

ful for the city itself, he faced considerable problems from an unusual alliance in 1788 between the Muntafiq BEDOUINS, the confederation that dominated the region around Basra, and the Kurdish *mir*, or prince, of SHAHRIZOR, the province comprising Iraqi Kurdistan. Given the fact that the two groups were of different ethnic origins and separated from each other by several hundred miles of Ottoman-controlled territory, it was unusual that they would act in concert, but Süleyman was able to defeat both. Nevertheless, Bedouin incursions, mounted first by the more powerful SHAMMAR confederation and then by the WAHHABIS, threatened the trade routes and the prosperity of his city. In 1798 he organized a campaign with more than 10,000 troops against the Wahhabis and advanced against towns they held in the al-Ahsa region in the northeast of the Arabian peninsula. The campaign ended in a stalemate and a truce. But the Wahhabis broke that truce with their raid on KARBALA, the Shii holy city in southern Iraq, not long before Süleyman's death in 1801.

After his death, there was a struggle among the males of the governor's household over who would succeed him. Ali Kahya, his steward and agha of Baghdad's JANISARIES, won this struggle, but was assassinated in 1807, to be succeeded by Süleyman's son Küçük Süleyman, or "Little" Süleyman. The Jews and Christians of Baghdad remembered Büyük Süleyman Pasha as a just and honorable man. This was undoubtedly due, in no small part, to the fact that governors before and after him used their office to extort large sums from both communities. Muslim chroniclers, in contrast, saw his reign as less than noble as, like his predecessors, he continued the practice of extracting illegal taxes from Muslim merchants and other tradesmen. Further endearing him to the Chaldean Catholics in the city, during his reign, European Catholic priests were free to offer sacraments openly in Baghdad to any who would take them, as Büyük Süleyman was remarkably tolerant of all the religiously diverse subjects of his province.

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Byzantine Empire The Byzantine Empire is said to have come into being when the city of Constantinople (ISTANBUL) was founded in 324 C.E. and to have ended when the same city fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. During these eleven centuries the empire underwent profound transformations; hence it is customary to divide Byzantine history into at least three major periods: the Early Period, from its founding to about the middle of the seventh century; the Middle Period, up to the conquest of Asia Minor by Turks in the 1070s; and the Late

Period, up to 1453, when the empire fell to the Ottomans. These divisions facilitate understanding the shifting borders and new actors in the area covered roughly by the Balkans, Asia Minor, Anatolia, SYRIA, PALESTINE, and EGYPT.

The fight for control of the fertile crescent was an enduring one, first between the Persians and the Byzantines and then between the Arabs and the Byzantines during the Early Period. With the settlement of SELJUK TURKS in the region, this conflict was transformed into a semi-permanent conflict between neighbors during the Middle Period. In the Late Period, after the sack of Constantinople in 1204 by VENICE and knights from the Christian West, known as Latins, the empire was partitioned and the Latin kingdoms assumed control of much former Byzantine territory.

At different points in the long history of the empire the polyglot (Slavic, Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Aramaic, Armenian, Latin) and multiethnic (Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats, Albanians, Greeks, Armenians, Syrians, Egyptians, JEWS) empire had been in grave danger. After the mid-seventh century the Byzantine Empire was a medium sized regional state based in Constantinople and fighting a battle for survival. However, even the disasters of the seventh century did not overturn the Byzantine faith that they were the new Israelites, a Chosen People, ruled by a Christ-loving emperor who dwelt in the God-guarded city. Their belief that failures and defeats were allowed by God as a punishment for sin and that repentance would allow them to be spared was the motivating power behind their recovery and victories in the 11th century. In Byzantine political ideology, as long as the empire retained its three elements—the emperor, the patriarch, and the city (Constantinople)—it continued to exist. Territorial losses were considered to be ephemeral.

Byzantium in the 11th and 12th centuries underwent explosive demographic, urban, and economic growth, which led to competition and discord with its population, and finally to military defeat at the hands of outsiders. In both cultural and political history, the loss of most of Anatolia and the rise of the Comneni dynasty to the Byzantine throne in 1081 marked a new stage. Once more the political decline of Byzantium from an unrivaled superpower to merely the strongest of several strong states subtly changed the cultural mood, and unquestioned self-assurance of Byzantine dominance gave way to a more defensive sense of superiority. The ecclesiastical schism between Rome and Constantinople in 1054 manifested the political and ideological division between East and West that was used to legitimize the attack on the Byzantine Empire after the Fourth Crusade.

The resilience of Byzantine political ideology and culture was tested while the empire was in exile following the events of the fourth crusade and three successive states—

the Despotate of Epirus (northwest of Greece and south of Albania), the Empire of Nicaea (Iznik, Turkey), and the Empire of Trabzon (Trebizond)—claimed to be the legitimate successor states. The reconquest of Constantinople from the Latins in 1261 amounted to a symbolic imperial rebirth. Soon, however, the Byzantine treasury was emptied as its territories shrank to a small part of northwestern Anatolia in the east and Thrace in the west.

Lack of resources, the constant threat of another crusade organized by the West to revive Constantinople as a Latin kingdom, as well as ideological and theological quarrels, prevented Byzantine society from focusing on its eastern borders. By 1320, Byzantium's eastern front had grown unstable but the Ottomans were not yet acknowledged as a true political threat. According to the Byzantines, the Ottoman nomads represented nothing more than the next wave of tribal movement into Anatolia. They were to painfully find out that these nomads had come to stay. The history of the relations between the Byzantines and Ottoman Turks is characterized by periods of conflict and cooperation and may be divided into three main periods: the Byzantines and the Ottomans as adversaries between 1302 and 1341, as cautious allies from 1341 to 1347, and the Byzantines as Ottoman vassals from 1354 to 1453.

BYZANTINE-OTTOMAN ANTAGONISM, 1302–41

The Ottoman emirate was one among many established in former Byzantine Anatolia. The Ottomans, named after their founder *OSMAN I* (r. c. 1281–1324?), were situated in northwestern Asia Minor, on the Byzantine frontier along the Sangarios River in eastern Bithynia (the Sakarya River in present-day Turkey). Many myths and legends were invented to supply Osman with a long and glorious pedigree; he was, after all, the founder of a dynasty that would inherit the universal Byzantine Empire and “terrorize” western Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Osman, upon the death of his father *Ertoğrul* in 1288, slowly advanced into the Byzantine province of Bithynia, raiding the upper valley of the Sangarios River as well as the territory between the Byzantine cities of *BURSA* and *Nicaea* (Iznik). In July 1302, Osman defeated a Byzantine army at *Bapheus* near *Nicomedia* (Izmit). Shortly thereafter he occupied the fortress of *Melangeia*, or *Yenişehir*, and made it his base for future operations. It lay between *Bursa* and *Nicaea* and so controlled the overland route from Constantinople to Bithynia.

These victories were the direct result of the empire's neglect of the eastern front. Emperor *Michael VII Palaiologos* (r. 1261–82) had weakened the Byzantine defense of Anatolia by dismantling the frontier defense troops since he was suspicious of their loyalty and by imposing heavy taxation on the local peasants. At the same time, Turkish raids in the Anatolian countryside

increased the general state of insecurity. When the emperor's son *Andronikos II Palaiologos* (r. 1282–1341) came to power he had to renounce the Union of Lyons (1274), an effort to lift the 1054 schism between Orthodox and Catholics, accepted by his father and proclaim the restoration of Christian Orthodoxy, disband the Byzantine navy due to the effects of the economic depression, and negotiate a commercial war between Venice and Genoa fought over the body of Constantinople (1296–1302). On the eastern front neither the Alans employed as mercenaries nor the Catalan Company—a professional mercenary group employed by the emperor to replace them—ended the Ottoman-imposed isolation of Byzantine cities in Bithynia. Local dignitaries and bishops were instrumental in defending the cities against the Turks.

Twice the Ottomans were in grave danger from Byzantine forces. In 1304 the Catalan Company sent by the Byzantines challenged Osman's emirate. However, the dismemberment of the company by the Byzantines when they proved to be more destructive than the Ottomans opened the way for the return of Osman who in 1307 captured fortresses around *Nicaea*, isolating the city. The Mongol army sent by the khan *Öldjaitu* to the relief of *Nicaea* in 1307 was somewhat successful in clearing out the Ottomans from the district. But as soon as Mongol army had passed, Osman conquered the surrounding territory up to the Sea of Marmara, isolating the cities of *Nicaea*, *Bursa*, and *Nicomedia* from each other and from Constantinople.

The fight for the possession of these cities was long and bitter, but their defense was mainly in their own hands. The Byzantine emperor could not spare much thought for the defense of Asia Minor. The empire was financially exhausted by the depredations of the Catalans and their aftermath. For some years, it was as much as it could do to defeat a handful of Turks raiding different Byzantine regions next to the sea in Europe, let alone trying to muster an army to defeat the Ottomans in Asia. The continuous flood of refugees from former Byzantine lands to the capital was a constant reminder of the frontier situation.

A more energetic or resourceful emperor might have been able to resist more ably, but *Andronikos II* was past his prime. The aging emperor had intended that his eldest son *Michael IX*, the child of his first wife *Anne* of Hungary, should succeed to the throne. However, *Michael* died before coming to the throne; because *Michael's* son *Andronikos* had his brother *Manuel* killed in 1320, *Andronikos II* disinherited his grandson instead of proclaiming him co-emperor, thus creating a dangerous power vacuum. The younger generation of aristocracy, led by *Andronikos's* friend *Kantakouzenos*, used the announcement of increased taxation by *Andronikos II* as a pretext to rebel. The civil war lasted from 1320 until 1327; eventually the emperor abdicated in favor of his grandson.

During these crucial years, Osman steadily enlarged his principality by overrunning the region between Sangarios and the Bosphorus up to the shore of the Black Sea. The conquest of Bursa in 1326 came as a surprise to the Byzantines. It became the first Ottoman capital and was adorned with mosques and endowments. Osman's son, ORHAN (r. 1324–62), after conquering Bursa, directed his activities against Nicaea and Nicomedia, which had been isolated for some years.

Although the Byzantine Empire was in decline, the Ottomans, as the smallest of the Anatolian Turkish emirates, must yet be credited with an outstanding military and strategic performance. Their geographical proximity to the Byzantine capital is stressed by historians as one of the reasons the Ottomans were more successful in building an empire than other Turkish principalities in Anatolia. Historical circumstances and strong leadership also account for their rapid expansion. The pattern of early conquests reveals strategic planning by Osman and his son Orhan. The conquest of the countryside surrounding large and prosperous Byzantine cities in Bithynia not only cut off their supply routes and destroyed their economy but also intimidated their populations. Ottomanists have stressed the *ghazi* spirit, the attitude of the religious warrior (*see* GHAZA), as a driving force for the early Ottomans; to wage war against the infidels was the religious duty of Muslims. A contemporary source, the *Destan of Umur Pasha*, the emir of Aydın, demonstrates that war and conquest were the lifeblood of the *ghazi* warriors, and as Ottoman territory bordered Byzantium, the Ottomans had plentiful prospects for holy war. As the Ottomans continued their offensive wars against the Byzantines, their numbers swelled with other tribal Turks seeking a life of valor and booty. The main reason for Ottoman success, however, was the development of stable and permanent institutions of government that transformed a tribal polity into a workable state.

The Ottomans utilized all human resources in their emirate and quickly learned skills in bureaucracy and diplomacy. As a result, the Ottomans occasionally made peace with the infidel Byzantines and in some cases even cooperated with them as allies. They also did not slaughter every Christian in their path; rather, they encouraged the Christian inhabitants of the countryside and the towns to join them. Islamic law and tradition declared that enemies who surrendered on demand should be treated with tolerance. The Christians of Bithynia were obliged to pay the *haraç*, or capitation tax, for the privilege of being tolerated, but this was no more burdensome than the taxes they had paid to the Byzantine government, which had neglected their interests. Once they had made the decision to surrender or defect, the Byzantine population resigned to their fate. The political inducements were often strong, for the Ottomans wanted to

increase their numbers; indeed a band of Catalans even joined them in 1304. Some Christians converted to Islam upon joining the Ottomans; however, this was not demanded. Many local Christians even participated in Ottoman raids against Byzantium.

The Byzantine Emperor Andronikos III (r. 1328–41), with the aid of his trusted friend John Kantakouzenos, was determined at least to make the effort to stave off the Ottoman advance along the Gulf of Nicomedia toward Constantinople. The resulting Battle of Pelekanon in June 1329 between the Ottoman and Byzantine forces was nothing more than a series of skirmishes. The Ottoman mounted archers and Orhan's strategy of avoiding a pitched battle with the Byzantine army created panic in the Byzantine camp. After the emperor fled, the fate of his forces was sealed. This battle was the first direct encounter between a Byzantine emperor and an Ottoman emir. From this point onward, the collapse of Byzantine resistance in Bithynia was rapid and total. Nicaea surrendered to Orhan on March 2, 1331. Nicomedia held out until 1337.

Long before the fall of Nicomedia, in August 1333, the emperor crossed over to Asia Minor on the pretext of relieving Nicomedia. But instead of fighting, he invited Orhan to discuss the terms of a treaty. This was the first diplomatic encounter between the Byzantine emperor and the Ottoman emir. The emperor agreed to pay an annual tribute of 12,000 hyperpyra (Byzantine gold coins), approximately one fifth of the annual state budget, to retain possession of the few remaining Byzantine territories in Bithynia.

The Ottomans set such a good example as pacific conquerors that they won the confidence of many former Byzantine subjects. For example, when Nicaea fell, Orhan allowed all who wanted to leave the city to depart freely, taking with them their holy relics, but few availed themselves of the chance. No reprisals were taken against those who had resisted, and the city was left to manage its internal affairs under its own municipal government. By 1336, Orhan had also taken over the emirate of Karasi, extending his domain along the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara. In the 14th century the Venetians and the Genoese possessed many territories formerly belonging to the Byzantines. Their prime concern was the preservation of these territories rather than cooperation with the Byzantine emperors against the Ottomans. Andronikos III and Kantakouzenos were convinced that they might more effectively enter into agreement with competing Turkic emirs. The long friendship between Kantakouzenos and Umur of Aydın was in fact a defensive alliance against the Ottomans. Umur was eager to provide the emperor with soldiers to fight battles in Europe in return for payment and booty. In 1336 Umur lent his ships for the recovery of the island of Lesbos in the Aegean from the Genoese.

BYZANTINES AND OTTOMANS AS CAUTIOUS ALLIES, 1341–47

During the second civil war in Byzantium between 1341 and 1347, the relationship between the Ottomans and Byzantines altered from adversaries to cautious allies. After the death of Andronikos III in 1341, Kantakouzenos was deprived of the regency of the young emperor John V Palaiologos, son of Andronikos; his experience and skills as diplomat and administrator were a threat to the young Empress Anna of Savoy, mother of John V. Kantakouzenos eventually proclaimed himself the emperor in 1341. Once more the bitter struggle for the Byzantine throne transformed into a regional struggle, with SERBIA and BULGARIA changing sides in the civil conflict and supporting one of the candidates to the Byzantine throne against the other according to their interest. After 1345, Kantakouzenos' friend Umur, who had greatly advanced his cause in Thrace with the support of troops, was less able to offer the same generous help, for the league of Western powers sponsored by Pope Clement VI had finally succeeded in destroying his fleet and seizing the harbor of Smyrna in October 1344. Kantakouzenos thus made contact with Orhan in 1345 and in 1346 he gave his second daughter Theodora in marriage to Orhan, a man in his sixties. Contemporary moralists threw their hands up in horror at this apparent sacrifice of a princess to a barbarian chieftain. The groom did not appear but sent his soldiers to receive the bride. The Ottoman troops supplied by Orhan completed the work left unfinished by the soldiers of Umur, and on the night of February 2, 1347, John Kantakouzenos was admitted in Constantinople. The emperor had to apologize in his memoirs for the unprecedented devastation the Ottoman troops inflicted in Thrace. Unlike Umur, the Ottomans departed Thrace at their will, carrying great numbers of booty and slaves. And the Byzantines were left to mourn the losses.

Booty was not, however, the only Ottoman gain. The forces commanded by Orhan's son, Süleyman Pasha, were not merely obeying their Byzantine allies. They came to know the life of the land and to make themselves at home on European territory. In the dispute between John V, the successor of Kantakouzenos, and his son Matthew in the summer of 1354, Süleyman provided Matthew with soldiers. It was during this campaign that the Ottomans acquired their first possession in Europe. Süleyman refused to evacuate the fortress of Tzympe near Gallipoli and while negotiations for the return of the city between Kantakouzenos and Orhan were still in progress, he occupied Gallipoli when its population abandoned it after a devastating earthquake in March 1354.

BYZANTIUM AS VASSAL OF THE TURKS, 1354–1453

The life of John V Palaiologos (r. 1354–91), who ascended to the throne after the abdication of John Katakouzenos, was a difficult one. The Byzantines still had hopes

of another crusade organized by the pope to deliver the Balkan lands from the Ottomans, who had renewed their expansion into Europe. Meanwhile, Sultan MURAD I (r. 1362–89), who succeeded Orhan to the Ottoman throne, consolidated his power in Anatolia before launching his attacks in Thrace. In 1361 before coming to his throne, he took Adrianople, the second largest city of Byzantium. In 1365 John V, pressured by the Ottomans in Thrace, took the unprecedented step of leaving his capital to pay a visit to the Hungarian king Louis the Great (r. 1342–82) and plead for help. His hopes for help were betrayed. The Hungarian king mistrusted the emperor and obliged him to leave his son Manuel as hostage. On his way back to Constantinople, John himself was taken hostage by the Bulgarians near Vidin and his son Andronikos seemed in no hurry to intervene on his father's behalf. He was eventually saved by his cousin Amadeo of Savoy who launched an attack on the Bulgarians and forced them to release the emperor in the winter of 1366. John V this time was persuaded to travel to Rome to seek support for organizing a crusade against the Ottomans. He agreed to convert to Catholicism in return for manpower and money. His five-month stay in Rome had little result, however, and on his way back the Venetians reminded the emperor of his debts. The crown jewels were already pawned in Venice during the second civil war. As he was unable to honor his debt, in return he consented to make over the island of Tenedos to the Venetians and thus regain the jewels as well as some much-needed cash. However once more his son Andronikos, prompted by the Genoese, left his father without money or credit as hostage to the Venetians. John eventually made his way back in 1371, weary and disenchanted.

In the meantime Murad's success in the Maritsa Valley in Bulgaria prompted Serbia, Bosnia, and Hungary in 1371 to unite against the sultan, though to no avail. Evrenos Bey and Hayreddin Pasha, the grand vizier of Murad, forced many Balkan lords to submit to Ottoman supremacy as vassals. Murad colonized newly conquered territories and changed the army by introducing the JANISSARIES, a corps of young Christians who converted to Islam and were trained to become his private soldiers. After Murad's death in 1389 at the BATTLE OF KOSOVO, BAYEZID I (r. 1389–1402) continued to weaken Byzantine resistance by setting one member of the ruling family against the other. This initiated the third phase in Byzantine-Ottoman relations, when the Byzantines became Ottoman vassals.

The emperor Manuel II (r. 1391–1402), who was at Bursa when he heard the news of his father's death, slipped out of the sultan's camp by night and hurried to Constantinople to claim his throne. He describes in his letters the misery he experienced while serving the Ottomans in Anatolia. Bayezid's psychological warfare against his Christian vassals lords was a great success. Thus, the crusade at Nicopolis in 1396 headed by King Sigismund of

Hungary seemed to be the last chance of the Byzantines. The assistance of the Byzantines to the crusaders in Nikopol (Bulgaria) in 1394 was answered by a full-scale siege of Constantinople by the Ottomans. Eventually, when TIMUR (founder of the Timurid Empire) defeated Bayezid in 1402 at the BATTLE OF ANKARA, this victory was perceived by the Balkan states as a sign of divine grace. The news reached Emperor Manuel in Paris on a desperate mission to awaken the western powers to the Ottoman threat.

While the Ottoman struggle for the throne was raging, the Byzantines managed to attain short-lived gains. In 1403 the city of Salonika was restored alongside with some Aegean islands and a long stretch of the Black Sea coast from Constantinople to Varna (Bulgaria). During the period known as the Ottoman Interregnum (1402–13) the Byzantines managed to become involved in the Ottoman civil wars by supporting one candidate over the other. The triumph of Mehmed I (1413–20) was due to the support of Byzantium and local *gazha* frontier leaders. However, Mehmed's successor, MURAD II (r. 1421–44 and 1446–51), was not as willing to tolerate Byzantine interference. Byzantine support to Mustafa, the Ottoman pretender to the throne, enraged Sultan Murad II and led to the besieging of Constantinople in 1422. When Emperor Manuel died in 1425, his empire was reduced to the environs of Constantinople, SALONIKA, and Morea (Peloponnese, Greece). His son John VIII (1425–48) was convinced that help would only come from the West. In 1430 the conquest of Janina in Epirus and of Salonika convinced the Byzantines that their appeal to the Western world to save Constantinople might be answered this time as the Ottomans were dangerously approaching Italy. The Union of Churches achieved in the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–39) did result in a long-awaited crusade. Sultan Murad, however, defeated the crusaders at Varna in 1444 and at Kosovo in 1448.

In Constantinople, the unpopularity of the Union of Churches among devoted Eastern Christians complicated matters for the Byzantine Empire; an anti-Union party capitalized on the defeats to stress the spiritual and physical isolation of the Byzantines from the Western world. Constantine XI (r. 1448–1453), brother of the late emperor John VIII, found a devastated and divided city when he entered Constantinople on March 12, 1449. In February 1451 Sultan Murad II died at EDİRNE. He had resigned six years earlier in favor of his son MEHMED II (r. 1444–46; 1451–81), but had come out of his retirement to take revenge on the Hungarians and the Byzantines. Known as “the Conqueror,” Mehmed II was 19 years old in 1451 and the Byzantines were slow to recognize that so young and inexperienced a ruler presented them with a danger more formidable than any sultan before.

The Byzantines were not alone in underestimating the strength of Mehmed II. His treaties with János (John) Hunyadi, governor of HUNGARY, and with George BRANKOVIĆ of Serbia, and the goodwill he expressed to

the KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN of RHODES and to the Genoese lords of Chios and Lesbos, fostered the illusion in the West that no harm could come while the Ottoman Empire was in the hands of one so young. Former emirs shared this illusion and organized a rebellion in Asia in 1451. The revolt was crushed as soon as Mehmed arrived. The Byzantine emperor suggested that a grandson of the late Prince Süleyman, called Orhan, who lived in exile at Constantinople was a pretender to the Ottoman throne. Mehmed II's response was the construction of a castle on the European shore of the Bosphorus. Rumeli Hisarı, as it came to be known, was completed in four months. According to Byzantine chronicles the Byzantines watching the work from their walls now felt that all the prophecies about the end of their world and the coming of the Antichrist were about to be fulfilled.

Omens and prophecies about the ultimate fate of the city had been heard for many years. It was widely believed that the end of the world would come in 1492, the year 7000 after the creation, which meant that there were still 40 years left. The first bombardment of the walls by cannons—including a gigantic cannon built by the Hungarian engineer Orban—began on April 6, 1453, and continued daily. After three Genoese broke through the siege, bringing supplies and weapons to the city, Mehmed knew that he must find a way to get part of his fleet into the Golden Horn. The final attack on the city began in the early hours of Tuesday, May 29, and by the afternoon the sultan entered the city, replacing the carcass of the Eastern Roman Empire with a new polity.

The Ottomans achieved what many neighboring forces—including the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Hungarians, and the Holy Roman Emperor—had been dreaming of: the conquest of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire. Even if Constantinople was a mere ghost of its former glorious past, depopulated, impoverished, and in disarray, it was still a strong symbol and a strategic gateway to the West. It immediately became apparent that the Ottomans intended to replace the old empire with an empire of their own. Mehmed II reconstructed and repopulated Constantinople, renaming it Istanbul, and making it the new Ottoman capital, which it would remain until the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century.

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