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The Imperial Majesty Mustapha Khan the III. Proceeding in procession
from the Imperial residence to the Sublime Porte on the Fête of the Bairahm
L'anne 1762

به نشین سلطنتا ولان
هنرلرینک بابهایونا یله
ک کوروشتر سمندر



بکیوز تیشار نیار بیلر نده اریکا
سلطان مصطفی خان ثالث حص
باروشط بئنده بیراما لآین

S. M. I. Mustapha Khan III. Partant de son Palais Impériale pres
de la Sublime Porte a l'occasion de la Fête du Baïram, l'année 1762.

152 Procession and Continuity: A Nineteenth-Century View of an Eighteenth-Century Ceremony

Alison Terndrup

In the nineteenth century, print-makers combined new technologies and forms with established pictorial genres to great effect. The lithographic presses of Ottoman Istanbul produced images of the modernizing world as well as nostalgic views commemorating historical events.¹ For the latter, artists and designers drew on the rich visual histories of art depicting official Ottoman events, including royal processions, state ceremonies, and diplomatic receptions.

The Suna and İnan Kiraç Foundation Collection (SVIKV) holds an illustrative mid-century example of Ottoman commemorative lithography, large in format (63 x 41 cm; 71 x 49 cm including its frame) and enhanced with hand-applied colors (fig. 1). According



Figure 2: Topkapı Palace Museum (TSM), 121/679 (formerly 17/169). The Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, Directorate of National Palaces Administration.

day of 1176 H / 1762, passing through the First Court of the Topkapı Palace.² A similar lithograph, with the Ottoman Turkish caption printed in larger calligraphic script and centered at the top of the image, is held in the Manuscripts Collection of the National Palaces in Istanbul, Turkey (fig. 2).³ The original intended audience for this work, likely Ottoman elites

in a distinctive architectural setting, official dress, and strict processional form as belonging to Ottoman imperial history. Visual expressions of the Ottoman past—real or imagined—were likely to evoke memories of stable rule, the predictable transfer of power, a sense of (proto)national pride, and general imperial nostalgia. Such evocations held relevant political and emotional connections to contemporary events in the turbulent years of the Tanzimat (Reorganization) era (1839–1876) and the Crimean War (1853–1856).

Inscribing Place

The inscription speaks to the wide viewership that this print was originally intended to address, following established modes of multilingual captioning for cosmopolitan audiences.⁴ Ottoman statesmen, foreign visitors and residents, and other members of their circles used English, Ottoman Turkish, and French to communicate in political and diplomatic contexts. Whether the original owner of this work would have been able to read the caption in one or all three languages is yet unknown.⁵

The Ottoman Turkish portion (fig. 3) can be transcribed as follows: “Bin yüz yetmiş altı tarihlerinde erike-nişin saltanat olan Sultan Mustafa Han-ı Salis hazretlerinin Bâb-ı hümayun ile Bâb-ı vasat beyinde bayram alayının görünüşü resmidir.”⁶ It describes the



Figure 1: Suna and İnan Kiraç Foundation (SVIKV), IAE, FKA_009509. “His Imperial Majesty Mustapha Khan the III, Proceeding in procession from the Imperial residence to the Sublime Porte on the Fête of Bairahm, l’anne 1762.” Engraving, mid-nineteenth century, 63 x 41 cm.

to its trilingual inscription—printed in English, Ottoman Turkish, and French—the scene shows an imperial procession held for the *bayram* holi-

and members of foreign diplomatic circles based in Istanbul, would have been separated from the depicted event by about a century. However, they would have recognized the dis-



Figure 3-5: SVIKV, IAE, FKA_009509. Excerpts.

bayram alayı (bayram procession) of Sultan Mustafa III (r. 1757–1774) as passing between the Bâb-ı Hümayun (Imperial Gate) and the Bâb-ı Vasat (Middle Gate), squarely locating the action in the ceremonial space of the First Court.⁷ However, both the English (fig. 4) and French (fig. 5) captions inaccurately describe the procession as moving from the imperial residence to the Sublime Porte.⁸ This discrepancy may point to the existence of several overlapping environmental factors in the production of this lithographic print. This could include, for example, the designer's level of education and the use of collaborative workshop practices. It is possible that the lithographic image (which involves passing the surface to be printed upon together with a chemically prepared stone through a horizontal press) was pulled

separately from its caption (which may have been printed in letterpress, a relief method that requires a vertical application of pressure), introducing a wider margin of error. This use of language may also point to the socio-cultural environment of nineteenth-century Istanbul, in which rapid shifts in protocol, preferred ceremonial sites, terminology, and official names and ranks occurred on an ongoing basis.

The image itself puts great emphasis on specificity of place through its precise depiction of the walls and gardens of the First Court of the Topkapı Palace (fig. 6), a semi-public realm used by the Ottomans as a parade ground for centuries. Established in the fifteenth century by Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444–1446; 1451–1481), known as

Fatih or Conqueror, the palace holds enormous symbolic significance. It served as the primary official residence for members of the dynasty for nearly four centuries.

The forward movement of the procession, emphasized by the horizontal lines of the palace walls, indicate that the group is about to pass through the Middle Gate into the more exclusive space of the Second Court. Here, royal ceremonies such as the *tecdid-i biat* (renewal of loyalty) were staged against the backdrop of the Babüssaade (Gate of Felicity).⁹ By the mid-nineteenth century, when this lithograph was likely produced, parts of the official *bayram* festivities, including the *muayede merasimi* (holiday greetings ceremony), were held at the Dolmabahçe Palace. However, the *bayram alayı* still processed to the Topkapı parade grounds, linking the updated celebrations of the Tanzimat era to the conventions of the Ottoman past. In this sense, the architectural elements included in the SVIKV lithograph frame the scene in multiple ways: formally, geographically, and within the bounds of an established ceremonial program.

Pictorial Prototypes across Media

In addition to the caption and architectural setting, the third main component of this lithograph is the ceremonial procession. Sultan Mustafa and his impressive retinue fill the bottom third of the composition. The sultan is oriented in the horizontal center of the scene, mounted on a finely caparisoned steed (fig. 7). He wears a ceremonial kaftan with diamond frog-



Figure 6: SVIKV, IAE, FKA_009509. Excerpt.



Figure 7: SVIKV, IAE, FKA_009509. Excerpt.

ging and a turban with a tall *sorguç*, or aigrette. Members of the elite imperial guard surround the sultan on foot. This includes *peyks* wearing black-plumed, golden helmets and carrying axes, *baltacı*s wearing blue robes and conical felt caps, and *solaks* wearing headgear with multicolored, fanned plumes. Viziers, palace officials, and janissary regiments round out the entourage.

This composition draws on a deep well of established prototypes across media. Ottoman artists of the *nakkaşhâne*, or official workshop, had produced series of small-scale manuscript paintings commemorating royal processions and state ceremonies since the sixteenth century. For example, the opulent *Surnâme-i Hümayun* (Book of the Imperial Circumcision Festival), completed for Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595), commemorated the 1582 circumcision celebration of Prince Mehmed.¹⁰ Abdülcelil Levnî Çelebi lavishly illustrated the festivities held for the 1720 circumcision of the sons of Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730) in the *Surnâme-i Vehbî* (The Festival Book of Vehbi).¹¹ Ottoman and foreign artists continued to use the official palace style developed in manuscript painting for the production of single-sheet paintings and prints throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Palace styles, subjects, and compositions circulated on a wider scale as artists produced works for sale on the open market. These single images were often bound into albums or used to illustrate travelogues, which reached audiences within the Ottoman Empire and abroad. An example of the type of heavily illustrated travelogue that gained popularity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is Antoine Ignace Melling's impressive *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des Rives du Bosphore*.¹² Among his views of the city is an en-

graving titled *Marche solennelle du Grand-Seigneur, le jour du Bairam* (The official march of the Sultan from Topkapı Palace to the mosque, on the day of Bayram). The view shows the bayram *alayı* of Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) processing beyond the walls of the palace via the Bâb-ı hümayun. The order of the procession mirrors that of the Kiraç lithograph, with the imperial guard closely surrounding the sultan, immediately followed by the recognizable figures of the *silahdar ağa* (sword-bearer) and *kızlar ağası* (chief harem eunuch) (fig. 8).

Melling's view was copied and simplified by J.M. Tancoigne in 1817, who included an accompanying text to fill in the reader on figures that could not be fit into the image. Tancoigne justifies his repetitive contribution to an admittedly popular topic among travel writers by ensuring the reader that he has consulted two of the best Ottoman sources (*autorités incontestables*) on the topic: Mouradgea d'Ohs-son and Ahmed Vasif Efendi, adding a gloss of authenticity and insider knowledge. In the text, the procession is led by mounted officials: the *kaptan paşa* (grand admiral), the *sadrazam* (grand vizier), the *reis-efendi* (minister of foreign affairs) and other ministers of the sultan. Immediately preceding the sultan is a finely caparisoned horse led by its bridle, a feature that appears in this position in both the Tancoigne engraving and the SVIKV lithograph



Figure 8: SVIKV, IAE, FKA_009509. Excerpt.



Figure 9–10: SVIKV, IAE, FKA_009509. Excerpts.

(fig. 9). Following the sultan and his bodyguard, Tancoigne’s text describes the *hazinedar* (treasurer), *rikâbdar ağası* (stool bearer), and *dülbend ağası* (turban bearer). Of these, only the *hazinedar* fit into Tancoigne’s engraving. However, the SVIKV lithograph does appear to include all three figures as well as additional attendants, footmen, and guards (fig. 10). The mirroring between Tancoigne’s text—one ex-

ample among a multitude of Ottoman and non-Ottoman texts—and visual examples, including the lithograph under study, demonstrates a continued interest in the conventional order of official ceremonies.

Conclusion

While bayram processions and other celebrations retained established

protocol, they also incorporated novel and modernizing visual elements throughout the nineteenth century, during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839), and his sons, Abdülmecid (r. 1839–1861) and Abdülaziz (r. 1861–1876). For example, the great variety of Ottoman official dress shown in the SVIKV lithograph became homogenized under the dress reforms of Mahmud II, who mandated the wearing of a modern military uniform consisting of trousers, frockcoat, and fez in the late 1820s. Travel writing of the time, colored by romantic nostalgia and orientalist leanings, expressed disappointment in these changes, blaming the costume reform for the loss of “oriental splendour,” often with the caveat that royal celebrations remained generally impressive.¹³ From the 1830s onward, state-sponsored festivities began to include new elements, sometimes based on Western European models and often utilizing new technologies. For example, military drills and parades, cannon salvos, martial music, gaslight illuminations, firework displays, and the staging of balls and soirées at new waterfront palaces such as Dolmabahçe became accepted elements of a new form of Ottoman ceremonial practice.¹⁴

This lithograph in the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation Collection is a product of this mid-century moment, embracing the future as it glorifies the past. It was made possible by a new print technology, itself a product of the Ottoman Empire’s continued participation in global commercial and diplomatic networks. Evidence of the presence of these networks is inscribed, literally, into the print by its trilingual caption. Formally, the lithograph references a venerable tradition of Ottoman royal patronage, pageantry, and ceremony. As such, it is an example of the complex and lasting appeal of commemorative images and their ability to inform nostalgic sensibilities.

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1 Alois Senefelder invented the lithographic process in Bavaria in 1804, but the technology for chemically preparing stones did not arrive in the print centers of the Ottoman Empire, including Istanbul and Smyrna (today's Izmir), until the 1830s. It took until the middle of the century for Istanbul's presses to come into their own. Ian Proudfoot, "Mass Producing Houris Moles, or Aesthetics and Choice of Technology in Early Muslim Book Printing," in *Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought, and Society: A Festschrift in Honour of Anthony H. Johns*, ed. Peter G. Riddell and Tony Street (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 161–186. Lithographic technology was quickly taken up in other parts of the Islamic world in the first decades of the century, including Qajar Iran. For Qajar lithographic book printing, see Farshid Emami, "The Lithographic Image and its Audiences," in *Technologies of the Image: Art in 19th-Century Iran*, ed. David J. Roxburgh and Mary McWilliams (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums distributed by Yale University Press, 2017), 51–79. For a comprehensive view of Islamicate lithography in the global

context, see Nile Green, "Stones from Bavaria: Iranian Lithography in its Global Contexts," *Iranian Studies* 43, no. 3 (June 2010): 305–331.

2 This refers to one or both of the two major Islamic holidays: *Ramazan Bayramı*, or *Eid al-Fitr*, and *Kurban Bayramı*, or *Eid al-Adha*.

3 Topkapı Palace Museum (TSM), 121/679 (formerly 17/169).

4 For a study of trilingual captions in French, Ottoman Turkish, and Greek appearing in a collection of twenty-five hand-colored engravings and lithographs produced in Ottoman Smyrna in the 1830s, see Gwendolyn Collaço, ed., *Prints and Impressions from Ottoman Smyrna: the Collection de costumes civils et militaires, scènes populaires, et vues de l'Asie-Mineure Album (1836–1838) at Harvard University's Fine Arts Library* (Istanbul: Orient-Institut Istanbul, 2019).

5 This piece was acquired by Suna and Inan Kıraç Foundation, Istanbul in 2018 from the Yılanlı Yalı collection.

6 "It is the official view of the bayram procession of the reigning Sultan Mustafa III between the Imperial Gate and the Middle Gate in the year 1176 H."

7 The Middle Gate is more typically known in Turkish as the *Ortakapı* or the *Bâbü's-selam* (Gate of Salutation).

8 In both English and French, "Sublime Porte" was used as a metonym for the Ottoman central government, named after the gate to the grand vizier's offices.

9 This follows the description in Ignatius Mouradgèa d'Ohsson, *Tableau general de l'Empire ottoman* (Paris, 1788–1824), 7:129–131. For an inter-cultural analysis of this monumental work, see Carter Vaughn Findley, *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

10 For *Surnâme-i Hümayun*, see Nurhan Atasoy, *Surnâme-i Hümayun 1582: An Imperial Celebration* (Istanbul: Koçbank, 1997).

11 For *Surnâme-i Vehbî*, see Esin Atıl, *Levni and the Surname: The Story of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Festival* (Istanbul: Koçbank, 1999).

12 Antoine Ignace Melling, *Voyage pittoresque de Constantinople et des Rives du Bosphore* (Paris, 1819).

13 John Auldjo, *Journal of a Visit to Constantinople* (London, 1835), 36. Miss Julia Pardoe criticized the *Kurban bayram* processions of 1836 specifically because of the "frightful fêz" worn by participants. Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan and Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836* (London, 1838), 1:169.

14 Alison Terndrup, "The Sultan's Gaze: Power and Ceremony in the Imperial Portraiture Campaign of Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II (r. 1808–1839)" (PhD diss., Boston University, 2021), ProQuest (28417144). For the role of innovation in Ottoman official ceremonies of the nineteenth century, see Hakan Karateke, *Padişahım Çok Yaşasın! Osmanlı Devletinin Son Yüzyılında Merasimler* (Istanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2004). For the design, establishment, and activation of the architectural settings in which such ceremonies took place, see Ünver Rüstem, *Ottoman Baroque: The Architectural Refashioning of Eighteenth-Century Istanbul* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019). For the concept of direct ruler visibility, under which the physical appearance of the sultan during ceremonial events played a key role in the Ottoman political rhetoric of the nineteenth century, see Darin Stephanov, *Ruler Visibility and Popular Belonging in the Ottoman Empire, 1808–1908* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).