Romaioi and Teukroi, Hellenes and Barbaroi, Europe and Asia

Mehmed the Conqueror—Kayser-i Rum and Sultan al-barrāyn wa-l-bahrayn

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In the late summer of 1462, nine years after the conquest of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror visited “the ruins of Ilion and the traces of ancient Troy” on his way to the island of Lesbos. He was interested in “the tombs of the heroes Achilles and Ajax,” as the “vir doctus et Imbriota nobilis Hermodorus Michael Critobulus” relates in his History, which he had written before 1466. Kritoboulos continues that Mehmed praised the heroes of Antiquity for having found the poet Homer as their panegyrist (Kritoboulos himself obviously could not come up to these expectations). Mehmed evidently imitated Alexander the Great, who visited the tomb of Achilles and exclaimed: “O Achilles, as a great man you have found a great herald in Homer!” But then the sultan’s speech changed to politics and turned out to be a statement on his ideology and his own role in history:

God has reserved for me, through so long a period of years, the right to avenge this city and its inhabitants. For I have subdued their enemies and

1 I am grateful to Carolina Cupane and to Andreas Rhoby, Vienna, for helpful improvements and additions.
2 Babinger 1959; see also bibliography in Asutay-Effenberger and Rehm 2009.
3 Ciriaco de’ Pizzicolli, who met Kritoboulos at Imbros in September 1444, describes him with these words, as cited in Setton 1978:87–88n22. Ciriaco may address Kritoboulos as Hermodorus in allusion to Hermodoros of Ephesos, who explained the Greek laws to the decemvirs in Rome and “thus assisted them in drawing up the laws of the Twelve Tables,” as in Smith 1870, s.v. “Hermodorus (of Ephesus).” See also the Suda, s.v.: Λόγοισιν Ἑρμόδωρος ἐμπορεύεται ὁ Ἑρμόδωρος, ἀκροατὴς γενόμενος Πλάτωνι, τοὺς ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ συντεθειμένους λόγους κομίζων εἰς Σικελίαν ἐπώλει.
4 “ὦ Ἀχιλλεῦ· ὡς [οὗ] μέγας ὤν μεγάλου κήρυκος ἐτυχες Ὀμήρου!” Sternbach 1963:35 (no. 78). Mehmed probably visited the so-called Achilleion (Beşiktepe) on the northwestern coast of the Troas.

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have plundered their cities and made them the ‘spoils of the Mysians.’ It was the Hellenes and Macedonians and Thessalians and Peloponnesians who ravaged this place in the past, and whose descendants have now, after a long period of years, through my efforts paid the just penalty for their injustice to us Asiatics at that time and so often in subsequent times.

This statement is interesting in many respects and raises a variety of questions. Let us have a look at some of them, which are related to the topic of this paper.

5 “spoils of the Mysians” (Μυσῶν λείαν): a proverbial saying known since Demosthenes (De corona 72.2), often quoted in Byzantium and explained, for example, by Photius (Lexicon, s.v.): Μυσῶν λείαν· παροιμία τίς ἔστι, λαβοῦσα τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀπὸ τῶν καταδραμόντων ἀστυγειτόνων τὲ καὶ ληστῶν τὴν Μυσίαν κατὰ τὴν Τηλέφου τοῦ βασιλέως ἀποδημίαν.

6 Σημείωσαι ὡς ἱστόρησε τοὺς τάφους τῶν ἡρώων ὁ βασιλεὺς πορεύομεν διὰ τῆς Τροίας καὶ ὅπως ἐπῄνεσε καὶ ἐμακάρισε αὐτούς· … καὶ ἀφικόμενος ἐς τὸ Ἴλιον κατεθεᾶτο τὰ τε ἐρείπια τούτων καὶ τὰ ἱχνη τῆς παλαιᾶς πόλεως Τροίας καὶ τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὴν θέσιν καὶ τὴν ἄλλην τῆς χώρας ἐπικαίρως, προσέτι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἡρώων τοὺς τάφους ἱστόρει, Ἀχιλλέως τέ φημι καὶ Αἴαντος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ ἐπῆνεσε καὶ ἐμακάρισε τούτους τῆς τε μνήμης καὶ τῶν ἔργων καὶ ὅτι ἔτυχον ἐπαινέτου Ὅμηρος τοῦ ποιητοῦ· ὅτε λέγεται καὶ μικρὸν συγκινήσας τὴν κεφαλὴν εἰπεῖν· ἐμὲ τῆς πόλεως ταύτης καὶ τῶν αὐτῆς οἰκητών ἐπέτισαν ὁ θεός ἔχειρωσάμην γὰρ τοὺς τούτων ἐχθροὺς καὶ τὰς πόλεις αὐτῶν ἐπόρθησα καὶ Μυσῶν λείαν τὰ τούτων πεποίημαι.

7 See Babinger 1959:224-225 and Schmitz 1970. I would not doubt that Mehmed really visited the extensive and “most beautiful” ruins which at his time were identified with Troy and Ilion. The places where the Byzantines believed that Ilion and Troy were located (not Karatepe in Cilicia, as Schrott 2008 proposes) are under discussion. One possibility is ancient Sigeion near the mouth of the Skamandros river, another the ruins of Alexandreia Troas, which is mentioned as Troada in a portolan (Delatte 1947:243, l. 2). See the lemmata in Belke
... circundassì circha 12 o 13 miglia. Gran parte della mura sono in pié, cioè dove uno pezo et dove uno altro. Sono grosse 10 pié de’ mia, che chosì gli mesurai, sono facte fuori et entro di pietre lavorate et ripiene di ghiaia et calcina, le pietre di fuori sono abozolate proprio chome la chasa vechia di Giuliano Ghondi, ma assai maggiore. Entro vi sono moltissimi edifici antichi tutti rovinanti, e quali non possiamo pensare sieno degli antichi di Troia, ma potius facti da qualche imperatore Romano, perchè vi habiamo trovato in 4 o 5 luoghi lettere latine d’alchuno imperatore. Vero è che vi si vede una ruina di uno grandissimo palazo quadrato passi 400 o più di pietre bellissime, con bellissimi archi, et dalla parte della marina è molto alto, in modo per tutto si può vedere. Et in alto ha certe cornice et fregi molto ben lavorati, et di questo dubitiamo o si o no. Lo edificio mostra antichissimo, forse che è quello di che si dice ‘quinquaginta illi tali tami’ [Aeneid 2.503-550]. E in uno altro edificio del quale si vede una volta che è lunga più d’una balestrata, in sullo entrare, trovamo in marmo lettere latine, e di queste e di tutte l’altre habiamo copia. Alsì uno altro edificio rotundo vedesi mezo; non è molto grande, nel quale si vedeno luoghi dove stavono statue, et sonvene due chaschate in terra di braccia 4 l’una o più, di marmo, bellissime, benchè non molto per la antichità si possino considerare: et in questo luogo sono lettere assai latine. Sonvi anchora molti altri edifici ruinati, grandissimi, et molte volte, delle quali non si può investigare nulla. Sono le mura sue insino sulla marina et dimostrone esser state altissime. Sonvi certi altri edifici ruinati, grandissimi, et molte volte, delle quali non si può investigare nulla. intendono. Èvi certe ruine che dicono essere stati aqueducti, et di tutto a bocha meglio vi potreno raguagliare. Uscimone tandem, et per ricordarsene messer Bernardo vi perdè la scimitarra, e discendemo in su quell’ altro fiumicello el quale vi dissi dubitavamo se era el Xanto, in sulla riva del quale rente Troia, in verso Rodi, sono bellissimi bagni et caldissimi, con grandissime ruine et lettere latine. Ma fra altre chose vi sono in pié sei archi, che si vede essere stati edifici di decti bagni, e quali et messer Bernardo et noi altri tutti affermamo mai haver
Revenge and Punishment for Deeds in the Past

Why can the conquest of Byzantium and especially of Constantinople be interpreted as a punishment? Similarly to other religions which developed an eschatology, the Jews, Christians and Muslims believed that misfortunes of all kinds had to be interpreted as a divine punishment for sins. Prominent examples in Byzantine history are contemporary descriptions of the Nika riot or the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204 and later Byzantine failures in political relations to the Western states. The interpretation of the Ottoman triumph over Byzantium in 1453 as a punishment that was sent from God is confirmed by many sources. The general opinion of Byzantine historians and other contemporaries was indeed that God allowed the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 as a punishment, although we observe a certain variety in the sort of sins they were supposed to have committed. The historian Doucas, for example, believed that their greatest sin was to break their oaths in favor of the union of the churches, which they gave

visti più belli. Et alsi una ruina d'un gran tempio con moltissime sepulture di marmo, de' quali ne mesurei de' lunghi braccia 51 l'uno. Entro Troia sono pochissime casunchule di turchi, e quali entro vi lavorano, et noi spesso essendovi entro ricordiamo illud Ovidii: Iam seges est ubi Troia fuit etc. [Ovid Epistles 1.53].

11 One example: in the autumn of 1376 Demetrius Cydones mentions in a letter to John Lascaris Calopherus that no help is to be expected from the Roman Church and Western Christendom, because “as it seems, a demon or rather our own sins act against it” (δαίμονός τινος, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἢ μᾶλλον τῶν ἡμετέρων ἁμαρτημάτων, ἀντιπραττόντων), Loenertz 1960, ep. 167, l. 43–44.
at the Councils of Lyons (1274) and Florence (1438/9), whereas for Laonicus Chalkocondyles it was indeed the fall of Troy to the Greeks, a pre-Christian Hellenic outrage, which was avenged through the siege and sack of Constantinople by the Turks. According to Kritoboulos this last sack was more terrible than those of Troy by the Greeks (1209/8 BC), of Babylon by the Assyrians (689 BC), of Rome by the Gauls (387 BC), of Carthage by the Romans (146 BC) and of Jerusalem by the Romans (70 AD). Chalkokondyles’ and Kritoboulos’ interpretation is supported by Nestore Iskender, an eye-witness of the conquest, who tells that Mehmed “exterminated the exterminators of magnificent Troy.”

From where did Mehmed take the idea of justifying or explaining his deeds through the stories of a mythical past? We know that the sultan was interested in history; Kritoboulos tells us a trustworthy account of Mehmed’s visit to Athens in 1458:

13 Οἱ τοσοῦτοι ὀρκοὶ ἑνὲκα τῆς συστάσεως καὶ ὁμονοίας τῶν χριστιανῶν, ἦγουν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, ἡ ἐν τῷ Λουγδούνῳ γενομένη σύνοδος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ πρώτου Παλαιολόγου, ἡ ἐν Φλωρεντίᾳ γενομένη σύνοδος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ ὑστάτου τῶν βασιλέων Παλαιολόγων, καὶ νῦν ἐν τῇ θείᾳ καὶ ιερᾷ μυσταγωγίᾳ αὕτῃ οἱ γενόμενοι σὺν ἀφορισμοῖς ἀλύτοις ἐπ᾽ ὀνόματι τῆς Ήγίας Τριάδος μέλλοσιν ἐξάραι τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῶν ἐκ γῆς καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς τὸ τῆς Πόλεως, Grecu 1958a, 36.6.8.

14 Οἱ τοσοῦτοι ὀρκοὶ ἑνὲκα τῆς συστάσεως καὶ ὁμονοίας τῶν χριστιανῶν, ἤγουν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, ἡ ἐν τῷ Λουγδούνῳ γενομένη σύνοδος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ πρώτου Παλαιολόγου, ἡ ἐν Φλωρεντίᾳ γενομένη σύνοδος ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ ὑστάτου τῶν βασιλέων Παλαιολόγων, καὶ νῦν ἐν τῇ θείᾳ καὶ ιερᾷ μυσταγωγίᾳ αὐτή οἱ γενόμενοι σὺν ἀφορισμοῖς ἀλύτοις ἐπ᾽ ὀνόματι τῆς Ήγίας Τριάδος μέλλοσιν ἐξάραι τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῶν ἐκ γῆς καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς τὸ τῆς Πόλεως, Grecu 1958a, 36.6.8–14.


18 Κατείχε γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐρως οφοδρὸς τῆς τέσσαρος τῆς τέσσαρος τάξιν καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ θεαμάτων, οτι ἠκούσε πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ περὶ τῆς σοφίας καὶ φρονήσεως τῶν ἐνταῦθα προγεγομένων ἀνδρῶν καὶ τῆς ἀλλῆς ἀνδρείας καὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ τῶν πολλῶν καὶ θαυμαστῶν ἐργῶν, ὡς ἐν τοῖς κατ’ αὐτούς καιροῖς ἐπεδείχθωσε καὶ πρὸς Ἐλλήνας καὶ πρὸς βαρβάρους ἄγωνισθωσε καὶ ἐπεθύμησε ἰδεῖν τε καὶ ἱστορῆσαι τὴν τε πόλιν καὶ τὰς τῆς ἀκρόπολις καὶ τῆς τοῦ τού πόλεως καὶ τῆς τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς καὶ τῶν λιμένων καὶ νεωρίων, καὶ περὶ πάντων ἀπλῶς καὶ εἶδεν καὶ ἔθαυμασε καὶ
He was greatly enamored of that city and of the wonders in it, for he had heard many fine things about the wisdom and virtues, and of the many wonderful deeds they had done in their times when they fought against both Greeks and barbarians. So he was eager to see the city and learn the story of it and of all its buildings, especially the Acropolis itself, and of the places where those heroes had carried on the government and accomplished those things. He desired to learn of every other locality in the region, of its present condition, and also of the facts about the sea near by it, its harbors, its arsenals, and, in short, everything. He saw it and was amazed, and he praised it, and especially the Acropolis as he went up into it. From the ruins and the remains, he reconstructed mentally the ancient buildings, being a wise man and a Philhellene and as a great king, and he conjectured how they must have been originally. He noted with pleasure the respect of the inhabitants of the city for their ancestors, and he rewarded them in many ways. They received from him whatever they asked for.\textsuperscript{19}

Going on a step further, however, we read what the real focus of Mehmed's interests was:

When he ... had under his power already the largest and best parts of both Asia and Europe, he did not believe that these were enough for him nor was he content with what he had: instead he immediately overran the whole world in his calculations and resolved to rule it in emulation of the Alexanders and Pompeys and Caesars and kings and generals of their sort ...

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{19}Laonicus Chalkokondyles 3.211 (see Darkó 1922) also relates that Mehmed admired the Acropolis; Tursun Beg (see İnalçık and Murphey 1978:43) does not mention Mehmed's visit to Athens.
\end{quote}
His physical power helped him well. His energies were keen for everything, and the power of his spirit gave him ability to rule and to be kingly. To this end also his wisdom aided, as well as his fine knowledge of all the doings of the ancients. For he studied all the writings of the Arabs and Persians, and whatever works of the Greeks had been translated into the language of the Arabs and Persians—I refer particularly to the works of the Peripatetics and Stoics. So he used the most important philosophies of the teachers of the Arabs and Persians.\footnote{καὶ τί γὰρ ἢ τὰ πλείστα καὶ κράτιστα τῆς Ἀσίας τε καὶ Εὐρώπης ἔχων ύψ’ ἐαυτὸν οὐκ ἀποχρῆν ἐνόμισεν αὐτῷ ταῦτα οὐδὲ τοῖς παροῦσιν ἡγάτησιν, ἀλλ’ εὐθὺς πᾶσαν ἐπέτρεχε τὴν οἰκουμένην τῷ λογισμῷ καὶ τὴν ταύτης ἄρχην εἶχεν ἐν νῷ καὶ πρὸς Ἀλεξάνδρους ἐώρα καὶ Πομπηίους καὶ Καίσαρας καὶ τούς κατ’ ἐκείνους βασιλεῖς τε καὶ στρατηγοὺς…. εἶχε μὲν γὰρ καὶ τὴν φύσιν συνεργόσαν καλῶς τὸ τε δραστήριον αὐτῆς καὶ ὑπὸ περὶ πάντα καὶ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἔγαν ἀρχικὸν καὶ βασιλικόν, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τούτο ἐνήγον αὐτὸν ἤ τε σοφία καὶ τὸ πάντα τὰ τῶν παλαιῶν εἰδέναι καλῶς ἰσχυρῶς γὰρ ἐς ἀκρὸν πᾶσαν τὴν Ἀρράβων καὶ Περσῶν καὶ ὀσὶ τῶν Ἑλληνῶν ἐς τὴν Ἀρράβων τε καὶ Περσῶν γιάνωσαν μεθερμηνεύθη, λέγω δὴ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Περιπάτου καὶ τῆς Στοάς, παϊδευταῖς χρησάμενος Ἀρράβων τε καὶ Περσῶν τοῖς σπουδαιοτάτοις τε καὶ σοφοῖς τὰ τοιαῦτα, Reinsch 1983, 1.5.1–2; English translation Riggs 1954:13–14.}

\textbf{History Justifies Politics}

Mehmed’s strong interest in history is confirmed by other contemporaries, but is also uncovered as not at all merely a theorist’s or classicist’s passion: an anonymous Ottoman chronicler, for example, reports the sultan’s special interest in the history of Constantinople.\footnote{Giese 1922:74, Giese 1925:99–100, quoted after Thorau 2007:157.} From Mehmed’s Venetian doctor, Jacomo Langusto, we learn that the sultan “wanted to be informed about the situation of Italy and the places where Anchises arrived with Aeneas and Anthenor, where the sees of the pope and the emperor were, how many kingdoms existed in Europe, of which he possessed a painted map, with all its kingdoms and regions.”\footnote{se informa del sito de Itallia, et de i luoghi doue capitono Anchise cum Enea et Anthenor, doue e la sede dil papa, del Imperator, quanti regni sono in Europa, la quale ha depenta cum li reami et provincie, Bodnar 1960:66.} Pseudo-George Sphrantzes describes another facet: “he always...
liked to read about the heroic deeds and lives of the Macedonian Alexander, Octavius Caesar, Constantine the Great, Flavius, and Theodosius the Spanish emperor of Constantinople, and he searched for ways to surpass them all.”

In general one should have no illusions about the political intentions behind Mehmed’s cultural interests—humanist ideas had no priority for him. Mehmed’s preference for Alexander the Great is confirmed by the Kievan cardinal Isidor and by Western sources, for example Nicolaus Secundinos, who reports that the sultan had in his entourage an Arab with “excellent knowledge in his language” (doctissimum lingua arabem) and two doctors, “one of them having command of Latin, the other of Greek” (quorum alter latine alter graece est eruditus), who should inform him about history: “He chose to imitate particularly Alexander the Macedonian and Gaius Caesar, whose deeds he ordered to be translated into his language, because he took great pleasure in reading or hearing about them.” A similar story may be found in the already-mentioned Jacomo Langusto: “Every day he got a companion of Ciriaco of Ancona and another Italian to read to him. He got them to read to him Laertius, Herodotus, Livy, Quintus Curtius, and chronicles about the popes, the emperors, the king of France, the Lombards.”

Of course the sultan liked to hear flattery, such as: “The army of Alexander the Macedonian never was as big as yours,” or that he was only the third after Alexander and

23 Ἀναγινώσκειν ἀεὶ ἠγάπα τά τε κατορθώματα καὶ βίους τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ Μακεδόνος καὶ τοῦ Ὀκταβίου Καίσαρος, Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Μεγάλου τοῦ καὶ Φλαβίου καὶ Θεοδοσίου τοῦ ἐξ Ἰσπανίας βασιλέως Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, αἰτῶν καὶ ἐρευνῶν μηχανάς, ἵνα τοὺς πάντας ὑπερβῇ, Grecu 1966:232.
24 Setton 1978:142n12 (with bibliography) offers an excellent short evaluation; his skepticism towards the positive image expressed by Jacobs 1949 is fully justified.
25 See the detailed research at Philippides 2007a:356–366.
28 ὁ στρατὸς τοῦ Μακεδόνος Ἀλεξάνδρου οὐχ ὑπήρχε ποτὲ τοσοῦτος, ώς τὸν σὸν, οὐδὲ τοσαύτας παρασκευὰς ἐκείνος εἶχε, Ps.-Sphrantzes in Grecu 1966:410.
Pompey, but in any case the greatest to pass the Taurus mountain range in arms as a warrior. Of course he had read or listened to the famous *iskendernâme* written by Ahmedî (d. Adrianopole, 1413). However, it is not astonishing that Mehmed did not like to be compared with the *megas basileus* Xerxes, as did many Western and some Greek sources, because he preferred to be the *victor* in the end.

Let us, in parenthesis, touch upon the question of whether Mehmed knew foreign languages, in particular Greek: Some of the above-mentioned texts refer to translators or translations, and Kritoboulos also relates that George Amiroutzes’ (1400–1470) son translated Ptolemy’s *Geographike Hyphegesis* (a demanding, very specialized text) into Arabic for the sultan. Cardinal Isidore, on the other hand, remembers that Mehmed listened every day to texts written “in Arabic, Greek and Latin,” and Jacomo Langusto assures us that “he used three languages: Turkish, Greek and Slavonian.” His command of Greek (and Latin) may not have been excellent, but considering the information from the sources and the lack of

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29 Reinsch 1983, 4.4.3–5.
30 Babinger 1959:546.
31 For these Western comparisons see Philippides 2007a:366–375. Mehmed is not the first Ottoman ruler who remembered the history of war between the Greeks and Asians; Bayezid I is already said to have alluded to Xerxes, Alexander the Great and Darius III in a speech before the battle of Ankara (1402): βασιλεὺς δὲ Παιαζήτης λέγεται εἰπὲν τάδε. «Τὸ πλῆθος ἔσκεν, ὃ ἀνδρεῖς, ἢ ἐγὼ τεκμαίρομαι, ύμᾶς δεδίττεσθαι. ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνο δὴ καὶ ύμεῖς ἵστε, ὡς πλῆθος οὐδὲν ύγιὲς ἐστίν, ὅπου ἂν ἄρετη παραγένηται. ἵστε δὴ καὶ Ξέρξην τὸν Δαρείου, βασιλέα Περσῶν, πλήθη ὁπόσα ἀγόμενος καὶ ἐς τὴν Εὐρώπην διαβὰς παρὰ βραχὺ ἐπῄει ἀποθανούμενος, εἰ μὴ Μαρδόνιος ὑποστάς ἐπῆμυνεν αὐτῷ τὸν ὀλέθρον ἐπανιόντι ἐς Σοῦσα. καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον ἵστε, ὡς Δαρείῳ μαχεσάμενος τὴν τε βασιλείαν ἀφείλετο καὶ αὐτὸν ἀπέκτεινε, Grecu 1958b, 1:139, 143–144.
32 Kritoboulos in Reinsch 1983, 5.10.5–8.
33 ... *arabice, graece et latine*, quoted from Philippides 2007a:358n37.
34 ... *usa tre langue turcho, greco, et schiavo*, Bodnar 1960:66. The explanation for *schiavo* may have been not only that in the first half of the fifteenth century and during the reign of Mehmed, persons of Serbian origin were present at the Ottoman court, but also that he was on good terms with his stepmother Mara, daughter of Đurađ Branković, who could already have had contact with him before the death of Murad II in 1451. See Popović 2010:73–76.
35 See Patrinelis 1972.
explicitly negative evidence, I am inclined to believe that he had at least a basic knowledge of those languages, a hypothesis which also may be supported by the existence of a scriptorium that produced Greek manuscripts for the Sultan’s library in the sixties and seventies of the fifteenth century.  

### Hellenes and Barbaroi

To return to the initial question: where are the roots of the construction of a “historical” and ideological justification within the category of “punishment” or “revenge”? The earliest classical authority is, of course, the already-mentioned Herodotus, whose history is built upon the archaic basic conflict between Greeks and barbarians. From the very beginning Herodotus declares the Trojan War a crucial historic event with long-lasting consequences:

> from this time forward they had always considered the Hellenic race to be their enemy: for Asia and the Barbarian races which dwell there the Persians claim as belonging to them; but Europe and the Hellenic race they consider to be parted off from them. The Persians for their part say that things happened thus; and they conclude that the beginning of their quarrel with the Hellenes was on account of the taking of Ilion.

Yet the immediate inspiration came probably not from Herodotus but from Arrian. In July 1453, the humanist Lauro Quirini wrote that Mehmed not only felt himself to be a new Alexander, but also that he read Arrian “almost every day.” Arrian indeed expresses the aspect of revenge very clearly (and from Mehmed’s perspective doubtless provocatively):

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36 See Raby 1983, who describes 15 still-existing manuscripts dated between ca. 1463 and ca. 1474.

37 Τὴν γὰρ Ἀσίαν καὶ τὰ ἐνοικέοντα ἔθνα βάρβαρα ὀικημοῦνται οἱ Πέρσαι, τὴν δὲ Εὐρώπην καὶ τὸ Ἕλληνικὸν ἠγημόνευε κεκωρίσθαι. 5. Οὕτω μὲν Πέρσαι λέγουσι γενέσθαι, καὶ διὰ τὴν Ἰλίου ἅλωσιν ἐφυρίσκουσι σφίσι ἐοῦσαν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἔχθρης τῆς ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, Herodotus 1.4–5; English translation by Macaulay.

But he (Alexander) said that he wished to take vengeance on the Persians, in retaliation for their deeds in the invasion of Greece, when they razed Athens to the ground and burnt down the temples. He also desired to punish the Persians for all the other injuries they had done the Greeks. But Alexander does not seem to me to have acted on this occasion with prudence; nor do I think that this was any retributive penalty at all on the ancient Persians.\textsuperscript{39}

An important point of motivation for the rivalry between Asians and Greeks was for Mehmed the history of Aeneas, who after his flight from Troy arrived at Latium in the end and became progenitor of the Romans, a story that was definitely converted into the foundation myth of the Roman Empire by Virgil (d. 19 BC). As far as we know, it was already in the context of the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 that this myth was used as a justification, indirectly by Nicetas Choniates accusing “those Aeneades” of arson in revenge for Troy,\textsuperscript{40} and directly by a French nobleman: “Troy belonged to our ancestors, and they who escaped thence came to dwell in that place from whence we are come; and because it belonged to our ancestors we are come hither to conquer lands!”\textsuperscript{41}

Information about the histories of Aeneas and the foundation of Rome, which gave the sultan the historical argument for planning the “reconquista” of the Old Rome, was without doubt available also in Constantinople, since Maximos Planoudes (d. ca. 1305) had translated


\textsuperscript{40} ... εἶπον δ’ ἂν ὡς καὶ ἀντίποινα τοῦ τὴν Τροίαν ἡβαλώσασι πυρὶ ταῖς σαϊς σχετλίως φρυκτευθέντι φιλότησιν οἱ Αἰνειάδαι οὗτοι πυρὶ σε κατέκριναν, van Dieten 1975:652.

\textsuperscript{41} Troies fu a nos anchiseurs, et chil qui en escaperent si s’en vinrent manoir la dont nous sommes venu, et pour che que fu a nos anchiseurs, sommes nous chi venus conquerre tere, said the knight Pierre de Bracheur, when he was asked for the reasons for conquering Byzantium, see Lauer 1924:106; English translation from Stone 1939. Carolina Cupane, Vienna, kindly drew my attention to this source.
Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* into Greek. In parenthesis I should mention that Mehmed’s siding with the Trojans was in some way already supported by the twelfth-century Byzantine writer Isaak Porphyrogenetos, who praises Hector as “the best strategist and the bravest of all the Trojans and the Greeks.”

**Skythai, Persai, Teukroi**

Mehmed’s ideological construct was without doubt helped by the Byzantine identification of the Ottoman Turks with the *Teukroi*, the inhabitants of Homeric Ilion. This rested on the obvious similarity of their ethnic name to that of the descendants of Teucer, the legendary first king of Troas. Until the *halosis* the name “Teukroi” was only identified with the people of Troy, but immediately after the conquest of Constantinople the new meaning can be found not only in Western sources but also in the letters of the Greek humanist Michael Apostolius (d. 1480). The sultan himself may have associated it with the fate of the *Teukroi* and of Aeneas in Planudes’ translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, with the help of his reader of Greek texts.


44 See e.g. Schmidt 1861, s.v.: Τεῦκροι οἱ Τρῶες, and ὄνομα τούτῳ ἐπιχώριον τοῖς Τρῳσί, Τεῦκροι γὰρ οἱ Τρῶες, van der Valk 1976:581, l.15–16.

45 Enea Silvio (=Pius II, pope 1458–1464) provides us with an early document: “*Video complures aetatis nostrae non auctores aut poetas duntaxat, verum etiam historicos eo errore teneri, ut Teucrorum nomine Turcas appellent,*” Pius II 1551:394.

46 Noiret 1889, letters 16, 57, 63, 64, 73, 90, 105, 125.

47 Ἐντεῦθεν, ἄναμνησθέντες οὖσι τοὺς Τεῦκρους ἐξ αἴματος τοῦ Τεῦκρου τὴν ρίζαν κατάγοντας, τῇ Κρήτῃ προσέσχον, Papathomopoulos and Tsavare 2002, 13.958.
This identification is all the more remarkable in light of the Byzantine practice in past centuries of giving various Turkish tribes the names of the (former) inhabitants of those adjacent Asian or European regions from which they approached the frontiers of the Byzantine / Roman empire. Therefore earlier Byzantine historians often gave the name *Skythai* to those Turks who migrated along the northern Black Sea shore and reached Byzantine territories at the lower Danube.48 Later, they used to call them *Persai*, because the Selçuk tribes were invading Byzantium from former Persian territories49 and from Iraq.50 (Therefore it is not at all a coincidence that Mehmed ordered the removal of Justinian's equestrian statue, which had been erected in 543/544 on a column in the Augusteum to mark the victory over the Persians, soon after the capture of Constantinople.51)

**Hellenes in the Ecumene, Barbaroi in Asia (and elsewhere)**

The ancient Greek historiographical ideology and mythology claims a superiority of Hellenes over barbarians of any sort. This fundamental design may already be found at Herodotus (who quotes Euripides: “Rightly the Greeks reign over the barbarians”52), and is further developed in the writings of Aristotle, who argues that barbarians and Greeks

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48 One example: Σκύθαις ... τουτέστιν Ἀβάροις καὶ Τούρκοις, Ps.-Maurikios Strategikon 11.2 Pinax.

49 Examples: Moravcsik 1967, 38.62: κατασκηνώσαν τὸ προρρηθὲν ἔθνος τῶν Τούρκων πρὸς ἀνατολὴν εἰς τὰ τῆς Περσίδος μέρη μέχρι τοῦ νῦν; Perez Martin 2002, 105.10–11: οἱ Πέρσαι (Τούρκους δὲ τούτους νυνὶ ὁ λόγος οἶδε καλεῖν); Heisenberg 1907:21, ὁ τὰ μεγάλα κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν ἱσχύων Πέρσης τὴν σήμερον. The emperor Manuel II’s “Dialogue with a Persian” may be a special case, because it is possible that Manuel’s Muslim opponent was indeed of Persian origin; see Trapp 1966.

50 For other names see Durak 2009.


52 *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1400: βαρβάρων δ’ Ἐλλήνας ἀρχεῖν εἰκός. See above.
differ so much from each other as the soul from the body and the human being from the animal ..., they are slaves by nature.... By nature he is a slave who participates in reason to the extent that he receives but not owns it. 53

From Alexander the Great onwards, the Macedonians were also integrated step by step into this “community of superiority” of the Hellenes—as late as the end of the ninth century AD, the self-designation “Macedonian” served as an argument of legitimation for the imperial dynasty of Basil I (867–886), Leo VI the Wise (886–912) and their successors. The fact that they later, at the time of Leo’s son Constantine Porphyrogenitus (d. 959), claimed an Arsacid origin for their ancestors further expanded their imperial legitimation, because the latter were Christian rulers of Armenia who fought against the pagan Sasanian Empire of Persia. 54 These genealogical speculations probably were inspired by Basil’s spiritus rector and adviser, the Patriarch Photios. 55

These barbarians, the Persians in (late) antiquity and the Turks in the late Middle Ages, had their roots outside the Roman Ecumene, in Asia, or to be more precise, in great Asia. This “great Asia” is defined in the Geography of Ptolemy, which was also to be found in the library of Mehmed. 56 Ptolemy makes a distinction between three parts of great Asia (megale Asia), the actual Asia (ἰδίως Ἀσία), 57 which is Asia Minor, and the adjacent (ἐφεξῆς) 58 and

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53 ὅσοι μὲν οὖν τὸ οὐσιόν διεστᾶσιν ὡσον ψυχὴ σώματος καὶ ἄνθρωπος θηρίου ..., οὗτοι μὲν εἰσὶ φύσει δοῦλοι, ... ἔστι γὰρ φύσει δοῦλος ὁ δυνάμενος ἄλλου εἶναι (διὸ καὶ ἄλλου ἐστίν), καὶ ὁ κοινωνῶν λόγου τοσοῦτον ὡσον αἰσθάνεσθαι ἀλλὰ μὴ ἔχειν, Ross’ 1957 edition of Aristotle Politics 1254b. Cf. Politics 1285a, διὰ γὰρ τὸ δουλικότερον εἶναι τὰ ἤθη φύσει οἱ μὲν βάρβαροι τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οἱ δὲ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν τῶν περὶ τὴν Ἑυρώπην, ὑπομενοῦσι τὴν δεσποτικὴν ἁρχὴν ύστερ δυσχεραίνοντες, and 1252b: φασιν οἱ ποιηταὶ “βαρβάρων δ’ Ἑλλήνας ἁρχεῖν εἰκός”, ὡς ταῦτα φύσει βάρβαρον καὶ δοῦλον ὄν. For the theoretical background see e.g. Koselleck 1979:218–220.

54 αὐτοκράτωρ Βασίλειος ὑρμάτω μὲν ἐκ τῆς Μακεδόνων γής, τὸ δὲ γένος εἶλκεν ἔξ Ἀρμενίων ἐθνοὺς Ἄρσακίων, Vita Basilii = Theophanes continuatus 5.2 (212 Bonn), see Koder 1997, and Toumanoff 1969.

55 Cf. the excerpt from Arrian’s Parthika, Photius Bibliotheca Cod. 58 (esp. 17a) and Cod. 241 (324b): Βασίλειος μὲν δὴ Ἀρμενίας τότε ἦν Ἀρσάκης.

56 For the tradition of Ptolemy see Stückelberger, Graßhoff et al. 2006, 1:27–30 and passim. The Codices Seraglienses 27 and 57 are not in the checklist of Raby 1983:29.

57 Τῆς ἰδίως καλουμένης Ἀσίας θέσις, Stückelberger, Graßhoff et al. 2006, 2:484.
remote parts (ἔσχατα μέρη), the adjacent to be understood as Asian regions bordering the Roman Ecumene, which at his time in the second century AD, clearly included parts of Asia in the east of the subcontinent Asia Minor. Therefore Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the tenth century also identified megale Asia with parts of Asia outside his Ecumene: India, Ethiopia and Egypt.

**Barbaroi: Semantic Flexibility in Byzantium**

The medieval Byzantine meaning of barbaroi was modified or extended according to the respective current (political) circumstances. It was a characteristic trait of the Byzantines that they had no problem with accumulating or combining their various identities—with being by faith Christians, in politics Romaioi and by culture Hellenes. Accordingly, we observe a flexibility in the usage of the term barbaros: any political enemy, not only a pagan, but also a Christian, could turn out to be barbaros, a single person as well as an entire tribe or nation.

A particular case was, during the Middle Ages, the Western nations which belonged ideologically and politically to the first Rome: at first, in the twelfth century, mainly the Normans of Sicily were so described, but after the Fourth Crusade and the “Latin” conquest of Constantinople in 1204, many other nations could be portrayed as barbaroi. Now, to quote only a few examples from the Greek sources, the archbishop of Athens, Michael Choniates, criticizes the “barbarically-speaking Italians, whose trust in Christ turned into a trust in gold,” as was the case with king Midas; the patriarch Gregory II complains of the “barbaric...
Italians” who suppress the Greeks; the historian George Pachymeres compares the Italians with the Alans and emphasizes their “blood lust.” On the other hand, the emperor John Cantacuzenus makes a clear distinction between barbarians and Italians, though he also equates them indirectly by accusing them of the same crimes.

A New Muslim Ecumene instead of the Old Roman Ecumene?

The political ideology of the Hellenes and the Hellenized Roman Empire also fascinated the “others.” The decade after the battle of Mantzikiert (1071), when the Seljuk leader Alp Arslan defeated the army of the Byzantine emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, opening Asia Minor to Turkish Landnahme, therefore represented a more decisive political shift than the ominous year 1204. The fact that the first Turkish state in Asia Minor was called Sultanat of Rûm is not a mere coincidence; it was a decisive step towards the fulfilment of the totalitarian claim of Islam to rule over the Hellenized (and Christian) Roman Empire and its symbolic and real center, the Nea Rome, Constantinople. From a report to the Venetian Signoria we learn that

as the Turk himself said, God enabled the first Mohammed, the prophet, to give the law to the peoples, which he did in part, but that God had now given the order to him, the second Mohammed, to extend his law, which he wants to be brought to all the Christians and that he believes to be much mightier than Caesar, Alexander or any other ruler, who ever strived for world domination.
Going far beyond the idea of Asiatic revenge against the Greeks, which was without doubt a useful means of propaganda, it was the Hellenic Roman-Christian Ecumene which the sultan wanted to overcome and to replace with an Islamic Ecumene (certainly centered upon his person, to be sure). Therefore he consistently pursued the idea of conquering not only the “daughter,” the second Rome, as prophesied by the Prophet Muhammad, but also the “mother,” Rome itself:

To this he directed all thoughts, all considerations, upon this he concentrated all his efforts in the navy and in the infantry, trusting in certain vaticinations and prophecies, which promised him a reign over Italy and the capture of the city of Rome. He said that the heavens had granted him the see of Constantine, and this was Rome, whereas Constantinople could not be seen as equal and identical—as he had taken the daughter by force, so he could also take the mother.

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67 Sultan Mehmed’s teacher Akşemseddin (died 1460) encouraged him to conquer Constantinople, quoting a hadith of the prophet Mohammed, who according to Ahmed ibn Hanbal (eighth to ninth century) had prophesied: “Verily you shall conquer Constantinople. What a wonderful leader will he be, and what a wonderful army will that army be!” (Hakim, 4.422; also Bukhari, Tarikh as-Saghrir, 139, and Ibn Hanbal, 4.335). Another hadith saying that the conqueror of Constantinople would have the prophet’s name probably did not survive, but is only mentioned in the Kitāb al-uyūn. See Canard 1926:84 and 107, Eisener 1987:129n481–482.

68 Ad haec omnes cogitationes, cuncta consilia dirigit, ad haec apparatus omnes copiasque maritimas et pedestres componit struitque, inmixus vaticiniis et praedicationibus quibusdam quae sibi regnum Italiae et urbis Romae expugnationem promittunt; ait sibi concedi coelitus Constantini sedem, hanc vero Romam esse, non Constantinopolim videri aequum valdeque congruere, quasi filiam vi ceperit, hanc etiam matrem capere posse, Nicola Sagundino, oratio 25.1.1454 (Pertusi 1976, 2:132).
Mehmed’s field-marshal (not he himself!) spoke about “Holy War.”\(^{69}\) What he strived for himself was to conquer all lands adjacent to the Mediterranean, including Europe,\(^{70}\) and to dominate the ancient Ecumene in imitation of the Byzantine emperor Justinian: “He said that only one world power, one faith, one monarchy should exist,”\(^{71}\) and between 1453 and his early death in 1481\(^{72}\) many Europeans believed that he would succeed. Even his last enterprise (1480) indicated that, in his attempt to found his worldwide empire, he intended to invade Italy (including the “mother” Rome). It is not surprising that George of Trebizond was not successful, when he invited Mehmed to follow the example of Constantine the Great: to convert to the Christian faith and thus to attain world rule as a Roman emperor.\(^{73}\) The sultan’s universal aspirations were continued by the rulers of the Sublime Porte through the reign of another admirer of Alexander the Great, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566), the “Commander of the Faithful and Successor of the Prophet of the Lord of the Universe” and worthy rival of the emperor Charles V (1520–1556, d. 1558).\(^{74}\)

Perhaps also in an eschatological sense, Mehmed attached importance to being addressed by the title “Kayser-i Rum” (“Caesar of the Romans”) by Christian (European) rulers,\(^{75}\) though as a Muslim he had assumed the title of “Hakan [or] Sultan al-barayn wa-l-bahrayyn” (“Lord / Sultan of the two continents and the two seas,” i.e., the Asian and the European parts of the empire, and the White / Aegean and the Black Sea).\(^{76}\) Combining these titles, Kritoboulos adresses him in the dedicatory letter of his history as “Supreme

\(^{69}\) İnalçık and Murphey 1978:43 and 55–56. Tursun Beg also gives him the title “Padishah of the World”; see İnalçık and Murphey 1978, facsimile folio 51r.


\(^{71}\) uno dice dover esser lo impero del mondo, una fide, una monarchia, Jacopo de’ Languschi in the chronicle of Zorzo Dolfin, as cited in Setton 1978:257–258n23.

\(^{72}\) For the short Ottoman occupation 1480–1481 of Otranto, see Majoros and Rill 2002:175–176.

\(^{73}\) See Mercati 1943 and the bibliography at Möhring 200:344n237.

\(^{74}\) Imber 2002:49–54.

\(^{75}\) So an anonymous “Pamphlet contre Mahomet”: καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ στέργει νὰ λέν· τῶν Ἦρωμαίων βασιλέα, Delatte 1927:353, l. 20–21. Cf. Podskalsky 1972:61–63. Tursun Beg (İnalçık and Murphey 1978:33) relates that Mehmed did not accept that the last Byzantine Emperor bore the title of Kayser-i Rum.

\(^{76}\) Encyclopédie de l’Islam, nouvelle édition, s.v. “Sultân,” 886.
Emperor, King of Kings, Mehmet the Fortunate, the Victor, the Winner of Trophies, the Triumphant, the Invincible, Lord of Land and Sea by the Will of God,” thus imitating the intitulations of the late antique Roman emperors.⁷⁷

Mehmed planned to convert the Nea Rome Constantinople into an ecumenic Muslim metropolis: a contemporary Armenian tradition claims that he adapted the name εἰς τὴν Πόλιν into Isambol (‘lots of Islam’) or Islambul (‘find Islam’).⁷⁸ This may be legendary, but there is no doubt about his intense efforts to repopulate the imperial city⁷⁹ and to redevelop it into his magnificent ecumenic capital.⁸⁰ At least two symbolic actions should be mentioned here: immediately after the conquest (May 29th, 1453), Mehmed converted the church of Hagia Sophia into the Great Mosque,⁸¹ and in 1458 he built the first genuine Ottoman sanctuary in Constantinople, a memorial for Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, the prophet Mohammed’s companion, outside the city walls at a high place that dominated Constantinople, not far from the location where Mehmed’s teacher Akşemseddin had found Abu Ayyub’s remains during the siege.⁸²

A Last Question…

Why did Kritoboulos and other Byzantine Greeks, but also Western writers⁸³ of the fifteenth century (readily) support Mehmed’s aspirations to overcome the narrow tribal myths of the Ottoman Turks and to refer to—in fact unacceptable for Christians—Muslim prophecies? Why did they indirectly encourage the view that Mehmed’s victories gained an ecumenic

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⁸⁰ Contemporary reports by Michael Kritoboulos (Reinsch 1983, 2.1–2, 10, 22 and 3.11–13), Ducas (Grecu 1958a, 42.3), and Aşıkpaşazade (Giese 1929:132–133). See Encyclopédie de l’Islam, nouvelle édition, s.v. “İstanbul” (particularly 234–242), Thorau 2007:152–154, and Bakırer 2009 with bibliography.

⁸¹ Necipoğlu 1992. For the history of the mosque in Constantinople during the Byzantine period see Tabar 1991, with bibliography.

⁸² The legend is reported by Evliyâ Celebi, here quoted after Kreiser 2009:183–184.

historic dimension, which enforced the expansion of the Turkish identity to that of the transnational and ecumenic identity of Muslim heroes? Why did the Byzantine Greeks and their European contemporaries depict Mehmed as an overwhelming and ingenious character and personality? This willingness to accept and explain Mehmed’s success may have emanated from a negative self-awareness, namely that the Western nations and their leaders knew that they had failed for a long time to organize an ecumenic, transnational and Christian defensive action against the Ottoman-Muslim conquest. Their behavior may have been an attempt to suppress the image of their own political and military failure. Likewise, the classical and multilingual education which they attributed to the sultan may have served the same purpose, because this could additionally demonstrate his supposed cultural superiority.

Demetrius Cydones had foreseen this situation as early as 1364, when he addressed an urgent and impressive warning to the leaders of the European nations not to abandon their joint efforts and the political unity of the Christians:

If [the Phrankoi] continue to help against the infidels only with words, not with deeds, the big city will be conquered ... then they will be forced to fight against the barbarians in Italy and along the Rhine ... and the nations around the Black Sea and the Bosporus and in Asia [Minor] will not accept that others in the West enjoy a comfortable life, whereas the East suffers subjugation, but they will support the barbarians against those who did not want to prevent the disaster though they could have done so ... Therefore it is better to wage war on the Turks for the Polis “with us” than to fight in the future, much more endangered, against all.

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84 It is not coincidental that the conscripts of the Turkish army are still today nicknamed “Mehmetçik.”

85 Loenertz 1956, ep. 93, l. 85–99: ἵσθι δὲ ως εἰ μηδὲ νῦν εἰς ἑργον ἄξουσι τὰς κατὰ τῶν ἁσεβῶν ἀπειλὰς, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῷ ψηφίζεσθαι καὶ παρασκευάζεσθαι καὶ τοῦτο παρέλθοι τὸ ἔτος, ἀλώσεται μὲν ἡ μεγάλη Πόλις — τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον οὕχι φωνήν αφιέντα διδάσκει τὰ πράγματα — κρατηθείσης δὲ ταύτης περὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν καὶ τὸν Ῥήνον ἀναγκασθῶσονται πολεμεῖν τοῖς βαρβάροις, οὐκ ἔκεινοις δὲ μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσιν ὅσι τὴν Μαιῶτιν καὶ τὴν Βόσπορον καὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὅλην οἰκούσιν. τῆς γὰρ βασιλείας ἀλούσης πάντες οὗτοι δουλεύσουσι τοῖς κρατήσουσι, καὶ οὐκ ἀγαπήσουσι εἰ τῆς Ἀνατολῆς δουλευόσης ἄλλοι
To return to the beginning: Some historians may highlight the resemblance of Mehmed the Conqueror’s statements to election manifestos and electoral addresses of present-day populist politicians; others could emphasize a conscious myth-making, initiated first of all by himself, but also by some members of his entourage. I think that both are part of the truth and that two aspects prevailed in his character: First, Mehmed was in his twenty-second year when he conquered Constantinople, and he was some ten years older when myth-making began. Therefore it is not astonishing that as a personality Alexander the Great, the young world conqueror, was his shining example and at the same time a challenge which he wanted to surpass in ruling over the pagan and Christian ecumene. Second, his name was also for him both obligation and challenge: although not personally religious, he nevertheless wanted to be a religious leader for the Muslims, a second Mohammed who brought the final victory of the true faith for the Ecumene.

Bibliography


τρυφῶμεν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἑσπέρας καθήμενοι, ἀλλ’ ἀμυνόμεθα μετὰ τῶν βαρβάρων τοὺς ἐξὸν τὰ δεινὰ κωλύειν μὴ βουληθέντας, καὶ πάντα ποιῆσομεν ὡστε μετ’ αὐτῶν κάκεινος δουλεύειν... βέλτιον οὖν μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς Πόλεως πολεμῆσαι τοις Τούρκοις ἢ πρὸς πάντας ἐφεξῆς ἀγωνίζεσθαι, μᾶλλον δὲ κινδυνεύειν. See the commentary of Eszer 1969:207–212. The realism of this opinion is supported by the information of Tursun Beg (İnalciğ and Murphey 1978:66) that after Sultan Bayezid’s conquest of Akkerman and Kilia in 1484 “Poland, Bohemia and Hungary were all fearful of the Ottoman advance and became concerned for the security of their countries.”


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