

BALMUN'24

JCC: FALL OF CONSTANTONPLE

**Under Secretary General:
Ezo Gökçe AVŞAR**

**Academic Assistants:
Malik Arda KUL
Ömer Alp ŞİRİNGÖZ**

STUDY GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Letter From The Secretary General**
- 2. Letter From The Under Secretary General**
- 3. Introduction To The Committee**
- 4. Timeline Of Key Events**
- 5. Byzantine Empire**
 - 5.1. Current State Of Byzantine Empire**
 - 5.1.1. Political**
 - 5.1.2. Cultural**
 - 5.1.3. Military**
 - 5.1.4 Religion**
 - 5.2. Current State Of Constantinople**
 - 5.3. The Papal State and West Europe**
- 6. Ottoman Empire**
 - 6.1. Current State Of Ottoman Empire**
 - 6.1.1. Political**
 - 6.1.2. Cultural**
 - 6.1.3. Military**
 - 6.1.4 Religion**
 - 6.2. Reign Of Mehmed II**
- 7. The Crusade**
 - 7.1. Motivation Behind The Crusade**
 - 7.2. Current State Of Crusade**
- 8. Character Guide**
- 9. Bibliography**

- 1. Letter From The Secretary General**
- 2. Letter From The Under Secretary General**
- 3. Introduction To The Committee**

Joint Crisis Cabinet: Fall of Constantinople will introduce the multidimensional nature of the pivotal moment which marked the culmination of centuries of geopolitical shifts, military strategies, and cultural transformations, is a nexus where the threads of history converge and diverge in profound ways that took place in 1453.

- 4. Timeline Of Key Events**

1391-1400: Bayezid I tried to conquer Constantinople four times. First, in 1391, both from land and the sea, lasted for 7 months, resulting in concessions from the Byzantine Empire.

Bayezid built a fortress for the preparations for a second siege in Constantinople. Anatolian Fortress (also known as the Beateous Fortress) was built between 1393 and 1394. It is located on the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus.

The second one in 1395 lasted short because of the weather conditions when the winter was coming. There was another attempt in 1396 but again failed.

In 1400, Bayezid tried the fourth time to conquer the city after the Byzantine emperor Manuel II tried to form a crusade. The siege ended after the Timurid Empire entered Anatolia and opened a new siege.

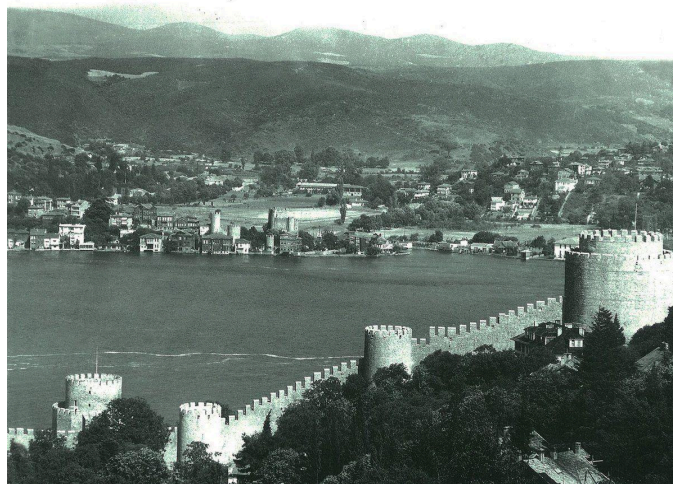
1439: Byzantine emperor John VIII Palaiologos signed in favor of the reunification of Catholic and Orthodox churches.

1442: Ottoman sultan Murad II laid siege to Constantinople, but he was forced to lift it in order to suppress a rebellion elsewhere in the empire.

1444-1446: Sultan Murad II abdicated his throne and his 12-year-old child Mehmed II. At the time, Mehmed asked his father to reclaim the throne but Murad refused. This lasted only 2 years after Murad II returned to his throne. This was a result of the efforts of a highly influential grand vizier Çandarlı Halil Pasha.

1449: Constantine XI Palaiologos became the new Byzantine emperor. He was also a supporter of the reunion between Catholic-Orthodox churches.

1451: Mehmed II ascended the throne once again in 1451. He devoted himself to strengthening the army and the navy for an attack on Constantinople. He started to build another fortress on the Bosphorus but on the European side. Rumelian Fortress (also known as the strait-cutter fortress) is in front of the Anatolian Fortress to throttle all naval traffic along the Bosphorus.



1452: Constantine XI asked the Christian world's superpowers to support him in the upcoming siege.

Mehmed II ordered men to prepare the roads from Edirne (the capital of the Ottoman Empire at the time) to Constantinople so that roads could cope with massive cannons and armies.

January 1453: Genoa's support for the defence of Constantinople arrived with the lead of Giovanni Giustiniani Longo. He was later named commander of land defence by the emperor Constantine XI.

March 1453: The Ottoman's newly powered cannons made by Hungarian gunsmith Urban had been transported to the outskirts of Constantinople from Edirne.

April 1453: Ottoman regiments in European and Anatolian coasts assembled outside Constantinople. Also, their fleet in Gallipoli moved to nearby Diplokionion (modern-day Beşiktaş region).

5. Byzantine Empire

5.1. Current State Of Byzantine Empire

5.1.1. Political

The regime of the Palaiologos dynasty already started with problems. After the Latin invasion of Constantinople in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade, the central authority was lost. After reclaiming Constantinople the reign of the Palaiologos dynasty formed in 1261, started to deal with many problems. Many Turks were conducting raids into Byzantine territories. The loss of the lands got worse after the Black Death (1346-1353), earthquakes including the great earthquake of 1354 weakened the

empire and increased public unrest. The empire survived three civil wars, one lasting for six years, but was wounded more each time.

Palaiologos dynasty always supported the reunification of the Catholic and Orthodox churches, which was a papacy priority since 1054. However, the people of Constantinople (which is considered the cradle of the Orthodox civilization) were strongly against it. Many riots occurred because of this concern and the people lost hope in the emperor over time.

5.1.2. Cultural

Byzantium considered itself heir to the Roman Empire, its inhabitants referred to themselves as Romans. The term "Byzantine Empire" came to be used only later by historians towards the 16th century to differentiate it from the earlier Roman Empire. Although the original language of the Roman Empire was Latin, with the separation from the West, Latin was replaced by Greek. Eventually, the term "Byzantine Empire" came to be used only later by historians towards the 16th century to differentiate it from the earlier Roman Empire. The Byzantine Empire adopted many features from the East but mostly the Greek culture was the influence. The reason behind this is that by the late 13th century, the Empire consisted almost exclusively of traditionally Greek territory. Consequently, this Greek culture soon came to dominate the Empire.

During the final period of the Byzantine Empire, art and cultural improvements peaked. Coinciding with the reign of the Palaiologoi dynasty, it was an attempt to restore Byzantine self-confidence and cultural prestige after the empire had endured a long period of foreign occupation. Byzantine art excelled in sculpture, painting, and mosaic work. The beauty of the mosaic work covering the walls of Byzantine churches is particularly renowned. The legacy of this era also can be seen in the Italian Renaissance.

The most known piece of art is considered the Hagia Sophia church (dedicated to the "divine wisdom"), which was commissioned by Emperor Justinian I and stands as the pinnacle of the "Golden Age" of Byzantine architecture. It is characterized by its enormous dome and boasts having been the world's largest cathedral for over a millennium.



5.1.3. Military

At the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Byzantine army totalled about 7,000 men, 2,000 of whom were foreign mercenaries such as the Grand Catalan Company. These foreign mercenaries were unreliable despite the fact they formed a large proportion of the remaining force. Upon hearing of the plight of Constantinople, Giovanni Giustiniani (along with 700 men from Chios and Genoa) sailed to defend the city, arriving in late January to prepare for the siege. He was known to be a mercenary soldier and was an expert at defending besieged cities. Constantine XI appointed Giustiniani as the general in charge of defence.

The city of Constantinople had about 20 km of walls. 5.5 km of land walls, 7 km of sea walls along the Golden Horn and 7.5 km of sea walls along the Sea of Marmara. This was one of the strongest sets of fortified walls in existence. Many people believed that these walls would protect them until the West came for help. In addition, the defenders were relatively well-equipped with a fleet of 26 ships: 5 from Genoa, 5 from Venice, 3 from Venetian Crete, 1 from Ancona, 1 from Aragon, 1 from France, and about 10 from the empire itself. Two tactical reserves were kept behind in the city: one in the Petra district just behind the land walls and one near the Church of the Holy Apostles, under the command of Loukas Notaras and Nicephorus Palaeologus, respectively. The Venetian Alvise Diedo commanded the ships in the harbour.

5.1.4. Religion

Citizens of the Byzantine Empire strongly identified as Christians, just as they identified as Romans. Emperors recognised Christianity as the official state religion and gave the church authority over politics and the law to unify their empire under a single religion. Certain emperors mandated that pagan people attend church and get baptised, while Jews and Samaritans were prohibited from inheriting property or receiving dowries unless they converted.

A central feature of Byzantine culture was Orthodox Christianity. Byzantine society was very religious, and it held certain values in high esteem, including respect for order and traditional hierarchies. The family was at the centre of society, and marriage, chastity, and celibacy were celebrated and respected.

Icons have an important place in Orthodox Christianity. Icons are religious images or paintings that represent holy symbols or characters. There was a period in the Byzantine Empire, During the eighth and early ninth centuries, Byzantine emperors (beginning with Leo III in 730) spearheaded a movement that denied the holiness of icons, or religious images, and prohibited their worship or veneration. Known as Iconoclasm (the smashing of images) the movement waxed and waned under various rulers, but did not end definitively until 843 when a Church council under Emperor Michael III ruled in favour of the display of religious images.



5.2. Current State Of Constantinople

Constantinople was in no peace for a time. In April 1204, during the Fourth Crusade, Latin armies captured, looted and destroyed parts of Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. This wasn't special for Constantinople. During the Fourth Crusade, several Byzantine lands were occupied in the same way. This is named as Frankokratia (or Latinokratia) referring to Catholic Western Europeans.

During that time most of the Byzantine Empire's territories were divided up among the Crusaders. Byzantine aristocrats also established several small independent splinter states (one of them being the Empire of Nicaea), which would eventually recapture Constantinople in 1261 and proclaim the reinstatement of the Empire.

The sack of Constantinople is a major turning point in medieval history. The Crusaders' decision to attack the world's largest Christian city was unprecedented and immediately controversial. Reports of Crusader looting and brutality scandalised and horrified the Orthodox world; relations between the Catholic and Orthodox churches

were catastrophically wounded for many centuries afterwards, and would not be substantially repaired until modern times.

Between 1346 and 1349, the Black Death killed almost half of the inhabitants of Constantinople. The city was further depopulated by the general economic and territorial decline of the empire, and by 1453, it consisted of a series of walled villages separated by vast fields encircled by the fifth-century Theodosian Walls.

Castilian traveller and writer Ruy González de Clavijo, who saw Constantinople in 1403, wrote that the area within the city walls included small neighbourhoods separated by orchards and fields. The ruins of palaces and churches could be seen everywhere. The aqueducts and the most densely inhabited neighbourhoods were along the coast of the Marmara Sea and Golden Horn. Only the coastal areas, in particular the commercial areas facing the Golden Horn, had a dense population. Although the Genoese colony in Galata was small, it was overcrowded and had magnificent mansions.



5.3. The Papal State and West Europe

Emperor Constantine XI asked Western Europe for help before there was a raid. But there was an unreturnable conflict between the Western-Eastern churches which ended with mutual excommunications. From then on, the papacy was trying to rebuild the union between the Western and Eastern Christian worlds. The Palaiologos dynasty supported the reunion as well and in the Council of Florence, in 1439, Emperor John VIII and Pope Eugene IV proclaimed a “Bull of Union.”

In the summer of 1452, when the Rumelian Fortress was completed and the threat of the Ottomans had become imminent, Constantine wrote to the Pope, promising to

implement the union, which was declared valid by a half-hearted imperial court on 12 December 1452.

Although he was eager for an advantage, Pope Nicholas V did not have the influence the Byzantines thought he had over the Western kings and princes, some of whom were wary of increasing papal control. Furthermore, these Western rulers did not have the wherewithal to contribute to the effort, especially in light of the weakened state of France and England from the Hundred Years' War, Spain's involvement in the Reconquista, the internecine fighting in the Holy Roman Empire, and Hungary and Poland's defeat at the Battle of Varna of 1444. Although some troops did arrive from the mercantile city-states in northern Italy, the Western contribution was not adequate to counterbalance Ottoman strength.

Some Western individuals, however, came to help defend the city on their account. Cardinal Isidore, funded by the Pope, arrived in 1452 with 200 archers. An accomplished soldier from Genoa, Giovanni Giustiniani, arrived in January 1453 with 400 men from Genoa and 300 men from Genoese Chios.

6. Ottoman Empire

6.1. Current State Of Ottoman Empire

6.1.1. Political

Ottomans have been growing in the region for the past 2 years and have gotten more powerful over time. From a small Beylik near the Byzantine territory to a great nation with a great expansion of land. The Ottomans had already wrested control of nearly all former Byzantine lands surrounding the city, but the strong defence of Constantinople's strategic position on the Bosphorus Strait made it difficult to conquer. In 1402, the Byzantines were temporarily relieved when the Turco-Mongol leader Timur, founder of the Timurid Empire, invaded Ottoman Anatolia from the east. In the Battle of Ankara in 1402, Timur defeated the Ottoman forces and took Sultan Bayezid I as a prisoner, throwing the empire into disorder. The ensuing civil war, also known as the “Fetret Devri” (interregnum), lasted from 1402 to 1413 as Bayezid's sons fought over succession. It ended when Mehmed I emerged as the sultan and restored Ottoman power.

The Balkan territories lost by the Ottomans after 1402, including Thessaloniki, Macedonia, and Kosovo, were later recovered by Murad II between the 1430s and 1450s. On 10 November 1444, Murad repelled the Crusade of Varna by defeating the Hungarian, Polish, and Wallachian armies under Władysław III of Poland (also King of Hungary) and John Hunyadi at the Battle of Varna, although Albanians under Skanderbeg continued to resist. Four years later, John Hunyadi prepared another army of Hungarian and Wallachian forces to attack the Turks but was again defeated at the Second Battle of Kosovo in 1448.

6.1.2. Cultural

The Ottomans absorbed some of the traditions, art, and institutions of cultures in the regions they conquered and added new dimensions to them. Numerous traditions and cultural traits of previous empires (in fields such as architecture, cuisine, music, leisure, and government) were adopted by the Ottoman Turks, who developed them into new forms, resulting in a new and distinctively Ottoman cultural identity. Although the predominant literary language of the Ottoman Empire was Turkish, Persian was the preferred vehicle for the projection of an imperial image.

Most of the sultans were professionals in a field of art, most commonly poetry. Ottomans adopted Persian bureaucratic traditions and culture. The Sultans also made an important contribution to the development of Persian literature.

Ottomans also had one of the oldest military marching bands, named “Mehter”. In Western Europe, the band's music is also often called Janissary music because the janissaries formed the core of the bands. It was an influence in Western Music during the late modern period.



6.2.3. Military

Mehmed II specifically built a fleet just for the siege. Estimates of the strength of the Ottoman fleet span from 110 ships to 430. A more realistic modern estimate predicts a fleet strength of 110 ships comprising 70 large galleys, 5 ordinary galleys, 10 smaller galleys, 25 large rowing boats, and 75 horse transports.

Before the siege of Constantinople, it was known that the Ottomans could cast medium-sized cannons, but the range of some pieces they were able to field far surpassed the defenders' expectations. Cannons were built at foundries that employed

Turkish cannon founders and technicians, most notably Saruca, in addition to at least one foreign cannon founder, Orban (also called Urban). Orban was a mysterious figure. The Hungarian engineer first tried to sell his services to the Byzantine Empire but they were in no position to secure the funds needed to hire him. Orban later approached Mehmed and claimed that his weapon had the power to blast “the Walls of Babylon” itself. Most of the cannons at the siege were built by Turkish engineers, including a large bombard by Saruca, while one cannon (the 27-foot-long cannon named Basilica) was built by Orban, who also contributed a large bombard.

The Ottoman besiegers vastly outnumbered the Byzantines and their allies. Between 60,000 and 80,000 soldiers fought on land, accompanied by 69 cannon. Baltaoğlu Süleyman Bey commanded a fleet stationed at Diplokionion with an estimated 31 large and midsize warships alongside nearly 100 smaller boats and transports. Mehmed’s strategy was straightforward: he would use his fleet and siege lines to blockade Constantinople on all sides while relentlessly battering the walls of the city with cannons. He hoped to breach them or otherwise force a surrender before a Christian relief force could arrive.



6.2.4. Religion

Sunni Islam was the religion of the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman sultans also served as caliphs and politico-religious leaders of the Muslim world. Non-Muslims, particularly Christians and Jews, were present throughout the empire's history. The Ottoman imperial system was characterised by an intricate combination of official Muslim hegemony over non-Muslims and a wide degree of religious tolerance. While religious minorities were never equal under the law, they were granted recognition, protection, and limited freedoms under both Islamic and Ottoman traditions. Until the second half of the 15th century, the majority of Ottoman subjects were Christian.

The Ottoman Empire had a wide variety of Islamic sects, including Druze, Ismailis, Alevis, and Alawites. The official and dominant interpretation of Islam was Hanafi. Sufism, a diverse body of Islamic mysticism, found fertile ground in Ottoman lands;

many Sufi religious orders, such as the Bektashi and Mevlevi, were either established or saw significant growth, throughout the empire's history.

The Ottoman Empire guaranteed limited freedoms to Christians, Jews, and other "people of the book", such as the right to worship, own property, and be exempt from the obligatory alms (zakat) required of Muslims. However, non-Muslims were subject to various legal restrictions, including being forbidden to carry weapons, ride on horseback, or have their homes overlook those of Muslims; likewise, they were required to pay higher taxes than Muslim subjects, including the "jizya", which was a key source of state revenue. Many Christians and Jews converted to Islam to secure full social and legal status, though most continued to practice their faith without restriction.

6.2. Reign Of Mehmed II

Mehmed II was born on 30 March 1432, in Edirne, then the capital city of the Ottoman state. Islamic education had a great impact in moulding Mehmed's mindset and reinforcing his Muslim beliefs. He was influenced in his practice of Islamic epistemology by practitioners of science, particularly by his mentor, Molla Gürani, and he followed their approach. The influence of Akshamsaddin (an Islamic scholar who was Mehmed's advisor) in Mehmed's life became predominant from a young age, especially in the imperative of fulfilling his Islamic duty to overthrow the Byzantine Empire by conquering Constantinople.

During Mehmed II's first reign, when he was 12 years old) he defeated the crusade led by John Hunyadi after the Hungarian incursions into his country broke the conditions of the truce per the Treaties of Edirne and Szeged in September 1444. When breaking of the Battle of Varna knocked on the Ottoman's door, with the grand vizier Çandarlı Halil Pasha's efforts Murad II came back to the throne and won the war. Mehmed II did not welcome the events of how Halil Pasha was effecting the sultanate. Çandarlı family controlled the grand vizier position for a long time and Mehmed was concerned their influence might result in bad happenings.

Following the death of Murad II in 1451, Mehmed II became sultan for the second time. When Mehmed II ascended the throne again in his 19-year-old, he devoted himself to strengthening the Ottoman navy and made preparations for an attack on Constantinople.



On the other side, in Constantinople, there was an Ottoman prince who had been held as a hostage. Orhan Çelebi was a second cousin and a rival to Mehmed II. Orhan was sent to Constantinople as a hostage and the Ottomans paid tribute to the Byzantines during his time there to keep him out of the way because Byzantines were constantly threatening Ottomans with releasing him and making him cause riots. Mehmed I during his second reign refused to pay anymore and caused a conflict.

7. The Crusade

7.1. Motivation Behind The Crusade

The Crusades were a series of religious wars initiated, supported, and sometimes directed by the Christian Latin Church in the medieval period. The best known of these military expeditions are those to the Holy Land in the period between 1095 and 1291 that were intended to reconquer Jerusalem and its surrounding area from Muslim rule.

Before the 11th century, the Latin Church had developed a system for the remission and absolution of sin in return for repentance, confession, and penitential acts. This was developed by subsequent Popes into the granting of plenary indulgences that reduced all God-imposed temporal penalties. A distinct ideology promoting and regulating crusading is evidenced in surviving texts. The Church defined this in legal and theological terms based on the theory of holy war and the concept of pilgrimage. Inspired by the First Crusade, the crusading movement went on to define the late medieval Western culture. Christendom was geopolitical, and this underpinned the practice of the medieval Church.

Just like Jerusalem was to Christianity, Constantinople was to the Orthodox Church. Furthermore, the Muslims and in this case, the Turks could move further if they succeeded in conquering Constantinople.



7.2. Current State Of The Crusade

The years 1272–1302 included numerous conflicts throughout the Levant as well as the Mediterranean and Western European regions, and many crusades were proposed to free the Holy Land from Mamluk control. None of these happened. The end of Western European presence in the Holy Land was sealed with the fall of Tripoli and their subsequent defeat at the siege of Acre in 1291.

The Holy Land would no longer be the focus of the West even though various crusades were proposed in the early years of the fourteenth century. The Crusades to liberate Jerusalem and the Holy Land were over. Even though a new threat from the East was knocking on the door of Europe, the Ottomans, religious motivations were decreasing as a result of distrust of the church in Western Europe and the corruption of churches eventually led to a Reform in Christianity.

8. Character Guide

Ottomans:

Chair: Mehmet II

Born in Edirne on March 30, Sultan Mehmet became the 19-year-old heir to the Ottoman Empire's throne. Mehmet II was renowned for his early enthusiasm for education and military tactics, and he showed leadership abilities well beyond his years.

Prior to the renowned siege of Constantinople, Mehmet II concentrated on establishing authority inside the Ottoman Empire. During his early reign, administrative changes were implemented and he showed a strong interest in a wide

range of fields of knowledge. Mehmet II's goals for the empire's governance, legal system, and educational system went beyond mere military victory.

Chair: Zaganos Pasha

Born approximately about 1410, Zaganos Pasha rose to prominence in the Ottoman Empire as a statesman and military leader in the fifteenth century. As he advanced through the ranks, Sultan Mehmet II turned to him for dependable advice.

Zaganos Pasha, renowned for his dedication and military acumen, led Ottoman armies in decisive wars and made a substantial contribution to the empire's growth. His leadership was not limited to the battlefield; he also held a number of diplomatic and administrative responsibilities.

Suleiman Baltoghlu

Initially, Baltaoğlu Süleyman Bey was enlisted into the Ottoman palace. Having completed his study with honors, he became Chief Janissary and held several other state positions.

He was instrumental in the discussions that resulted in the Edirne-Segedin Treaty, overseeing the treaty's signature in 1444 and advising King Ladislas of Hungary of the decisions made. After winning Sultan Murad II's trust, he rose to the rank of sanjak bey. Mehmed II fought battles with the Karaman army during his rule. As admiral of the Ottoman navy, he conducted a raid to seize a settlement on the island of Midilli in 1449 after taking command of the Gelibolu sanjak.

Karaca Pasha

The sixth Ottoman Sultan, Murat II, had Karaca Bey, a distinguished commander and the grandson of Emir Karaca Ali. Often called "Dayı," some people think this moniker came from his relationship with Prince Alâattin's maternal uncle, who is the son of Sultan Murat II. Some claim its origins lie in the Turkish word "tâi," which denotes generosity or openness.

Notably, Karaca Bey was instrumental in the 1444 Battle of Varna's successful outcome, which took place during Sultan Murat II's reign.

He was named the Rumeli Beylerbeyi during the reign of Sultan Mehmet II, holding the position of vizier. The construction of one of the towers of Rumeli Fortress was directly supported by Karaca Bey.

Hamza Bey

Amasyalı Beyazid Pasha, a vizier of Mehmed II and Murat II, was his brother. Amasyalı Beyazid Pasha was put to death due to Cüneyt Bey's accusations. In 1425, Hamza Bey killed Cüneyt Bey of Izmir in order to exact revenge for the death of his brother Bayezit Pasha.

The Ottoman navy was resurrected in 1428 when Hamza Bey, led by Navlı Bey, which was founded by Saruca Pasha in the Gallipoli shipyard, sailed to the Aegean Sea with a fleet of about 40 ships. The Ottoman navy had been vanquished and burned by the Venetians near the Çanakale Strait in 1417. As fleet commander for Sultan Murat II in 1429, he took part in the blockade of Thessaloniki and helped with the capture

Mahmud Pasha Angelovic

Angelović's birthdate is thought to have been in the early 1420s. The majority of historians concur that Angelović was born in the Serbian Despotate's Novo Brdo and that his father Mihailos was descended from either Alexios Angelos Philanthropenos or Manuel, his son, brother, or nephew, who ruled Thessaly. He was descended from the Byzantine Angelos family, who had fled Thessaly in 1394, and was born in the Serbian Despotate. Biographers claim that he was conscripted as a kid under the Ottoman devşirme system. He was married to a Zaganos Pasha daughter and was a skilled soldier who had been raised as a Muslim at Edirne. He was one of Zaganos Pasha's intelligent seeming heirs.

Hasan Aga

Sent from Sardinia originally. As a little boy, he was kidnapped and taken to live among the Harem Aghas. Following his summons to Istanbul to assume the role of captain-general in August 1532, Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha took on the role of acting governor of the province. The forces of the Spanish Empire, the Kingdom of Naples, the Kingdom of Sicily, the Knights of Malta, the Genoese Republic, and the Papal States were among the forces that attacked Algiers in 1541. The force was organized under the leadership of the Holy Roman Germanic Emperor Karl V and was led by Andrea Doria at sea and Fernando Álvarez de Toledo on land. The local populace and the soldiers under Hasan Aga's command, who guarded the city's citadel, made sure the siege was unsuccessful.

Firuz Bey

During the uprising of Prince Mustafa (also known as Little Mustafa) in Rumelia, when his uncle Mihaloğlu Mehmed Bey was slain, Firuz Bey and his father Hızır Bey guarded the Wallachian border and Silistre fortress.

He overcame the Wallachian voivode Drakul, who had attacked Silistre, in 1424. He held Drakul's son Radul captive and subjected him to the Ottoman Empire as a guarantee. The first Ottoman sanjakbeyi in Silistre, Mihaloğlu Firuz Bey, defeated Mircea, the Wallachian voivode, and successfully defended Silistre.

Molla Ishak

Serving as a trusted religious leader during the reign of Mehmet II, he had great influence over Ottoman Society.

Mahmud Celebi

He was the grandson of Halil Pasha, succeeding the legacy of Ibrahim Pasha. During his time serving as a Sancakbeyi, he stands out over his brilliant work and quick decisions.

Byzantines:

Chair: Constantine XI

When Constantine XI Palaiologos was born in 1405, the Byzantine Empire was deteriorating. The Ottoman Turks, who were gradually encroaching on Byzantine territory, were a continuous menace to him during his formative years. Political unrest and financial hardships within the empire were among the domestic issues that faced Constantine.

Constantine made agreements with Western nations in an effort to fortify Byzantine defenses and win support against the Ottoman danger that was soon to materialize. The empire's position remained unstable in spite of these attempts.

Upon assuming the throne in 1449, Constantine XI was well aware of the difficulties that would lie ahead. He battled the constraints of his finances and the pressing necessity to fortify Constantinople as tensions grew.

Chair: Loukas Natoras

The Byzantine Empire's last megaduct. The famous quote "I would rather see a Turkish turban in Constantinople than a Latin serpent" is attributed to Notaras, who distanced himself from the Latins as a result of the destruction of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade and the founding of the Latin Empire.

It is alleged that Notaras oversaw covert rebel groups that opposed the Ottoman Empire.

Giovanni Guistiniani

A pirate from Ceneviz. Due to his impressive skills and ability to know how to move and recognize the deepest depths of the sea, Giovanni always stood as a great protector in Constantine's eyes. He was often commanded to protect the borders from any foreign invasion.

Guistiniani Longo

The younger brother of Giovanni Guistiniani. Serving in the seas right next to him, he stood up in different directions from his brother, such as being able to manipulate both genders, his ability to talk his way into succession and his looks.

John VII Palaiologos

The older brother of Constantine XII. During his reign, he tried to reunite the Orthodox and Catholic churches and communities, yet the outcome was unsuccessful. He often had acts over the Ottoman Empire over border protection and criticized his brother for not being like him.

Gregory Palamas

He was an Aynoroz monk in Greece, a prominent theologian defending Isychasm, and the archbishop of Thessaloniki. His publications supporting Isychasm embodied his principles, which are sometimes referred to as Palamism. His adherents are referred to as Palamites.

Palamism maintained that man may achieve the divine light, or the true perception of God, by leading a genuine spiritual life. The Palamism was accepted in Byzantium by the ecclesiastical council in 1351. With his writings, Palamas battled the Latins and the pro-Western Catholic intellectuals in Byzantium and fiercely upheld the Orthodox understanding of the Church.

Cardinal Bessarion

a Byzantine Greek Reformation humanitarian, theologian, Catholic cardinal and one among the famed Greek academics who contributed to the so-called great renaissance of letters in the 15th century.

He received his Neoplatonic philosophical education under Gemistus Pletho and went on to become the titular Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. In the end, he was made a cardinal and was twice entertained as a potential pope.

Cardinal Isidore of Kiev

Patriarch Joseph II consecrated Isidore when he was named Metropolitan of Kyiv and all of Russia by Emperor John VIII Palaeologus in 1437. By bringing the Eastern Orthodox Church in Kievan Rus into communion with the Holy See, the Emperor wanted to ensure Constantinople's defense against the Ottoman Turk invasion.

Vasili II, the Grand Duke of Moscow, harbored misgivings about the new metropolitan. He granted Isidore permission to travel to Florence in 1439 to attend the Council of Basel's continuation, provided that Isidore returned unharmed and with "the rights of Divine law and the constitution of the holy Church" intact. He was given the assurance by Isidore that he would not betray the Orthodox faith upon returning from the ecumenical assembly.

Nikephoros II Phokas

One of the trusted commanders of Constantine XII. Even though he is referred to as Nikephoros II Phokas, he has no official blood connection with the Royal Family. He is referred to by the past emperors' names due to their similar properties.

George Spheantzes

A respected, trustworthy historian who worked for Constantine XII. The two of them were often spotted together inside the palace, as he is one of reign's close confidants. He took part in writing down the current acts of foreign forces and had strong connections with the Royal Family.

9. Bibliography

Hudson, M. "Fall of Constantinople." Encyclopedia Britannica, May 22, 2023.
<https://www.britannica.com/event/Fall-of-Constantinople-1453>.

Wikipedia contributors, "Fall of Constantinople," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Fall_of_Constantinople&oldid=1189361433

Wikipedia contributors, "Byzantine Empire under the Palaiologos dynasty," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Byzantine_Empire_under_the_Palaiologos_dynasty&oldid=1187552252

Gayubas, A. "Byzantine Empire". *Encyclopedia of Humanities*. September 28, 2023. <https://humanidades.com/en/byzantine-empire/#ixzz8MNABBeKL>

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Did the Byzantine Empire practice Christianity?." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, June 5, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/question/Did-the-Byzantine-Empire-practice-Christianity>

Elshaik, M. E. "Byzantine culture and society," *Khan Academy*. 2017. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/medieval-times/byzantine-empire/a/byzantine-culture-and-society>

History.com editors, "Byzantine Empire," HISTORY, August 24, 2010. <https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-middle-east/byzantine-empire>

Wikipedia contributors, "Sack of Constantinople," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sack_of_Constantinople&oldid=1185737795

Wikipedia contributors, "Constantinople," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Constantinople&oldid=1191151731>

Wikipedia contributors, "Crusades," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Crusades&oldid=1190517201>

Wikipedia contributors, "Ottoman Empire," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ottoman_Empire&oldid=1190894922

Wikipedia contributors, "Mehmed II," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mehmed_II&oldid=1190588976