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DECLINE AND FALL
OF BYZANTIUM
TO THE OTTOMAN TURKS

BY DOUKAS

An Annotated Translation of "Historia Turco-Byzantina"
by Harry J. Magoulias, Wayne State University

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To
Ariadne

σύννευος
καλή τε
κάγαθή

CONTENTS

Chronology	9
Introduction	23
Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks	55
Notes	263
Bibliography	325
Index	331

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Old City of Rhodes 42
John VI Kantakouzenos 43
Manuel II Palaiologos 44
Emperor John VIII Palaiologos 45
Monastery of Brontocheion, Mistra 46
Palace of Despots, Mistra 47
Walls of Constantinople 48
Walls of Constantinople with Moat 49
Mehmed II the Conqueror 50
Emperor Constantine XI 51

MAPS

- The Byzantine World Before the Fall 1453 52
Greece and Western Anatolia Before the Fall 1453 53
Constantinople 54

CHRONOLOGY

CHAPTER I *page 57*
Listing of the years and generations from Adam to the Fourth Crusade, 12 April 1204.

CHAPTER II *page 59*
Reigns of the emperors of Nicaea to the recapture of Constantinople in 1261. Conquests of the Seljuk Turks and appearance of the Ottomans. Reigns of Andronikos II and Michael IX, Andronikos III, John V and John VI Kantakouzenos. Turks occupy Gallipoli (1354). Genoese take Chios and Old and New Phokaia (1346); Navarrese occupy the Cyclades islands and part of the Peloponnesos (1386-1390).

CHAPTER III *page 60*
Murad I succeeds Orchan in 1360. He seizes Thrace and Thessaly and is killed fighting the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo, 15 June 1389. Succeeded by his second son Bayazid.

CHAPTER IV *page 62*
Serbs become Bayazids' tributaries under Despot Stefan Lazarević. Bayazid crosses to Anatolia; subjugates the Seljukid emirates of Germiyan, Aydin, and Saruchan; rebuilds the fortress of Gallipoli (1390).

CHAPTER V *page 63*
Reign of John VI Kantakouzenos and civil strife. Alexios Apokavkos assassinated by supporters of Kantakouze-

Chronology

nos (11 June 1345), who are subsequently slaughtered; escape of Doukas' grandfather Michael to the emirate of Aydin.

CHAPTER VI *page 66*

Kantakouzenos proclaimed emperor by his followers; civil war intensifies (13 May 1347). He seeks the alliance of the despot of Serbia.

CHAPTER VII *page 68*

Arrival of Umur Pasha of Aydin at Didymoteichos (May-June 1345) seeking alliance with Kantakouzenos who is in Serbia. Meanwhile Umur plunders the land from Gallipoli to Selymbria. Informed that the Knights Hospitalers have taken the harbor of Smyrna (October 1344) and are building a fortress, Umur returns with many captives. Umur Pasha is killed scaling the walls of the fortress of the Hospitalers (May 1348).

CHAPTER VIII *page 70*

Kantakouzenos negotiates a treaty advantageous to the Serbs. Empress Anna of Savoy attempts to hire the Ottoman Turks to fight Kantakouzenos. Orchan sends 10,000 troops into Thrace; many Byzantines captured and sold into slavery (1346).

CHAPTER IX *page 72*

Kantakouzenos petitions Orchan for military aid and offers his daughter in marriage (1346). Villages and towns between Selymbria and Constantinople sacked and burned. Kantakouzenos and Turks wage war with both Serbia and Constantinople. Kantakouzenos secretly admitted into capital (2 February 1347).

CHAPTER X *page 75*

Kantakouzenos' daughter marries John V Palaiologos (28 or 29 May 1347) and gives birth to Andronikos (11 April 1348). John VI Kantakouzenos' son, Matthew, defeats Turks in the Chersonese and slays Sulayman (1359?).

Chronology

CHAPTER XI *page 77*

John V Palaiologos goes to Italy. Francesco I Gattilusio assists John V in entering Constantinople (22 November 1354). Kantakouzenos abdicates 4 December 1354; tonsured a monk. Murad I succeeds Orchan (1360).

CHAPTER XII *page 79*

In May 1373 Andronikos, John V's son, and Kunduz, Murad's son, rebel against their fathers. Murad blinds Kunduz and compels John V to blind Andronikos and his infant son John. John V's second son Manuel crowned emperor (25 September 1373). Andronikos escapes (1376) and with Genoese help enters the capital (12 August 1376). John V and his two sons Manuel and Theodore incarcerated in the Tower of Anemas and escape (June ? 1379). Andronikos IV restores his father John V to the imperial throne. Andronikos awarded key towns along the Thracian shore of the Marmara (1381). Manuel proclaimed emperor. Francesco Gattilusio marries Maria, daughter of John V; her dowry is the island of Lesbos (1355).

CHAPTER XIII *page 81*

Bayazid conquers Turkish principalities in Anatolia. Demands tribute. Manuel forced to campaign with Bayazid with 100 troops. Sixty warships devastate Chios, the Cyclades, Euboea, and the environs of Athens. John V constructs two towers on either side of the Golden Gate for refuge. Bayazid demands demolition of the fortress, threatening to blind Manuel. John V complies and shortly thereafter dies (16 February 1391). Manuel escapes; returns to Constantinople and assumes control of government (8 March 1391). Bayazid devastates the environs of Constantinople, takes Thessaloniki (12 April 1394?), and dispatches troops to lay waste the Peloponnesos and Black Sea regions. Bayazid besieges Constantinople with 10,000 troops. The Crusade of Nikopolis occurs in answer to Manuel's pleas, and the Christians are crushed by Bayazid (25 September 1396).

CHAPTER XIV *page 85*

Bayazid demands surrender of Constantinople (1396-1397). Andronikos IV dies (28 June 1385). Bayazid supports

Chronology

John VII's claims to the throne of Constantinople. Manuel II travels to Italy, and through France, and returns to the Peloponnesos.

CHAPTER XV page 87

John VII Palaiologos introduces Turkish kadi to adjudicate disputations between Greeks and Turks; cedes all Byzantine lands in Thrace including Selymbria to the Ottomans while he reigns only within Constantinople. Envoys from Temir-khan demand that Bayazid restore the lands he had conquered from the Seljukid emirs. Bayazid humiliates them; demands surrender of Constantinople from John VII. Temir-khan arrives with his armies; takes Arsyngan, Sebastea, Damascus, and Halep, and returned to Samarkand (1401).

CHAPTER XVI page 90

In 1402 Temir-khan crosses Armenia to Anatolia; crushes Ottoman forces, taking Bayazid captive (28 July 1402).

CHAPTER XVII page 96

Temir-khan takes Smyrna from Knights Hospitalers; raises pyramid of skulls. Genoese of New Phokaia and the Gattilusio governor of Lesbos and Old Phokaia submit to Temir-khan who devastates Anatolia. Bayazid dies in Qara Hisar and is buried in Prusa. Temir-khan returns to the East (1403).

CHAPTER XVIII page 100

Manuel II returns to Constantinople (9 June 1403); banishes John VII to Lemnos. Bayazid's son Sulayman seeks the support of Manuel. John VII enters Thessaloniki as emperor of Thessaly (before November 1403). Turkish opponents of the Ottomans resume control of their principalities with Temir-khan's support. Juneid takes Smyrna (1403) and Ephesus, becomes emir of Aydin, and allies himself with Sulayman, Mehmed's brother, in Thrace. Sulayman comes to Prusa and launches a campaign against Juneid. Germiyanids and Karamanids retreat from Ephesus leaving that city to Sulayman.

Chronology

CHAPTER XIX page 105

Sulayman orders the Genoese Salgruzo de Negro to construct a fortress opposite Gallipoli. Sulayman crosses to Gallipoli. Musa proclaims himself ruler of Thrace, Thessaly, and Illyricum. Sulayman installs Juneid as governor of Ochrid. Sulayman goes to Adrianople; dispatches an army against Musa, which is defeated near Sofia. Musa overruns Serbia and massacres the Christians; lays siege to Thessaloniki and Constantinople. Manuel II negotiates with Mehmed and offers aid against his brother Musa. Mehmed defeats his brother Musa.

CHAPTER XX page 111

Mehmed surrenders the fortresses along the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara, and those in Thessaly to Manuel II. John VIII Palaiologos marries three times. Manuel II journeys to the Peloponnesos. The prince of Achaia recognizes his suzerainty (1415). Manuel II installs Theodore as despot of the Peloponnesos.

CHAPTER XXI page 115

The Karaman oglu plunders Prusa, exhumes and burns Bayazid's bones. Mehmed demands that Juneid surrender his province. Mehmed comes to Smyrna; the governors of New and Old Phokaia, the Germiyan and Mentеше emirs, the lords of Lesbos and Chios, and the grand master of Rhodes do him obeisance. Smyrna falls to Mehmed; he razes the tower being built by the Knights Hospitalers at the mouth of the harbor. Juneid pledges his allegiance to Mehmed. The Venetians sink Mehmed's fleet off Gallipoli (May 1416). Mehmed installs Juneid as governor of Nikopolis. The socio-religious revolt of Bürklüdje Mustafa is launched (1416), claiming equal validity for both Islam and Christianity. Bürklüdje Mustafa defeated by the forces of Mehmed's son Murad.

CHAPTER XXII page 122

Mehmed takes Ikonion. Juneid joins Mustafa in a rebellion with the support of the Vlachs (1416). Defeated by Mehmed near Thessaloniki, Mustafa and Juneid seek refuge in Thessaloniki. Mehmed demands their surrender, but Manuel II extends his protection to the refugees while assuring Mehmed

Chronology

that they will be placed under guard. Mehmed sends an army into Vlachia in retaliation for their support of Mustafa. Mehmed I dies of apoplexy (21 May 1421) in Adrianople and his son Murad II succeeds him (1421-1451).

CHAPTER XXIII *page 130*

Murad is proclaimed sultan. Manuel II tries to convince Murad to abide by Mehmed's will that his two younger sons be given to Manuel II as their guardian. Manuel II installs Mustafa ruler of Thrace.

CHAPTER XXIV *page 136*

Vizier Bayazid leads Murad's forces to Adrianople to give battle to Mustafa. Bayazid's troops desert and the victory is Mustafa's who decapitates Bayazid. Mustafa enters Adrianople and Gallipoli surrenders.

CHAPTER XXV *page 146*

Murad petitions Manuel II for aid against Mustafa. Description of alum manufacture in New Phokaia used in dyeing. Juneid and Mustafa lead an army across the straits to Lopadion, but Murad, preceding them, had demolished the bridge (20 January 1422).

CHAPTER XXVI *page 153*

Juneid persuaded by his brother Hamza to desert to Murad. Juneid goes to Smyrna and slays Mustafa of Aydin and is proclaimed ruler of the province.

CHAPTER XXVII *page 157*

Mustafa's troops desert and he flees to Gallipoli. Murad takes Gallipoli. Mustafa flees to Vlachia. Murad acclaimed in Adrianople. Mustafa captured near the Danube and hanged in Adrianople.

CHAPTER XXVIII *page 160*

Manuel II dispatches envoys to Murad to mollify the sultan but in vain (8 June 1422). Manuel II contrives to support

Chronology

Mehmed's surviving son, Mustafa, against Murad. Murad abandons siege of Constantinople (6 September 1422). Manuel suffers paralytic stroke (October 1422). Marching on Nicaea, Murad strangles six-year-old Mustafa (1423). Murad blockades Thessaloniki, ravages Zetounion (Lamia) and environs, and suffers setbacks by the governor of Zetounion (1425). Murad dispatches Halil with army to wage war on Juneid. Juneid retreats to the fortress of Hypsele, surrenders, and is killed (1425).

CHAPTER XXIX *page 169*

John VIII Palaiologos negotiates treaty with Murad surrendering the Byzantine lands along the Black Sea and pledging annual tribute (1424). Thessaloniki ceded to the Venetians by Despot Andronikos (14 September 1423). Murad demands surrender of Thessaloniki and takes the city (29 March 1430). Danos II, voivode of Vlachia, sues for peace with Murad and agrees to pay annual tribute. Dracul kills Danos II in battle and becomes voivode (1431). Dracul arrives in Prusa and submits to Murad. Murad invades Karaman territories (1444).

CHAPTER XXX *page 174*

George Branković, despot of Serbia, marries his daughter Mara to Murad (1435). Branković builds fortress of Smederovo (1430). Dracul leads Murad and his troops into Hungary but they cannot take Zepenios (Sibiu) and suffer many losses. Murad demands cession of Smederovo from Branković; fortress surrendered after three months' siege (August 1439). Murad II subdues Novo Brdo in Serbia (June 1441). Serbia is now overrun by the Turks. Murad II unsuccessfully besieges Belgrade (1440).

CHAPTER XXXI *page 179*

John VIII sails for Italy to negotiate the Union of the Churches, which is consummated at Ferrara-Florence (6 July 1439). Signers of the Act of Union are vilified in Byzantium and the Union rejected by the masses.

CHAPTER XXXII *page 182*

János Hunyadi and George Branković, with the support

Chronology

of Hungary, lead army of 25,000 against the Turks (1443). They take Sofia. Murad restores Smederovo and other cities to George Branković. Turkish emissaries arrive in Hungary to negotiate a peace treaty. Murad II takes Ikonion and Laranda (Karaman) and returns to Thrace. Murad II is informed that peace treaty has been violated and the Hungarians and Vlachs have crossed the Danube. At Varna (10 November 1444) the king of Hungary (Vladislav III) is slain, and the Turks cut down the Christians. Victorious, Murad II abdicates and resides in Magnesia (December 1444 or January 1445). On Halil's appeal Murad II returns as sultan and his son Mehmed II is sent to Magnesia to govern (August 1446). Murad II is victorious over Hunyadi and his Hungarian forces and allies at Kossovo (17-19 October 1448). Murad II defeats Constantine Palaiologos at the Hexamilion, destroys the walls, and takes 60,000 captives (10 December 1446).

CHAPTER XXXIII

page 186

John VIII Palaiologos dies (31 October 1448); succeeded by his brother Constantine XI Palaiologos who arrives in Constantinople (12 March 1449). Murad II dies (2 February 1451) and is succeeded by Mehmed II. Mehmed II orders death of his half-brother. Emperor Constantine XI dispatches ambassadors to make peace with Mehmed II.

CHAPTER XXXIV

page 192

Mehmed II concludes three years' peace with János Hunyadi (20 September 1451). Mehmed II breaks treaty with Byzantium and cuts off revenues awarded the emperor. Mehmed II orders the construction of the fortress Baš-kesen (Rumeli Hisar, 15 April-31 August 1452) on European side of the straits. Greek farmers, protecting their crops, massacred by Turks. Constantine XI arrests all Turks in the capital, then releases them. Mehmed II declares war (June 1452). Cannon are placed at the new fortress and Mehmed II orders all ships refusing to pay customs duties sunk. Sultan returns to Adrianople.

CHAPTER XXXV

page 200

A Hungarian cannon-founder offers his services to

Chronology

emperor but Constantine XI unable to pay his wages; he enters service of Mehmed II and casts a monstrous cannon in three months (January 1453). A Venetian ship commanded by Antonio Rizzo fails to lower sails and is sunk by cannon ball (November 1452). At Didymoteichos the sultan decapitates the surviving crew members and has Rizzo impaled. Mehmed II returns to Adrianople in January (1453) and tests Urban's cannon. Sultan obsessed with desire to capture Constantinople; spends sleepless nights planning attack.

CHAPTER XXXVI

page 203

Emperor Constantine XI appeals to Pope Nicholas V for military aid in return for which he will comply with the Union of 1439. Liturgy of Union takes place on 12 December 1452. The intransigent anti-Unionists reject sacraments of the Greek clergy who participated. Five ships loaded with provisions and troops sail from Chios for Constantinople.

CHAPTER XXXVII

page 207

In February and March (1453) the monstrous cannon is hauled from Adrianople to a spot five miles from Constantinople. Religious dissension within the capital because of the Liturgy of Union. Hagia Sophia is shunned. In March Mehmed II starts to mobilize troops for siege of Constantinople. On Friday after Easter (6 April 1453) Mehmed II's forces are deployed outside the walls of Constantinople and the siege begins.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

page 211

Emperor Constantine XI and the Genoese of Galata prepare the capital's defenses. Giovanni Longo Giustiniani arrives from Genoa with two ships and troops (29 January 1453) to defend the walls near palace. Five supply ships run blockade and enter the Golden Horn. Eighty ships transported on wheeled cradles over tramway behind Galata into the Golden Horn (22 April 1453). Urban's cannon opposite wall near the Gate of St. Romanos. Tower of St. Romanos and adjacent walls demolished. Giustiniani prepares fireship to destroy sultan's ships, but the Genoese of Galata inform the Turks who sink the trireme with cannon shot; 150 troops lost. Turks sink a Genoese

Chronology

merchant ship ready to sail for Italy (5 May 1453). Mehmed II orders the construction of a pontoon bridge, made of wine casks, across the harbor.

CHAPTER XXXIX

page 220

Mehmed II's final appeal to Constantine XI to surrender City. Preparations made for final assault. The hidden sally-port called Kerkopoporta opened at command of emperor. Assault begins early on Tuesday 29 May 1453. Giustiniani mortally wounded; abandons post with his troops. Fifty Turks gain entrance through the sally-port of Kerkopoporta and the enemy ascend walls. Greeks, attempting to reenter through Charisios Gate, routed and trampled to death. Emperor falls bravely fighting. Turks enter capital at dawn and slaughter 2000 soldiers. The citizenry rush to Hagia Sophia but the Turks break down the doors and round up the Christians to sell in slave markets. Sea walls scaled, dwellings plundered, old and infirm and infants slaughtered. Grand Duke Loukas Notaras and family seized. Many Latins escape by sea on five ships.

CHAPTER XL

page 231

Mehmed II enters capital in afternoon and proceeds to Hagia Sophia. Mehmed II inquires about the emperor. Emperor's head recovered; stuffed and exhibited among Muslim princes. Sultan redeems all Byzantine nobles and officials who are found. The next day sultan visits grand duke. In drunken stupor Mehmed II demands Loukas Notaras's son brought to him to be despoiled. Grand duke refuses; in fit of anger Mehmed II orders the youth brought to him; Notaras, his son-in-law, and an older son beheaded. The redeemed Byzantine nobles and officials also executed.

CHAPTER XLI

page 236

Doukas eulogizes the fallen City. Captive Byzantines are sold into slavery and dispersed; many converted to Islam.

CHAPTER XLII

page 240

Outside the walls troops sell their plunder of books and jewels and burn the icons. Walls of Galata demolished (3 June

Chronology

1453). Breached walls of Constantinople rebuilt in August. Five thousand families commanded to move into Constantinople from the provinces by September. Hagia Sophia becomes a mosque, and Mehmed II departs for Adrianople 18 June 1453. The Christian governors and rulers come to Adrianople with gifts to make obeisance. Mehmed II imposes annual tribute on Serbs, Greek despots of the Peloponnesos, Maona of Chios, Gattilusio lord of Lesbos, and Greek emperor of Trebizond. Sultan marches against despot of Serbia (Spring 1454). Hungarians defeat Mehmed II near Trnovo. Sultan leads second campaign with 20,000 troops; unable to take Smederovo. He sends 4000 men and women to populate towns outside Constantinople. Mehmed II goes to Constantinople and orders construction of palaces.

CHAPTER XLIII

page 245

Ambassadors from Knights of St. John on Rhodes come to Adrianople to negotiate a commercial treaty with Mehmed II (1455). Sultan demands tribute but they refuse. In spring Turkish fleet of 180 vessels commanded by Admiral Hamza Beg, governor of Thrace, sails from Gallipoli to Mitylene in Lesbos. Turkish fleet sails to Chios to intimidate the Chians. Turkish fleet goes to Rhodes, but seeing warships and defenses ready to attack, continues to Kos. Drunken Turkish soldiers in Chios throw tiles from roof of a church and a riot ensues. Greeks and Italians chase Turks back to ships. Bireme capsizes and the Turks drown. Mehmed II furious over incident and declares war against Chios.

CHAPTER XLIV

page 250

Dorino I Gattilusio dies 30 June 1455; succeeded by his son Domenico. Domenico dispatches Doukas to Adrianople to deliver annual tribute on behalf of the lord of Lesbos and Lemnos (1 August 1455). Viziers inform Doukas that Domenico must come in person and receive from the sultan his right to govern Lesbos. Mehmed II demands cession of Thasos and raises annual tribute from 2000 to 3000 gold coins. Designing Turkish admiral demands possession of a Lesbian bireme, which he pursued into harbor of Lesbos. Lesbians refuse to surrender the ship. The Turkish admiral sails to New Phokaia and demands surrender of the fortress. The town's magistrates comply (31

Chronology

October 1455). Lord of Lesbos dispatches Doukas to plead his case before viziers. Mehmed II demands the payment of 10,000 gold coins, threatening to attack. While Doukas appeals decision, sultan seizes Old Phokaia from the lord of Lesbos 24 December 1455. Mehmed II occupies Ainos in Thrace.

CHAPTER XLV

page 254

To avoid the impending attack, the Chians pay 30,000 gold coins for loss of Turkish lives and Hamza Beg's bireme; they also pay 10,000 gold coins for annual tribute. In protest against the government of Nicolò II Gattilusio, governor of Lemnos, the Lemnians request from Mehmed II a Turkish governor. The new governor of Gallipoli and Turkish admiral, Ismail, is ordered to deliver Lemnos to Hamza to govern. Meanwhile, the lord of Lesbos dispatches two ships in an attempt to retake the island. Five hundred Lemnians attack and take forty captives. Nicolò II Gattilusio returned to Lesbos. Three days later Ismail installs Hamza as governor of Lemnos and returns to Gallipoli with the captives in May 1456. Mehmed II marches against Belgrade, demolishes the walls with his cannon, and his Turkish troops pillage the city. Hunyadi crosses Danube, gains entrance into the city, and routs the Turks. Mehmed II wounded and his ships are burned (July 1456). Sultan returns to Adrianople in disgrace.

In August Doukas is in Adrianople to pay annual tribute for the lord of Lesbos. The captives taken on Lemnos are ransomed for 1,000 gold coins. The pope dispatches papal fleet of eleven ships in 1456 to give aid to the beleaguered islands. Lemnos, Samothrace, and Thasos are seized. The fleet returns to Rhodes. Mehmed II blames the lord of Lesbos, declares war, and dispatches a fleet under Ismail to attack the island (March 1457); unable to take Methymna and withdraws (9 August 1457). For three years the despots of the Peloponnesos did not pay their annual tribute to the sultan, and he threatens them with expulsion. In the winter (1458) Mehmed II rebuilds the fortress of the Golden Gate at Constantinople. Sultan invades Peloponnesos (15 May 1458) and takes Corinth without resistance. Despot Thomas flees to Italy and his brother Demetrios surrenders; the Peloponnesos falls to the sultan (1460-1461). Nobles of Albania slaughtered. Two thousand families from the Peloponnesos are settled in Constantinople and 2,000 youths registered for Janissaries. In 1461 the sultan fits out a fleet of

Chronology

210 ships. Sultan demands cession of Sinope. Ismail submits (June 1461). Advancing to Trebizond, sultan demands its surrender. Emperor David Komnenos capitulates (15 August 1461).

In 1462 Mehmed II demands that the voivode of Vlachia, Vlad the Impaler, make obeisance with annual tribute of 10,000 gold coins and 500 youths. The voivode impales sultan's two envoys, crosses the Danube, and takes many captives from the regions of Dystra (Silistria), who he brings back to Vlachia and impales. An army of 10,000 Turks crosses into Vlachia and is crushed by the voivode, who condemns survivors to death by impalement. Mehmed II assembles a force of 150,000 men and crosses the Danube. He is attacked by the voivode, but after suffering many losses, retires to Adrianople. In September 1462 Mehmed II dispatches a fleet of 67 ships to Lesbos, demanding the surrender of the island from Nicolò II Gattilusio. Five thousand soldiers and 20,000 citizens are besieged. Nicolò refuses to capitulate. Mehmed II departs, leaving Mahmud Pasha to continue the siege. Cannon demolish the walls in the section of the city called Melanoudion. Doukas' history ends here with an uncompleted sentence.