading to the adjoining corridor. There is a book, possibly a Kur'an, on the chest near the window. The room is lit by candles in two tall candlesticks. The atmosphere is very reminiscent of the description of Murad's study given by Domenico Hierosilimitano which is quoted above. We can see the same

<sup>8</sup> A circumstantial report of these ceremonies is found today in the *Public Record Office (S.P. Turkey. 1.5)* which records the succession of events in much the same order as the 'Sûrnâme-i Hümayûn' by Lokman (Topkapı Palace Museum, H. 1344). It states that the festivities continued 52 days and nights, from 29 May to 18 July 1582, although the Sultan and his family and the courtiers stayed at the İbrahim Paşa Sarayı until 22 July: 55 days and 54 nights.

<sup>9</sup> For the miniatures of the Mss., see, N. Atasoy-F. Çağman, *ibid*; F. Çağman-Z. Tanındı, *Islamic Miniature Painting*, İstanbul 1979, pp. 64, 67-68; for another important manuscript illuminating the festival see, N. Atasoy, "III. Murad Şehinşahnâmesi 'sünnet düğünü' Bölümü ve Philadelphia Free Library'deki iki Minyatürlü Sayfa", *STI*, V (1972-73), pp. 359-388.

scene, cut out from his daily life; the details of this scene were repeated with minor variations by several artists.<sup>10</sup> The way in which character is conveyed in these portraits is an innovation in the Ottoman tradition of painting.

The most important novelty of this realistic period of the Ottoman portrait painting is seen in fact in the single portraits. The development of the traditional style and the change in the attitude towards human representation is well shown by a manuscript: *Kıyafet el-insâniye fî-şemâil el-Osmaniye* which contains a series of portraits of the Ottoman Sultans from Osman to Murad III.<sup>11</sup> The text was composed by the prominent 'şehnâmeçi', Lokman b. Seyyid Hüseyin el Aşûrî el Urmevî,<sup>12</sup> who completed it in 1579. A large number of copies were made at various dates.<sup>13</sup> The manuscript is divided into three sections: *mukaddime*, *tezhib*, and *hâtîme*. "In the introduction (*mukaddime*) after praising Sultan Murad and the historian Hoca Saadeddin, the author relates how, with the help of the 'matchless painter' Nakkaş Osman, from the '*Musavvirân-ı hassa*', and thanks to the favour of the Sadrazam Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, he obtained the Royal portraits which the text was designed to accompany".<sup>14</sup> They confronted many difficulties in their search for authentic portraits; some were obtained from European masters. Lokman then states how they carefully examined them, compared them with those which had been in the Court collections since the time of Murad II, established their correctness and started to work.

<sup>10</sup> One of the miniatures, repeating the same scene is in the *Javahir al-Gharaib Tarjomat Bahr el Ajaib* (990/1582). The painter may have been Molla Tiflisi, see E. Binney, "A lost MS. of Murad III", *V. International Congress of Turkish Art*, Budapest 1978, pp. 191-202. Another miniature showing the Sultan in his study is in a book of fortune telling and astrology by Muhammad al-Suûdî, translated into Turkish for Fatma Sultan, the daughter of Murad III (Bibl. National Paris, Supp. Turc. 242) The miniatures are by Nakkaş Osman, E. Blochet, *Les Peintures des MSS. Orientaux de la Bibliot. Nationale*, Paris 1914-1920, pp. 308-9, pl. LXX

<sup>11</sup> For the miniatures of the MS. see, N. Atasoy, "Nakkaş Osman'in Padişah Portreleri Albümü", *Türkiyemiz*, 6 (Şubat 1972), pp. 2-14; N. Atasoy-F. Çağman, *ibid*, pp. 38-39; F. Çağman-Z. Tanındı, *ibid*, pp. 65-66.

<sup>12</sup> For Seyyid Lokman, his and works see, Necib Asım, "Osmanlı Tarih-nüvisleri ve Müverrihleri: Şehnâmeçiler", *Tarih-i Osmani Encümeni Mecmuası*, İstanbul 1911, v. 1, pp. 425-35, 498-99; Ahmed Refik, *Alimler ve Sanatkârlar*, İstanbul 1924, pp. 81-94; H. Aksu, "Sultan III. Murad Şehinşahnâmesi", *STY*, IX-X (1979-80), pp. 1-22; C. Woodhead, "An experiment in official historiography: The post of şehnâmeçi in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1555-1605", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, 75 (1983), pp. 157-182.

<sup>13</sup> For copies of the MS see, N. Atasoy-F. Çağman, *ibid*, pp. 84-90; C. Woodhead, *ibid.*, p. 166; C. Rieu, *Catalogue of the Turkish MSS. in the British Museum*, London 1888, pp. 53-54.

<sup>14</sup> Rieu, *ibid*, p. 53.

very pleased with it and requested that portraits of his ancestors should be painted as well. Sokollu also demanded a set of Royal portraits from Italy through Barbarigo. The bailo, in his despatch, reminded the Senate of a portrait of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent on horseback which he had seen some time before, in the house of Titian, it would seem, implying that Titian used to accept commissions for Royal portraits.<sup>20</sup> On 16 January 1578, the Senate informed the bailo that, the pictures of the Sultans were ready and would be sent to Istanbul, together with the other objects demanded by the Paşa.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, our knowledge of these portraits does not go further. But, it is possible that they might have been used by Nakkaş Osman, as models for the *Şemâilnâme*.

Still, we now know of four surviving oil-on-canvas portraits of the Sultan by European hands, two of which formerly have been ascribed to Titian or his school. One of these today in Munich, is the last of a set of Royal portraits which once belonged to the Emperor Rudolph II, and which among other items, was registered in the library catalogue in 1598 (State Library, K. Hof-und staatl. Cod. Germ. 2133-2134). The portrait of Murad was attributed to a painter of the school of Titian.<sup>22</sup> In this portrait, Murad is

<sup>20</sup> For this portrait of Sultan Süleyman, see, F. Babinger, "Drei Stadtannichten von Konstantinopel ... aus dem ende des XVI. jahrhunderts", *Denkschriften Öst. Akad. d. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Klasse*, LXXVII. iii 1959. Titian (Tiziano da Cadore or Tiziano Vecellio 1477-1576) evidently painted Kanunî Sultan Süleyman more than once. Federigo Gonzaga duke of Mantua, in a letter dated August 1538 written to his agent Benedetto Agnello in Venice, wanted him to ask Titian to finish a portrait of Süleyman. B. Agnello in his answer, informed the Duke that Titian had made a portrait which bore a great likeness to the Sultan on the basis of a painting and a medal provided by someone who had been in Istanbul, J.A. Crowe-G.B. Cavalcaselle, *The life and times of Titian*, London 1881, vol. 2, pp. 38, 498. The other portrait by the hand of Titian was seen by Vasari in the house of Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, see. G. Vasari, *Vite de' piu Eccelenti Pittori, Scultori e Architetti Scritte da Giorgio Vasari, Pittore e Architetto* (ed. Novara 1967, vol. VII, pp. 324). For a study on the portraits of Kanunî, see, S. Eyice, "Avrupalı bir Ressamın gözü ile Kanunî Sultan Süleyman", *Kanunî Armağanı*, Ankara 1970, pp. 129-197. Titian was apparently friendly with certain Turkish ambassadors. In January 1567, he introduced the Spanish agent in Venice, Garci Hernandez, to a Turkish ambassador who was passing through the city. (From G.H. to the King, Venice, 25 January 1567, *Simancas. E. 1326*; for this information see, F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. by. S. Reynolds, London 1972, vol. 2, p. 1048.

<sup>21</sup> There is a document concerning another request from Sokollu, this time for glass from Venice, sent through the Bailo Marcantonio Barbaro. see R.J. Charleston, "The import of Venetian glass into the Near East, 15-16th century", *Annales de 3<sup>e</sup> congrés des journées internationales du verre*; Liège 1964, pp. 164-165.

<sup>22</sup> They were in the Munich State Museum in 1905 (Cat. no. 833-34). The catalogue of the portraits and other items in Rudolph II's collection was made by J.B. Fickler in 1598, see F. von

painted in three quarters profile against a plain background, with a melancholic expression on his face (Pic. 19). His features are clearly depicted, as if the painter had worked from nature. His sad eyes look far away in deep thought. He has heavy eyelids and thin eyebrows, a slightly arched nose, full lips, a fair moustache and a beard. His kaftan is embroidered with pearls.

Another portrait of the Sultan, attributed to Titian<sup>23</sup> is in Italico Brass collection in Venice. Here too he is represented in three quarters profile. He has the same thin eyebrows, beard and moustache. He is elaborately dressed in a fur collared, and embroidered ceremonial robe, and has a richly ornamented and bejewelled aigrette on his turban. His hands rest on his lap. There is a ring on his left small finger. He leans against a pearl-embroidered cushion, on a textile-patterned background.

Whether any of these portraits was the same as that in the set sent from Italy, as requested by Barbarigo, or whether any of them are the work of the anonymous Veronese artist resident in the Venetian embassy, or whether they are copies of either original it is impossible to say at present; the problem requires further investigation.

Another oil-on-canvas picture of the Sultan, is among the collections of Topkapı Palace Museum (Pic. 20). This, which is the last of a series of Royal portraits, shows him in profile as a handsome man with sensitive features, in royal elegance, on a dark background. He has a fine, slightly curved nose, and a dark beard and moustache. The blue gown under his brown ceremonial *kaftan* has jewelled fastenings. But the frilled collar of his shirt (*gömlek*) and the brown colour of his *mücevveze* are two elements alien to the Ottoman costume tradition. Although the features are similar to those in the other pictures of Murad, the painting might be an idealized copy by a journeyman.

This portrait shows a significant resemblance to the bust portrait of the Sultan, engraved by J.J. Boissard for T. de Bry, in his *Vitae et Icones Sultanorum Turcicarum*, first published in Frankfurt in 1596 (Pic. 21). Boissard, spent most of his life in Italy and worked in Rome. He had visited the Aegean

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Reber, "Die Bildnisse der herzoglich bayerischen Kunstkammer nach dem Fickler'schen Inventar von 1598", *Sitz. Königl. Bayer. Akademie Wissen. Phil.-hist. Klasse*, 1893, pp. 39-40. For Fickler, see, J. Steinruck, *Johann Baptist Fickler*, Münster-Westfalen 1964. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. S. Eyice for the picture (no. 2)

<sup>23</sup> The painting was published by B. Berenson, *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance, Venetian School*, London 1957, vol. 2.

Islands, but never been to Istanbul. He refers, in the preface of his work, to Paolo Giovio the famous collector of, among the other things, the portraits of famous personalities, which he exhibited in his museum in Como,<sup>24</sup> and it is thus clear that Boissard copied most of the portraits from Giovio's collection. The idea of collecting the portraits of the famous, had its origin in the Greek and Roman tradition. It was reintroduced to Europe, among others, by Paolo Giovio, whose collection and whose book *Elogia*<sup>25</sup> based on it, set a pattern for painters and engravers throughout the sixteenth century. As the authenticity of his collection was accepted it forms a major source for the artists who did not feel the need to find new models.<sup>26</sup> The case of the set of

<sup>24</sup> Paolo Giovio (1483-1552) who is considered to be the founder of contemporary museology, started his museum by collecting portraits of literary persons. He was already in possession of a considerable number of portraits by 1521. His museum in Como was a sumptuous building set in vast garden with fountains. For the ground plan and reconstructions of Giovio's museum, which are, at present in the Museo Civico in Como, see, Zygmunt Wazbinski, "Musaeum Paolo Giovio como jego geneza, znaczenie", *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici* 1979, pp. 115-144; P. Ortwin Rave, "Paolo Giovio und die bildnisvitenbucher des humanismus", *Sonderdruck aus Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 1959, pp. 119-154. The collection came to include effigies of literary men, artists and humorists, Popes, dukes and kings and other famous personalities. After the death of Paolo Giovio, the museum retained its magnificence for some time. In the second half of the century, his heirs were still buying paintings and drawings for the museum. After 1569, the building was in poor repair and part of the pictures were transferred to the Giovio's residence in Como. By 1614 the demolition of the museum was inevitable. There is a certain amount of documents for the history of building and the collection in, L. Rovelli, *L'Opera Storica ed Artistica di Paolo Giovio, Il museo dei ritratti*, Como 1928.

<sup>25</sup> First edition without illustrations (Venezia, 1546), later editions of various dates with slightly different titles, For the different editions see, *Pavli Iovii, Opera, Gli elogi degli uomini illustri letterati-artisti-uomini d'arme*, (a cura di Renzo Meregazzi), Roma 1972.

<sup>26</sup> That the portraits should be correct and authentic was Giovio's principle, but in some cases, particularly for the dead, it was inevitable to draw the portraits from imagination with the help of the sketches, medals and statues, Rovelli, *ibid.*, p. 141, Pave, *ibid.* Raffaello da Urbino sent a set of his paintings of famous men (among them Nicolo Fortebraccio, Charles VII, the King of France, Francesco Spinola) to Giovio, for his museum in Como, Vasari, *ibid.*, v. 2, p. 378. Giovio also came into possession of 'i veri ritratti specialmente de gli antichi re di Turchi'. Barbaros Hayreddin Paşa, together with certain gifts, had given Virginio Orsino (*conte dell'Anguillara, capitano d'alcune galee Francesi*) a chest decorated with ebony and ivory, which contained 'undici veri ritratti di Signori Ottomanni dipinti secondo l'ingegno de gli artefici barbari', *Gli Elogi*, Fiorenza 1554, p. 129. Giovio asked for a list of artisans from Vasari, Vasari, *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 7-8. In a letter to a friend (14 September 1548) he emphasizes his wish that the portraits in the museum be engraved, *Raccolta lettera Bottari*, Roma 1766, in Rovelli, *ibid.*, p. 145. In fact, immediately after Giovio's death in 1552, Cosimo I de' Medici, sent an artist named Cristofano dell'Altissimo to Como, to make copies of the portraits. Between June 1552 and August 1553 Cristofano had already finished copying 24 pictures to be sent to Florence and continued sending the completed

Ottoman Royal portraits up to Selim II, which was listed in his collection,<sup>27</sup> was no exception. The similarity between the engravings of Boissard, although they are more elaborate in detail, and those in Giovio's collection and publications (see below) verifies what Boissard indicates in his preface. But, the argument is who or what might be the main source for Murad's portrait. Surprisingly, before the publication of *Vitae et Icones*, the copies of the portraits in the Museum of Como including one of Murad's were already in the Galleria degli Uffizi. This oil-on-canvas picture of the Sultan by an anonymous artist, which was evidently added to the collection in a later date, and was copied by Cristofano dell'Altissimo for Cosimo I de' Medici was definitely not the model for those discussed above. In the picture, which was dated between 1580-1590, he bears the same facial features with the other portraits showing him in his later years.<sup>28</sup> This is the focal point, which leads us to believe that there were other sources besides Giovio accessible to the artists.

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pictures till 1589. He worked in such a speed that Vasari (*Vite*, ed. 1568) reports that there were 280 pictures collected in Florence. These were first housed in *Sala del Mappamondo* in *Palazzo Vecchio* and then during the reign of Ferdinando I de' Medici, moved to the *Galleria degli Uffizi*. S.M. Trkulja, 'La Collezione iconografica', *Gli Uffizi, Catalogo Generale*, Firenze 1979, pp. 599-603. Towards 1619, when Cardinal Bonromeo wished to embellish his library with the portraits of famous people, a certain Gerolamo Borsieri was sent to Como to copy the portraits there. In 1619, Borsieri in a letter to the Cardinal wrote that not all the original works belong to Titian or Giorgione, Rovelli, *ibid*, p. 151. Nevertheless, the portrait of Barbaro Daniello was painted by Titian for the museum, Alessandro Farnese was a copy of Titian's Paolo III, and P. Aretino was by an assistant of Titian, *Paoli Iovii, Opera*, I, p. 1.

<sup>27</sup> The list of woodcuts includes, Bayezid I, Mehmed I, Mehmed II, Bayezid II, Selim I, Süleyman II, Barbaros Havreddin Paşa, Oruç Ali Paşa, Vasari, (*Vite*, 1568, v. I). The woodcut portrait of Mehmed II in *Elogia* (Basileae, 1576-78) and in *I commentari delle cose de' Turchi, Venezia, 1531 riedite in Latino Wittenberg 1537 col titolo. De rebus gestis et vitis imperatorum Turcarum* in this edition, there are portraits of ten sultans, from Orhan to Kanuni) shows him in three quarters view holding a rose. The head bears a striking resemblance to the portrait attributed to Bellini, but the rose indicates the possible influence of another painter, Sinan Bey (1475-80) who had been to Venice and whose painting of the Fatih, is among the collections of Topkapı Palace Museum (Album 2153). For discussions of the portraits of Fatih, see, B. Gray, "Portraits of Mehmed II, Fatih", *MTK*, pp. 765-71. Giovio, in his commentary on the picture, states that "he had also possession of an original copy painted by Gentile Bellini who was invited to İstanbul", *Elogia*, Basileae, 1577-78. At this point, we can not be certain that the model he used for publishing was the copy of the painting by Bellini. He had a medal of Mehmed II as well, Vasari (*Vite*, Novara 1967, vol. 2, pp. 519-20).

<sup>28</sup> For the reproduction of the picture, see, W. Prinz, "La serie Gioviana o la collezione dei ritratti degli uomini illustri", (catalogue by E. Micheletti), *Gli Uffizi*, p. 646.



We have both literary and artistic evidence for a number of European artists who worked in Istanbul. Particularly notable are those who came with envoys who resided for some time in Turkey and thus became familiar with the Turkish way of life. These artists were usually commissioned by those who were interested in Ottoman affairs to produce drawings representing the daily life of the people and of the court. They regularly sent such drawings to Europe or took them themselves. Among these pictures, single or serial representations of the Sultans were prominent. The 'Great Turk', who was sometimes supplied with mythical attributes, was a real danger to the Christian faith, and it is understandable that the portraits of the Sultans were frequently copied, sometimes, as we had seen, by famous professional painters, and that they often appeared as engravings and prints.

The detailed survey of the accessible material in the case of portraits of Sultan Murad will put the argument in clearer perspective.

The earliest portrait of Murad III in this 'genre' of publication is found in the *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* by F. Hogenberg and G. Braun, printed in Cologne, in 1572-1618 (Pic. 22). The portrait is set in a medallion, as the last of a set of Royal portraits on the lower part of a bird's eye view of Constantinople, originally drawn by Vavassore, sometime before 1520.<sup>29</sup> This map of Istanbul was copied by several engravers at various dates, and the portraits mostly derive from those of Giovio. In the text, the engraver's name is given as Adolpho Venerii.<sup>30</sup> The model for the portrait of Murad III, however, remains obscure. The form of the mücevveze indicates that some fanciful touches have been made.

An album in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Ms. Bodl. Or. 430), includes three portraits of the Sultan. The book has no title and has no indication of the artists' names but the contents indicate that it was prepared in 1588.<sup>31</sup> In all three pictures, the Sultan is depicted as an elegant man with fine features of royal magnificence. The first (Pic. 23) shows him at a ceremony, most probably an audience with an ambassador, during which

<sup>29</sup> Vavassore's map first published in 1520, may in fact have been at a considerably earlier date, as the mosque of Bayezid II built between 1501-1506 is not shown.

<sup>30</sup> This name is in the 1572 edition, see, R. A. Skelton (introduction) *Braun and Hogenberg, Civitates Orbis Terrarum, 'The Towns of the World', 1572-1618*, Cleveland-New-York 1966, vol. I/1, p. 51. In the earlier editions, the medallion following the portrait of Selim II was left empty. Probably the engraver was looking for a picture of the new sultan.

<sup>31</sup> S. Skilliter, *Life in Istanbul, 1588, Scenes from a Travellers Picture Book*, Oxford 1977.

our painter may have been present. The Sultan sits cross-legged on an embroidered carpet<sup>32</sup> wearing a gold and green *dolama*<sup>33</sup> with a red girdle under his *kaftan*. There is a huge aigrette on his turban. The scene is one described by most travellers who had an audience with the Sultan. However, the imaginary architectural setting of the scene in this instance makes the picture closer to myth than to reality. In the second picture (Pic. 24), Murad is riding a splendid horse, magnificently harnessed. A *peyk* with his bow and arrows is running beside the horse. In the third (Pic. 25), once again in full profile, he is on horseback, but at a more ceremonious moment he carries a sceptre in his hand. The artist, obviously a careful observer, gave more importance to the aesthetic aspects of composition and movement rather than the precise facial features of the Sultan. Colour is used as a means of highlighting details, particularly in textiles.

In some of the portraits, though they show the same basic features as those delineated by Nakkaş Osman, we observe a change in the Sultan's appearance. One of these is to be found in Pietro Bertelli's, *Vite degl' imperatori de Turchi con le loro effigie talgiate in rame e datte in luce da P.B.* (Pic. 26). As the title indicates, the work is a compilation of engraved portraits of the Ottoman Sultans with written description of their lives.<sup>34</sup> The portrait of Murad III in this book may have been copied from an original drawing, as the rest of the portraits were drawn after those of Giovio through Boissard. Here the Sultan has a rather melancholy expression.

Laurence Johnson's engraving of Murad III (Pic. 27) for Richard Knolles' famous *The historie of the Turkes* first published in London in 1603, was copied from the same source, but the composition is in reverse. Johnson,<sup>35</sup> had used Giovio's series through Boissard's engravings as models

<sup>32</sup> The cushions and textiles used for the furnishing of the Throne Room (*Arz Odası*), were made of serâser of Istanbul and embroidered with pearls, T. Öz, *ibid*, vol. 1, p. 62.

<sup>33</sup> *Dolama* is a loose gown, open in front without fastenings, worn gathered with a sash (*kuşak*), M.Z. Pakalın, *ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> In his preface, Bertelli dedicating his book to Baldasaro da Wense, gives a list of historical sources for the text. These are, Andrea Cambini Fiorentino, Paolo Giovio, G. Battista Menavino, Giosafat Barbaro, Ambrosio Contarini and T. Spandugino Cantacuzeno. But there is no indication of whom was responsible for the engravings. According to the colophon, the book was printed in May 1599 (Vicenza), with the consent of F. Iorenimo Giovannini da Capugnano, the inquisitor of Vicenza, and by the order of Bertelli.

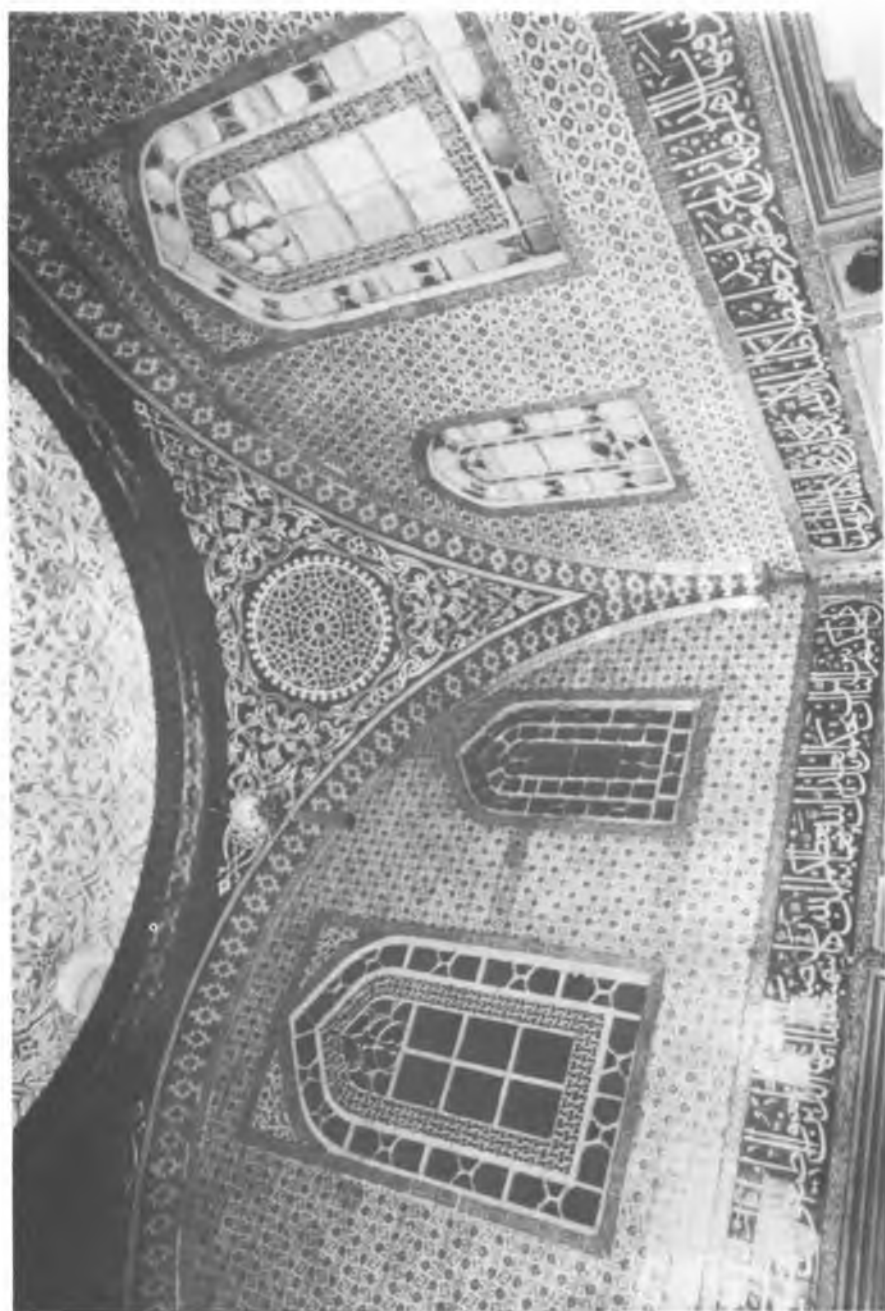
<sup>35</sup> Johnson's only known work, apart from this set of portraits, is a portrait of King James I, see A.M. Hind, *Engraving in England in the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries. Descriptive Catalogue with Introduction*, Cambridge 1952, vol. 1, pp. 124-137.

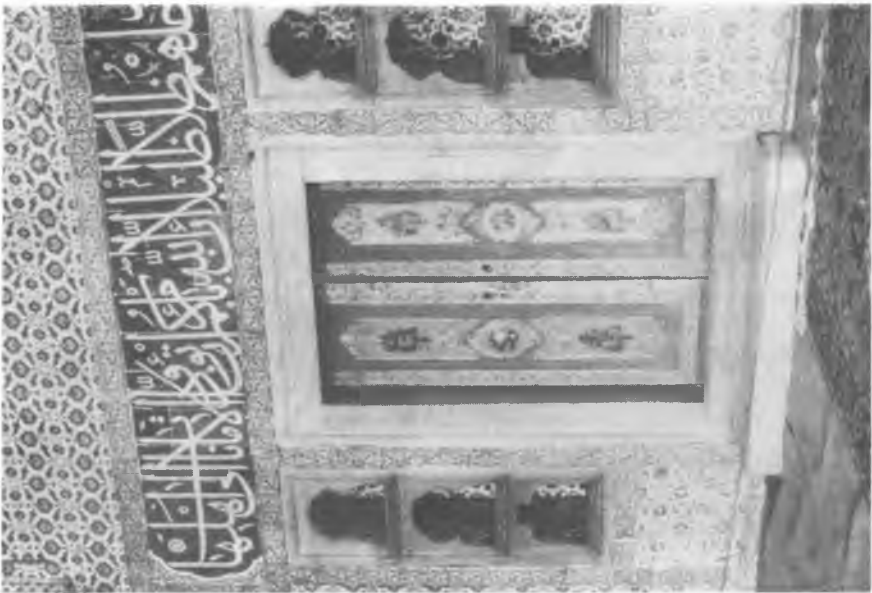


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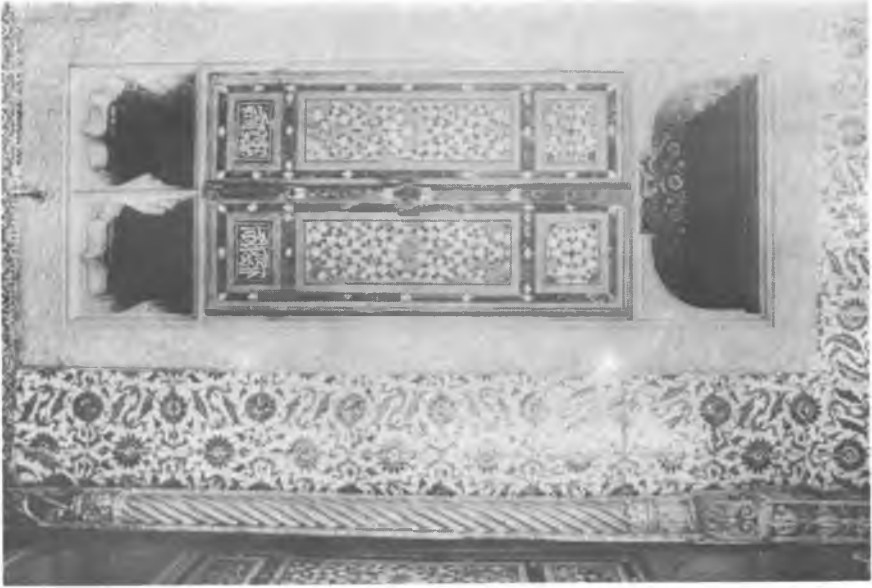


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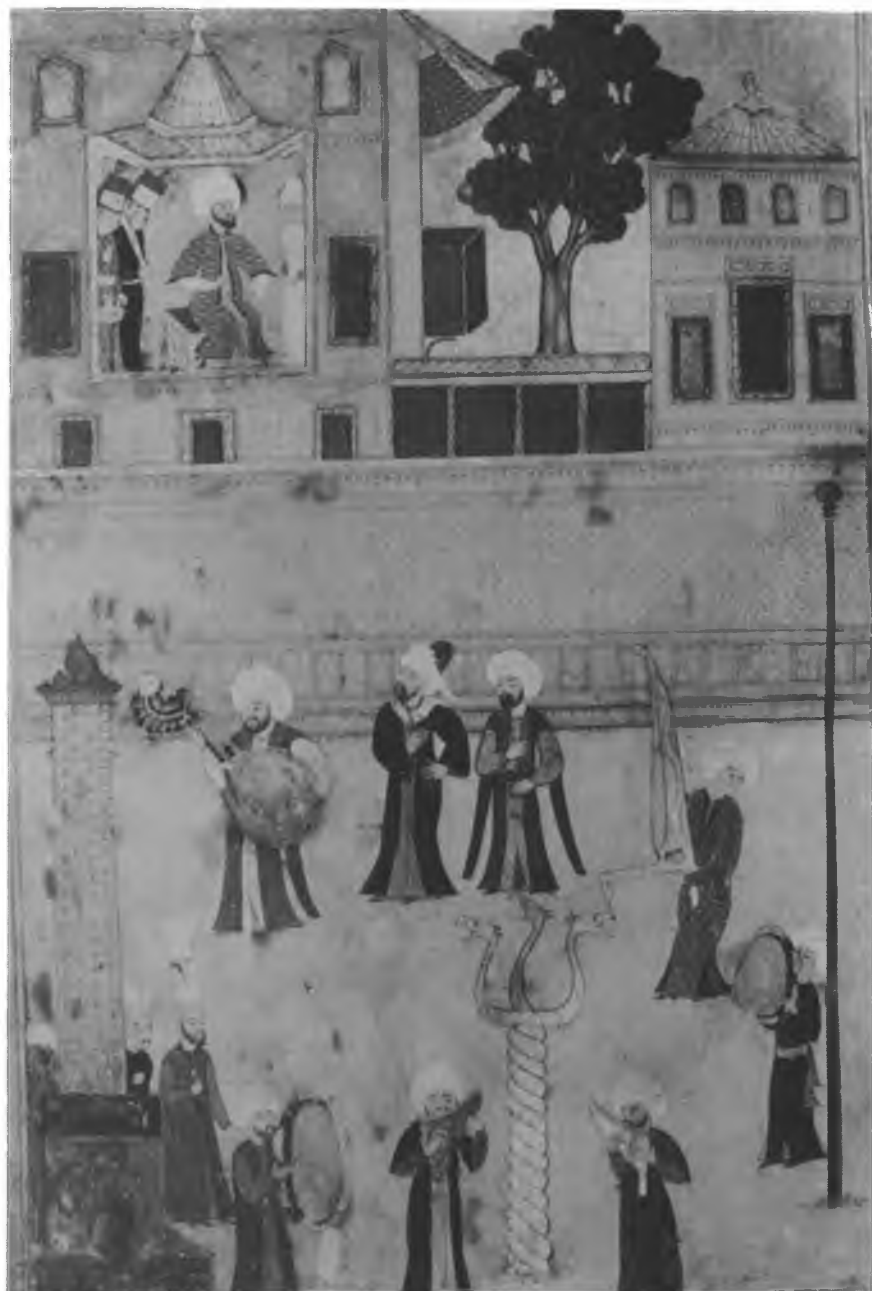


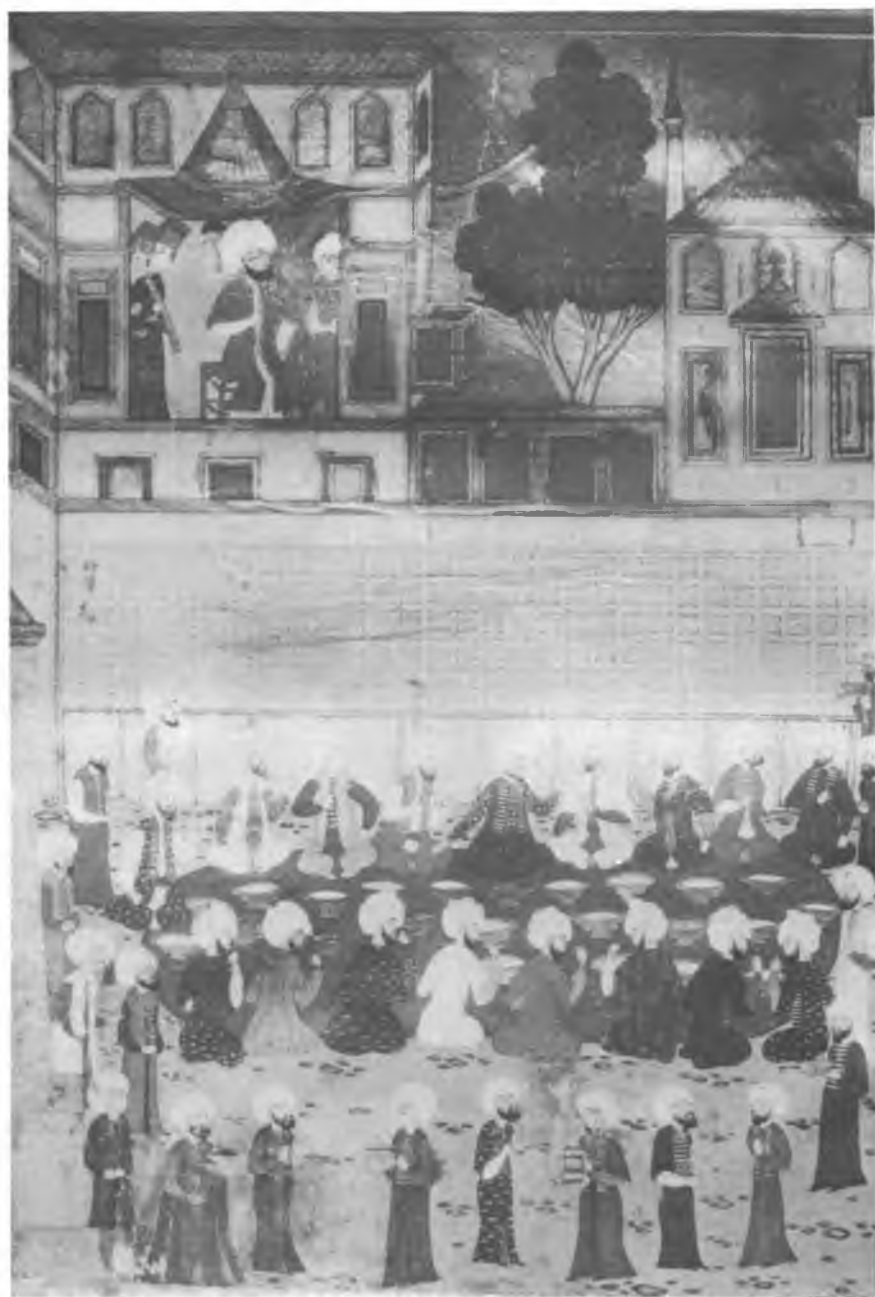
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حضرت سلطان محمد باقر  
 در روز شنبه در کربلا  
 در روز شنبه در کربلا  
 در روز شنبه در کربلا

قدمش بر سر راه  
 ازین بر عی کین  
 و سخن عثمانيه  
 ۹۵۴  
 سیرتی و در وقت  
 سیرتی و در وقت  
 سیرتی و در وقت



در روز شنبه در کربلا  
 در روز شنبه در کربلا  
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حضرت سلطان محمد باقر  
 در روز شنبه در کربلا  
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در روز شنبه در کربلا  
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 در روز شنبه در کربلا

حضرت پادشاه  
 اقتدار قطب  
 عثمان سید سلاطین  
 سلطان امیر و امیر سلطان  
 محمد خان عاری  
 مراد خان عاری



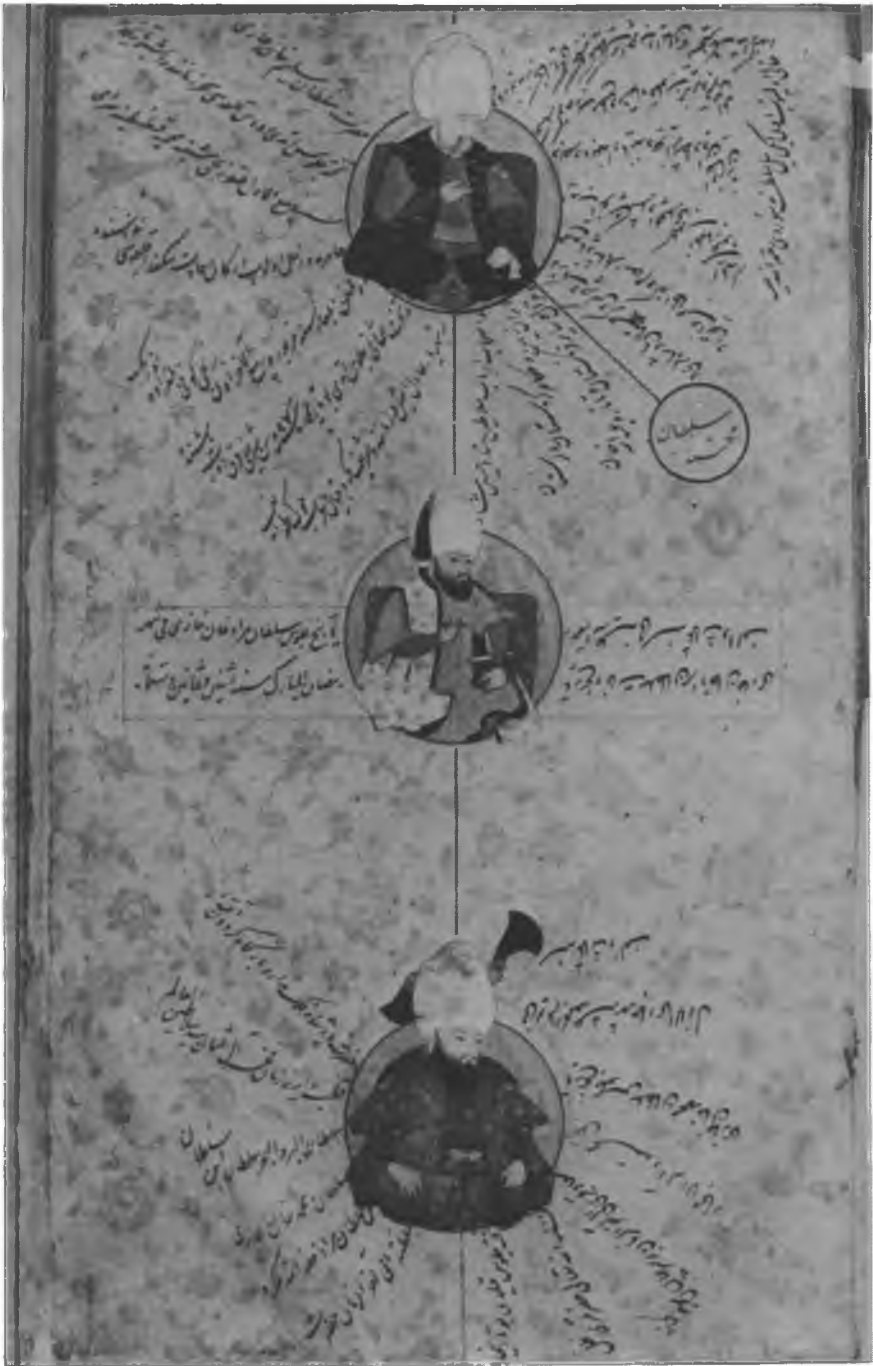
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کلاه محمدی  
 عابدان  
 رعایات  
 مراد خان عاری  
 محمد خان عاری  
 سلطان امیر و امیر سلطان



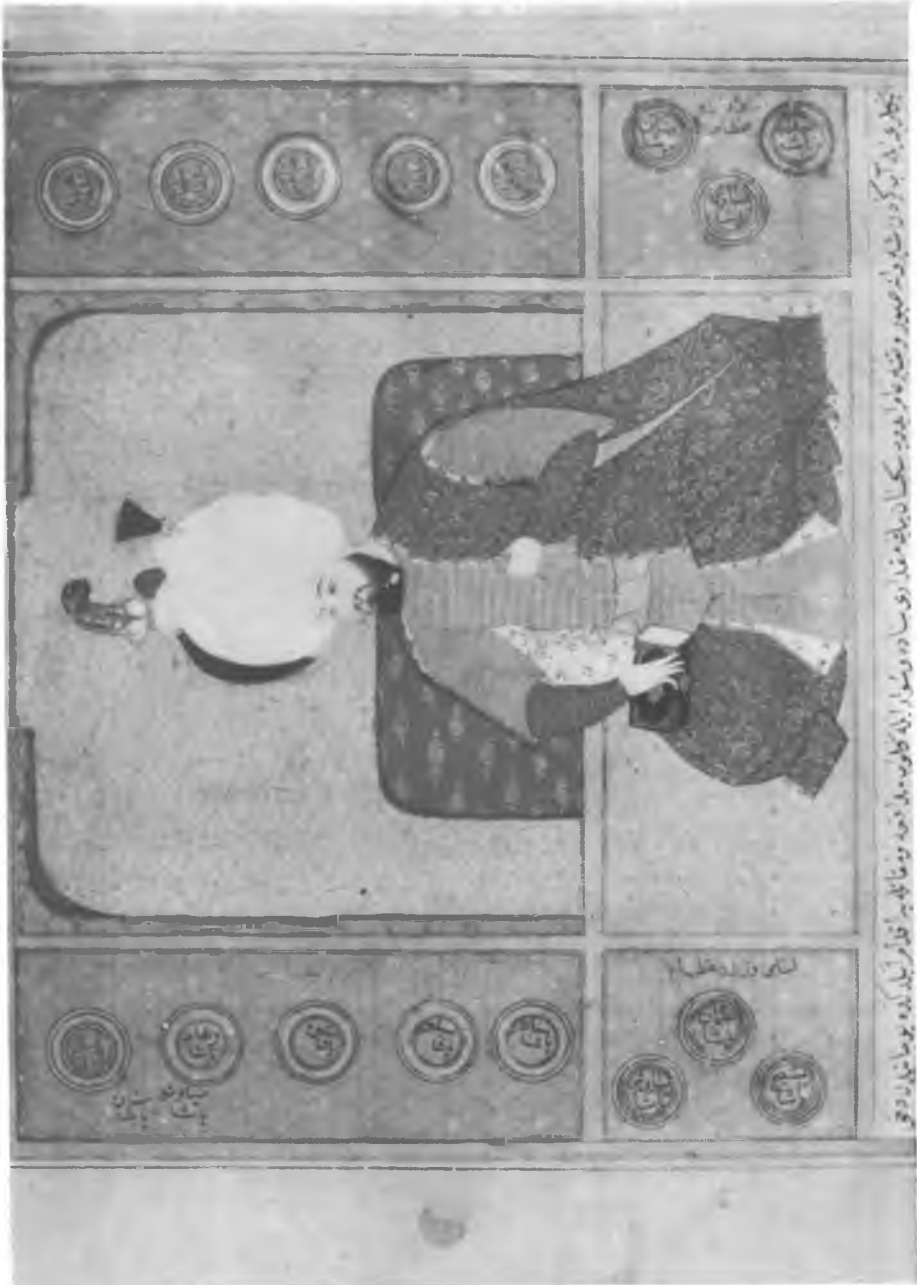
و منصف بصوت زبانت  
 و المسلمین قاتل الکفر و اللعن  
 و منصف بصوت زبانت  
 و المسلمین قاتل الکفر و اللعن  
 و منصف بصوت زبانت  
 و المسلمین قاتل الکفر و اللعن

حضرت سلطان مرزا  
 رحمه الله عليه انارغنايت زباني  
 بحار سيبويت فايض بجاري  
 رحمت حماني كرام سلاه عزت  
 صمدت طالع ولايح بودد  
 بحسب طالع ولايح بودد  
 رحمت حماني كرام سلاه عزت  
 صمدت طالع ولايح بودد









بخار بود که آنرا در آن شهر خوانده میبود و گفته میبود که در آنجا یک خانه بود و در آنجا یک خانه بود و در آنجا یک خانه بود  
 سایه سون  
 پیشا پاشا















Tunc Venerabilis Pater cum quatuor alii hunc templum Sancti  
Dionysii quod in propinquo est a Cantuariensis archidiacono







AMURATE III

Imperator XVIII mori anno 1707 di eta 66 anni

AMVRATH.



*Non ego fortis eram: Quis tanto nomine dignus?  
Nec sortem faciat mens generosa virum.  
Me tumidum fortuna tumens euexi in altum,  
Et par fortune, mens mea semper erat.  
Sic quamuis tenero mihi nil mihi mille placeret:  
Nominis ingenio raptis amore sui.  
Emisi, meos ad fortia facti ministros:*







30



31



32



33

for Murad's ancestors. The portraits are in a lettered circle with a strapwork border, different from the type used by Boissard in which the spandrels are filled with ornament reserved on a dark ground.

The precise original source for these portraits of Murad III showing the Sultan in his later years, remains unknown for the present. However, another portrait of the Sultan (Pic. 28) in an album, in the National Library in Vienna (cod. Vindob. 8626, f. 39), bears a close resemblance to them. The album was painted by an European artist resident in Istanbul and was dated by F. Babinger to around 1590-93, on the evidence of a scene showing the arrival of a Persian embassy at Istanbul. The event depicted took place in 1590. The nephew of Şah Abbas, Haydar Mirza had come with the envoy; the pomp of their entry with more than a thousand men certainly impressed the painter.<sup>36</sup> The book contains representations of everyday life, costumes, ceremonies, habits and important events as observed in sixteenth century Istanbul. They are executed in water-colour. The artist is anonymous but certainly was familiar with Turkish culture and had the quality of a miniaturist, an artisan, precise in details. The scene that concerns us shows Murad III riding out of the Palace. He is wearing a fur robe (*kapaniçe*)<sup>37</sup> over his *kaftan*. There are two plumes on his turban. The handle of the dagger in his girdle and the shield of the sabre by his side are inlaid with jewels. The harness of his horse, collar, stirrup, and bridle are also decorated with precious stones. The dress of the two *yeniçeris* are typical of sixteenth century. They too, are armed with swords and daggers and carry exquisitely ornamented muskets. The Sultan is now over forty and suffering from ill health.<sup>38</sup> He is fat and the whole expression of his face reflects his tiredness.

<sup>36</sup> F. Babinger, "Drei Stadtansichten von Konstantinopel ... aus dem ende des 16. jahrhunderts". This album may have been taken to Vienna by Bartholomaeus v. Pezzen who was with the envoy of Rudolph II in Istanbul, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-21.

<sup>37</sup> See note 15.

<sup>38</sup> Hierosilimitano reports that the Sultan used to go to visit his mother in her Seraglio at Üsküdar once every month and when he was ill used to stay there until he recovered (*BL, Harleian MSS. 3408, f. 117a-b*). F. Billerbeg, who had seen him during the circumcision ceremonies of his son Mehmed, describes him thus: "... about thyrtly yeees olde ... He is off a lowe stature, of great head, grosse eyes and leysie, and in a manner never moving them. His jawes and cheekes pulst up and swolne. A long nose stretched downe to his mouth. A thinne red beard, pale faced for the most part. The rest of his body leysie and feeble. He hath the faling sicknesse ...". *Most Rare and Straunge Discourses of Amurathe the Turkish Emperor that now is: Of his Personne, and howe he is Governed ...*, London 1585. For another description of the Sultan by Rabbi Salamon Uschehebra, see, H.G. Rosedale, *Queen Elizabeth and the Levant Company*, London 1904, p. 36. In the manuscript (*Public Record Office, SP, 97/3, ff. 5-10*) Salamon describes him as such:



Another portrait with similar features is in the Ungnad collection in Vienna.<sup>39</sup> Here, he is represented as if he was sitting for the painter, in three quarter profile, wearing a ceremonial *kaftan* embroidered with carnations. David Ungnad Freiherr von Sonnegk und Preyburg to whom the album once belonged, stayed in Istanbul as ambassador of Maximilian II, between 1573-78. He was also interested in Turkish culture and took a rich collection of works of art with him in his return to Vienna.<sup>40</sup> We have no information of the exact circumstances under which this portrait of Murad III was produced. But, Ungnad's collection of portraits of the Sultans is a significant piece of evidence for the artistic milieu of Istanbul and, in particular, the availability of European portraits of the Sultans at a period during the illustration of the *Şemâilnâme* by Nakkaş Osman.

Ottoman portrait painting, gradually changed its character becoming entirely Europeanized in later centuries. The most important work in this area of later Ottoman portraiture was executed by Kapıdağlı Konstantin, a Greek, who was a favorite painter of Selim III (1789-1807). We do not possess much information about Konstantin,<sup>41</sup> beyond a series of Royal portraits from Osman to Selim III which are signed by him and kept in the Topkapı Palace Museum. The portrait of Murad III (Pic. 31) like the others in the series is set in a medallion; on the lower part of the panel, there is a view of the inner court of Topkapı Palace. In this painting Murad's features are similar to those in the earlier portraits in his later years, in an idealized style. He is wearing a mauve fur robe, over his yellow *kaftan*, and a *yusuflî kavuk* with a plume on it. (Pic. 29).

John Young, the keeper of the British Institution, who copied this series to be published in England, explains in his preface to the Album, how he received the material: "In the spring of 1806, Mr. Green, treasurer of the Levant Company, invited me to inspect a box of cabinet pictures, recently imported from Istanbul. They had been consigned by the Turkish government to its ambassador in England for the purpose of having a series

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"... aveva la barba bionda che pareva d'oro, larga, lunga et piena di Maesta." (f. 2) For Salamon, who was influential in the diplomatic circles and in the court of Murad III, see, A. Galante, *Histoire des juifs d'Istanbul*, Istanbul 1941-42.

<sup>39</sup> T. Mankowski, *Orient w Polskiej Kulturze Artystycznej, Studia z Historii Sztuki*, VIII, Wrocław-Kraków 1959, pp. 196-198.

<sup>40</sup> See note 34, also, S. Eyice, "Kanuni Sultan Süleyman'ın yeni bir portresi", *Belleten*, XXXV/138 (1971), pp. 213-15.

<sup>41</sup> T. Öz, "Osmanlı hükümdarlarının resimleri", *Tarih Hazinesi*, 2 (1950), pp. 55-57.

of prints engraved from them. Mr. Green, who was considered as best qualified to carry into the effect the object of consignment was made acquainted with the source from which the pictures were derived ... After many interviews it was determined that the portrait of Osman should be engraved as a specimen”, and the work was carried out after a short interruption following Selim’s death, and published in 1815.<sup>42</sup> Young, points out the authenticity of this material “which had its beginnings in the early part of the fourteenth century”. He then added an historical text concerning the life and reign of each Sultan. This pattern of a series of royal portraits in medallions was repeated by the Ottoman artists again in the nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup>

In view of the existing evidences documented above which demonstrate a significant consistency in the physical features of Murad III, and the gradual change in his appearance towards his middle -age, it is appropriate to emphasize the fact that, these are either the products of eye- witnesses or the works inspired by or copied from them in Europe. According to Lokman, Sokollu Mehmed Paşa provided the court atelier (*nakkashâne*) with the portraits by the European artists, and according to Barbarigo’s report, he even asked one from the Venetian embassy to the court to paint the Sultan. The way in which Lokman describes how Nakkaş Osman used these pictures (see, pp. 4,5) fits perfectly into the distinct documentary character of the Ottoman painting. Taking into consideration the patterns of the *şemâilnâme*, *zübdetü’l-levârih* and *silsilenâme* manuscripts, *Nakkashâne* at the time was very well informed of the ‘vogue’ in Europe of the royal portraits, painted and reproduced in print in a serial form. The immediate outcome of this continuous intercourse, in this case during the time of the illustration of ‘*şemâilnâme*’, remains more as an inspiration than a definite impact on the character of the Ottoman portraiture. Nevertheless, the verbal and pictorial representations of Murad III, in the early years of his reign, by the European artists coincide with the description of him in the ‘*şemâilnâme*’, and either in realistic or idealized and simplified manner, they help us to visualize his appearance and character during his reign.

<sup>42</sup> J. Young, *A series of Portraits of the Emperours of Turkey, from the Foundation of the Monarchy to the year 1815. Engraved from the Pictures Painted at Constantinople, Commenced under the Auspices of Sultan Selim the third and Completed by Command of Sultan Mahmoud the second with a biographical account of the Each Emperours*, London 1815.

<sup>43</sup> Biographical notices of Ottoman Sultans by Osmanzâde Taib, dated 1724, continued to the Sultan Abdülmeccid 1839-1861 by İsmet. 31 full page portraits of the Sultans, see, G. Renda, “XVIII. Yüzyılda Minyatür Sanatı”, *MTK*, pp. 839-862.

Murad III, died in 4-5 Cemâzi'l-evvel, 1003/15-16 January 1595. According to his personal physician Domenico Hierosilimitano, the cause of his death was closely connected with a kidney complaint. He was buried in the *türbe* (Pic. 30, 31, 32, 33) built after his death by the architect Davud Ağa, which stands in the courtyard of Ayasofya, not far from Topkapı Palace, where he spent all his life.