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Los Angeles

Mirrors of the World:

Alexander Romances and the Fifteenth Century Ottoman Sultanate

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in History

by

Lee Andre Beaudoen

2017

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Mirrors of the World: Alexander Romances and the Fifteenth Century Ottoman Sultanate

by

Lee Andre Beaudoen

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Michael G. Morony, Chair

Beginning in the third century BCE, just after the death of the Alexander III of Macedon, a series of historical and romanticized narratives begin to circulate that told the tale of his life, adventures, and military career. These textual representatives were only one aspect of a broader category of *Alexandriana* – the textual, visual, material and folkloric representations – that highlighted the deeds of Alexander the Great. Textual representations of *Alexandriana* spread throughout the Mediterranean, Middle East, and Central Asia, and were rendered into a broad range of languages including, Greek, Syriac, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Mongolian, Persian and Ottoman Turkish. Previous readings of Ahmedi’s fifteenth-century Ottoman Turkish rendering of the *Iskendername* have correctly placed it as part of the *nisahatname* ‘mirrors for princes’ genre, but have underplayed its role in the almost two-millennia tradition of the Alexander Romance cycle. This oversight missed several opportunities to investigate Ottoman participation in the long durée of Mediterranean cultural continuity of the Alexander Romance tradition. Furthermore, the beginning of the fifteenth century offered a narrative link between the Ottoman and Alexandrine historical contexts that has been overlooked thus far. Equally important, the Ottoman Civil war and Wars of the Diadochi offered an opportunity for understanding the role of the Alexander

narrative in the fifteenth century Ottoman context. Mid-fifteenth century association and emulation of Alexander the Great provided both narrative links between Mehmed the Conqueror and Alexander the Great. Such links re-shaped a “Mediterraneanized” Ottoman imperial paradigm that sought – if only ephemerally—to re-unite the Mediterranean world under the Ottoman standard. *Translatio imperii* was encapsulated within both the Alexandrine and Ottoman narratives and represented not a single context but several distinct contexts (trans-imperial, geographic, intra-dynastic and inter dynastic *translatio imperii*) which highlighted a series of circumstantial parallelisms (Narrative, Person, Place and Event) between these two narratives. This significance of Ottoman participation in the broader Mediterranean cultural world represented a major step in a cultural continuity and Mediterranean cultural unity that both shows the Ottoman relationship with the distant past and its entry into the early modern world as a major world empire.

The dissertation of Lee Andre Beaudoen is approved.

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For my parents, Linda M. Tremblay and Fred V. Beaudoen,
who have always proudly supported me.

Mirrors of the World: Alexander Romances and the Fifteenth Century Sultanate

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From Babylon to Konstantoniyye: Linking the Ancient with the Early Modern

The 1,776 years separating the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE) and the conquest of Constantinople (1453) marked an extended period in which the politics, culture and economics of the eastern Mediterranean were transformed. By the end of this *longue durée*, the Ottomans had captured Constantinople and thus, realigned these dynamics within the eastern Mediterranean. Yet, discussions of political continuity and change in the broader Mediterranean context cannot ignore one ever looming factor: the presence and dissolution of a politically, culturally, and economically unified Roman Empire.

The Roman Empire offered an archetypal imperial paradigm for the pre-modern Mediterranean world. Equally important, this Roman-Byzantine paradigm lasted until the fifteenth century when it ended with the capture of Constantinople. Thus, Byzantium promoted a political ideology that linked it directly to the earliest years of the Principate and by extension to the Roman Republic. Edward Gibbon captured this *mentalité* of the continuity of Roman legacy in his *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Gibbon's imperial paradigm similarly ended for the Roman empire in 1453. Seen in this light, the capture of Constantinople, stood out as an important moment for the *translatio imperii* (transfer of power) of the Romano-Byzantine legacy to the Ottoman state.

During the second and first centuries BCE, the incorporation of the Hellenistic world facilitated a unified Roman paradigm that was unique and set a new standard for aspiring conquerors. Aspirations of a re-unified Roman Empire flourished in both the Medieval West and Byzantium, but were never realized. And yet, the desire to reinstate Mediterranean unity did not

disappear. Later experiments in cultural and economic unity were ephemeral, and diminished reprisals of achievement when compared to Rome's model of Mediterranean unity.

Despite this lack of success, aspirations for Mediterranean unity endured into the Early Modern period. In the fifteenth century, Mehmed II had access to no less than three of the participants of the council of Ferrara/Florence in 1437/8 – the council that sought to repair the schism between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. The council ruled for church unity but failed in realizing this decision; the Ottoman capture of Constantinople (1453) interrupted the process. Yet, such ideas of unity may have inspired Mehmed II. Mehmed II aspired to capture Rome – a plan never realized but set into motion with the capture of Otranto in 1480. Such ambition in conquest reflected the desire of Alexander the Great. Alexander, himself had designs on Mediterranean conquest in the fourth century BCE. that were never realized. His preparation of a Mediterranean fleet slotted to defeat Carthage never saw the light of day; his plans for Mediterranean conquest were interrupted by his death and the Wars of the Diadochi. So, Alexander served a circumstantially parallel role to Mehmed II with respect to Mediterranean conquest and Mediterranean unity.

Expressed in these moments of *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism is an opportunity to explore ways in which the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East engaged with Antiquity. The central and western Mediterranean discourse of “renaissance” has been deeply explored but is not suitable for an eastern Mediterranean context. Many of the Greek and Latin texts had a continuous life of reception and circulation or were stylistically re-envisioned in later texts, such as Kritovoulos' *Life of Mehmed*.¹

¹ Kritovoulos of Imbros liberally appropriated the style of Thucydides and Herodotus in his *Life of Mehmed*.

Furthermore, the perpetuation of classical antiquity also found expression beyond the traditional Roman *limes*. The extensive translation movement in Baghdad under the Abbasids in the ninth century represented an important link between antiquity and the fifteenth century. This movement took on the ominous task of translating works from Greek, Syriac and Middle Persian (Pahlavi) into Arabic. The Aristotelian corpus was perhaps among the most important translations.

The exploration of this topic draws upon several themes taken from Ottoman, Byzantine and Mediterranean history and literary criticism such as the structure of historical and literary narrative, Mediterranean unity and inclusivity, *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism. It aims to bring a new perspective to the Ottoman relationship to Alexander the Great as a cultural model. It focuses heavily on narrative, both historical and literary. It revisits the issues of imagined history, narrative construction, and historical reality based on the contention that pre-modern conceptions of the past assessed based on criteria beyond reliability to legitimize emerging states and develop modes of kingship. Using the broader genre of the Alexander Romances, it seeks to make cultural and ideological connections between two chronologically distant periods: the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE. To this end, it employs two structures of analysis: *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism. These structures stand out as cultural points of continuity. It aims to enhance these intellectual constructs with an enriched model for analysis that looks at the contexts in which *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism function. Finally, it seeks to place the Ottoman tradition of the *Alexandriana* in line with this long literary and historical tradition that aided in shaping a new fifteenth century Ottoman imperial paradigm.

The Figure of Alexander the Great

The successes of Alexander as general and world conqueror acted as a guiding beacon throughout this long period. In the Roman Imperial period, Alexander remained a shining model of the world conqueror. Alexander's *res gestae* were set to the tune of historical and romanticized narratives. The first men to narrate the events of Alexander's campaign were those closest to him. Many of them such as Ptolemy (the future Ptolemy I "Soter"), Callisthenes and Aristobulus accompanied Alexander on his campaigns. But, unfortunately, these original works, no longer survive or are preserved indirectly through other later historical sources.

Almost immediately after the death of Alexander his life and deeds had begun to assume legendary qualities. Much of the work to create these early narratives took place in Egypt at the court of the Ptolemy I (305 BCE) and perhaps Ptolemy II "Philadelphus" (285 -246). The Alexander Romance took on several aspects of Egyptian tales, epistolary novels, and anecdotes of Alexander's last days and adventures.² The Greek Alexander Romances' close association with Ptolemaic Egypt supported an Egyptian model of kingship that endured through antiquity through the Pre-modern world. Yet, beginning in the eleventh century a shift in this conception of kingship occurred that created a new Persian Model of Kingship (*shahī*).

A Persian and Central Asian tradition of establishing dynastic legitimization through imagined history and genealogy stood alongside this ideological shift. These fabricated narratives and genealogies often extended back to (Sasanian) pre-Islamic antiquity. Much as a textual image of Alexander formed in the Ptolemaic courts, conceptions of Persian Kingship crystallized in the courts of tenth and eleventh century Persia. Here, Alexander stood next to mythic and historic Persian kings and Central Asian conquerors such as Mahmud of Ghazna.

² Richard Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, (New York: Penguin, 1991), 11-14.

During this period, the tradition of the Alexander Romance was encapsulated in Ferdowsi's *Shahname* and perpetuated by "khamasaic authors" of the Persian *Iskendername* tradition. The term *khamasaic* authors" refers to those authors – Nezami, Amir Khusrow, and Jamī – who wrote their Alexander Romances in Classical Persian as part of a quintet of other epic romances. This Persian *Iskendername* tradition traveled with the Ikhanids to Anatolia where the Ottomans under the auspices of Ahmedi picked up the tradition. Ahmedi's *Iskendername* followed both the paradigm of works such as the *Shahname* and the Alexander Romance tradition, thus creating a cultural and ideological link between the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE.

Equally significant, the shift from the Egyptian tradition of kingship to the Persian tradition did not separate the Persian and Ottoman Alexander Romance tradition from the earlier Greek tradition. In fact, it represented a new phase in its development. Persian *Shahi* exemplified by the Sasanian dynasty entered into the Islamic world and served as a mode for the Abbasid Caliphate and the successor dynasties of the late ninth and tenth centuries, such as the Samanids and Ghassanids, and Seljuks. Seen in terms of cultural transference, this new phase represented a *translatio imperii* from Egypt to Persia that occurred within the Alexander Romance genre and represented a shift in the understanding of models of kingship in the eastern Mediterranean that occurred between the end of Late Antiquity and the early modern world.

The World of *Alexandriana*: Berzunza's Catalogue

In the 1930s, Julio Berzunza produced a small monograph entitled *A Tentative Classification of Books, Pamphlets and Pictures about Alexander the Great and the Alexander Romances*.³ In this catalogue, Berzunza organized the universe of documentation both historical and pseudo-

³ Julio Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification of Books, Pamphlets, and Pictures Concerning Alexander the Great and the Alexander Romances*, (Private Printing, 1939).

historical relating to Alexander III of Macedon. The work is broadly organized into “History”, which he then divides into “Histories and other ancient sources” and “Ancient Historical Novelists” (textual). A second section of the work focuses on numismatics (material). It is followed by the third section cataloguing the Alexander Romances. The fourth section addresses Modern Historians and “Essayists” (textual). The final section catalogues “Modern Prose fiction” and “Drama” (textual and performative). The catalogue closed with a sixth section devoted to iconography (visual culture).

As he explains in his introduction to the catalogue in 1932, he was confronted with the task of writing an essay on *El Libro de Alexander* while working on his Master’s Degree in Romance Languages. He noted that the inaccessibility of “Alexander literature”. Furthermore, he remarked that even in well-stocked libraries there appeared to be no effort to obtain rare and out-of-print books on Alexander. To remedy this problem, he attempted to collect books, pamphlets, and pictures entirely devoted to Alexander III of Macedon with the hope that such a collection might contribute to “*Alexandriana*” that was then unknown.⁴

In his collecting and cataloguing, he noted two problems. Firstly, there was a difficulty in getting off-prints. The second issue arose in describing the various *Alexandriana*, which he encountered in a "scholarly manner". Berzunza excluded archaeological findings and excavation reports from his catalogue. He did not consider the “science of archaeology” sufficiently far enough advanced in the Alexandrine field to call for an especial grouping of the few publications of its findings."⁵

Berzunza’s endeavor to capture the textual, visual, and material cultural on a single figure in the 1930s American context offered an opportunity to frame the discussion of the Alexander

⁴ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, vii.

⁵ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, vii.

Romance and the fifteenth century Ottoman Sultanate within a similar paradigm. By using this framework, the intention is to contextualize the Ottoman experience within a much broader diachronic framework of the Alexander Romance traditions and to demonstrate Ottoman participation in this broader cultural continuity. This approach highlights the Ottoman role as a Mediterranean world empire in fifteenth century that was participating in a 1,700-year-old tradition. So, active participation and emulation reached a zenith in the mid-fifteenth century under Mehmed II. The present use of *Alexandriana* includes folkloric narratives of Alexander and is discussed in the first chapter.

Mediterranean Unity

At which point in history did Mediterranean unity fracture? This question addresses one of the most intense debates in the history of Mediterranean scholarship. The development of its historiography has been dealt with at length by Peregrine Horden and Nicolas Purcell (2000).⁶ Perhaps one of the most significant historians to first weigh in on the topic was the Belgian historian Henri Pirenne (1937), who argued that the fracturing of Mediterranean unity occurred at the time of the Arab Conquest.⁷ Pirenne's thesis, once widely popular, has since been disproven. Mediterranean Historiography took on many of its contemporary ideas with the work of Fernand Braudel. Braudel's contribution became a new starting point for creating a modern discourse for defining the Mediterranean and understanding its role in a broader human history.⁸ More recent scholarship, such as the encyclopedic work of Horden and Purcell (2000), David

⁶ Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000).

⁷ Henri Pirenne, *Mohammad and Charlemagne*, (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2001); David Abulafia, *The Great Sea: A Human History of the Mediterranean*. (London: Allen Lane, 2011)

⁸ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean: and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Phillip II*, 2 vols, trans., Siân Reynolds, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

Abulafia (2011) and the work of Chris Wickham (2005) have advanced the scholarship on Mediterranean unity.⁹ Much of this scholarship views the concept of Mediterranean unity along the lines of an east-west axis of division and deemphasizes the unity along a north south axis.¹⁰

Intrinsic to any discussion of Mediterranean unity should be the discussion of what kind of unity. Political Mediterranean unity effectively ended with the fall of Rome in the fifth century. However, it remained a model for achievement in much the same way that Alexander the Great remained a model for eastern conquest. Yet, political Mediterranean unity represents only one aspect of Mediterranean unity. In truth, complete political unity was never achieved after the Roman Mediterranean project. The Ottoman Empire of the sixteenth century came close; it solidly extended imperial power through the eastern Mediterranean and included much of North Africa.

Economic and cultural models of Mediterranean unity are perhaps the most intriguing. From the eleventh century exchanges in culture along an east west axis were part and parcel of both the economic and culture realities of the Mediterranean. The Venetian and Genoese expansion into the Aegean and Black Sea created a physical presence in the Eastern Mediterranean that lasted until the Ottoman period. In the mid-fifteenth century Mehmed II provided a vigorous program of patronage for Florentine and Venetian scholars. Venetian involvement in the emirates of the early fifteenth century is well documented in both the Greek and Ottoman sources as well as in the scholarship of Elizabeth Zachariadou.

⁹ Christopher Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean: 400-800*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁰ Two monographs offer exceptions to this east-west bias, see: Natalie Zemon Davis, *A Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth Century Muslim between Worlds*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger: Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2003).

The Alexander Romances offer a new dimension in the conversation of cultural unity. When viewed through a cultural lens of history, the Alexander Romances offer a means of a shared cultural connectivity that created a unified Mediterranean cultural unity. Equally important, this connectivity extended beyond the Mediterranean world and spanned from the Iberian Peninsula through the territories of Persia and the sub-continent of India to Asia, and reached as far as China and Mongolia.

Mediterranean Inclusivity

A second important piece of this discussion is the topic of Mediterranean inclusivity that is raised by Braudel in his monumental work: *The Mediterranean in the Age of Phillip II*. Braudel first approached inclusivity at the levels of geography and culture and raised the question of whether one should define the Mediterranean as comprising only those territories, which make up the Mediterranean littoral or as those states which are interconnected to the Mediterranean littoral through trade networks, rivers, and other networks such as pilgrimage routes. Braudel defined the Mediterranean, first in terms of geography and then in terms of inclusivity. These two dynamics were some of the first steps in creating a Mediterranean historiography that continues to contribute to scholarly discourse until the present day. The themes of geography and inclusivity were later built on by Horden and Purcell, highlighted interconnectivity as a dominant theme in approaching Mediterranean inclusivity.¹¹

The Scholarship on the Romances

¹¹ Horden and Purcell, "Connectivity", in *The Corrupting Sea*, 123-172.

It may be helpful to continue with the discussion of the Alexander Romances by providing a brief overview of the twentieth Century scholarship. In the 1950s, George Cary published his monograph entitled *The Medieval Alexander*.¹² This comprehensive monograph provided an in-depth look at the manuscript production of the Alexander Romances from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries in its various European recensions. *The Medieval Alexander* provided a comprehensive literary survey of manuscript production and dissemination in the West. It is less effective in placing the European Alexander Romances beside their historical or their Persian or Ottoman counterparts. Cary's emphasis on Western European — French, German, Castilian, Aragonese and English recensions of the Alexander romance narrative shows the degree to which these narratives have been studied as European national literatures. Consequently, it overlooked the Alexander Romances as a Mediterranean cultural phenomenon. Yet, it remains one of key reference texts for the extensive European production of Alexander Romances.

In the 1960s Albert Wolohojian published an English translation of the Armenian Alexander Romance.¹³ This Armenian version provides a key link to the parent A manuscript, now lost which has a third century CE origin. Wolohojian's translation discussed the earlier Armenian scholarship and study of the Alexander Romances in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

There has also been extensive work on the French renderings of the Alexander Romances; there is a robust tradition in the French language of recounting the tales of Alexander. While a detailed investigation of the French scholarship surrounding *Le Roman d'Alexandre* is not the focus of this dissertation, its scholarly discourse is relevant for positioning the *Iskendername* tradition within the larger context of the Alexander romances as a genre. The French scholarship

¹² George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1956).

¹³ Albert Wolohojian, *The Romance of Alexander the Great by the Pseudo-Callisthenes*, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969).

on the French medieval romance is rich and extensive. It is also worth mentioning that there is a rich body of literary discussion surrounding the Medieval English Alexander Romances.

Richard Stoneman (1991; 2008), has advanced the modern scholarship of the Alexander romances.¹⁴ He has published extensively on the theme of the Greek Alexander romance, a translation of the Greek Alexander Romance and selections of from the Alexander Romances. Stoneman (2008) focused heavily on the Greek recensions of the Alexander Romances but in more recent years has extended his focus to include the Persian recensions of the manuscript but has given far less attention to the *Iskendername* of Ahmedi.¹⁵ He has recently edited a volume the Alexander Romances in Persia and the East. The recent work of Faustina Doufikar-Aerts (2010) has done much to explore the Arabic tradition of the Alexander Romances.¹⁶ Her monograph *Alexander Magnus Arabicus* provided a detailed and stimulating discussion of the Arabic *sira* (biography) of Alexander which provides a crucial missing link between what the Greek recensions and the Ottoman and Persian *Iskendernames*.

Finally, two recent works on the European recension of the manuscript deserve mention. A recent multi volume study of the Alexander Romances by Catherine Gaullier-Bougassas (2014), *La Fascination pour Alexandre le Grand dans les literatures Européens; Réinventions d'un Mythe*, provides a comprehensive exploration of the literary Alexander narratives for the tenth through the sixteenth centuries.¹⁷ A much shorter edited volume by Markus Stock: *Alexander the*

¹⁴ Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, (New York and London: Penguin, 1991); Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

¹⁵ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Richard Stoneman, Kyle Erikson and Ian Richard Netton, *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, (Eelde: Barkhuis, 2012).

¹⁶ Faustina Doufikar-Aerts, *Alexander Arabicus Magnus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition through Seven Centuries from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Suri*, (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2010).

¹⁷ Gaullier-Bougassas, *La Fascination pour Alexandre le Grand dans les littératures Européens : Réinventions d'un Mythe*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

Great in the Middle Ages: Transcultural Perspectives (2016) provides a much broader overview of the Alexander romances that includes Near Eastern and Southeast Asian recensions.¹⁸

Narrative Theory and Historical Imagination

Narratives belong to both history and literature. This dissertation takes a narrative approach to the topic of the Alexander Romances and their place in the fifteenth century. The final goal of the literary scholar and the historian may differ but neither can avoid dealing with a narrative that tries to (re)capture a fictional or factual event. The use of *Alexandriana* encapsulates the cultural components that relate to Alexander the Great – textual, material, visual and folkloric – that provide resources for these narratives. Yet, no one would rely on any literary narrative for the factual truth of events or historical contexts. So, the place of these less reliable sources lies in the historical imagination of the patrons, writers, and readers who either appropriated or gave them credit.

Approaching this material from the perspective of narrative, has opened an opportunity to investigate the native ecology of the Alexander Romance, which straddles both history and literature. To be sure, no historian would take any one of the Alexander Romances in its many registers as a reliable historical document. Yet, at a closer look, one cannot completely discount its historical value. Interwoven within the Alexander Romance narratives are gems of reflections of reliable information: diplomatic and epistolary exchanges, military engagements, and anecdotes. It is important to bear in mind that past assessments of the distant past held other criteria for narratives than reliability. Thus, when dealing with the premodern conception, one must allow for a wider range of narrative possibilities that comprise past historical imaginations.

¹⁸ Markus Stock, *Alexander the Great in the Middle Ages: Transcultural Perspectives*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

Hayden White (1973) has written extensively on the historical imagination of the of nineteenth century authors but a different mode must be considered when dealing the Pre-modern and early modern contexts.¹⁹

The study of narrative, narratology and narrative discourse indeed provides a rich body of scholarship that has drawn from national literature and literary criticism departments, alike. The work of Erich Auerbach (1953, 2003) has shown how dominant themes in literary narrative represent reality and reoccur throughout the history of western literature.²⁰ Similarly, the French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur has looked at the structure and intersection of literary and historical narrative.²¹ José Carlos Bermejo Berrera (2005) looked at the intersection of history and epic poetry arguing that history is interaction between three elements: description, evocation and expression. The combination of these three elements allows history to carry on from its epic poetry, which he argues was its source.²²

The Historical Sources and their Reliability

Moving from the realm of Mediterranean historiography and narrative theory the discussion now turns to Ottoman historiography, the issues of the reliability of and engagement with the sources. Reliability of the sources has played a notable role in modern Ottoman historiography,

¹⁹ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imaginations of Nineteenth Century Europe*, (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins Press, 1973; *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1987). See also F. R. Ankersmit's, "Hayden White's Appeal to the Historians," *History and Theory*, 37(2), (1998): 182-193. See also, Jerzy Topolski, "Conditions of Truth of Historical Narratives," *History and Theory*, 20(1), (1981): 47-60. See also Ansgar Nünning, "Where Historiographic Metafiction and Narratology meet: Towards an Applied Cultural Narratology," *Style*, 38(2), Fall (2004): 352-374.

²⁰ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, (Princeton: University Press, 2003).

²¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vols 1-3, trans Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1985). See also J. P. Connerty, "History's Many Cunning Passages: Paul Ricoeur's Time and Narrative", *Poetics Today*, 11(2), (1990): 383-403.

²² José Carlos Bermejo Barrera, "On History Considered as Epic Poetry", *History and Theory*, 44(2), (2005): 182-194.

among scholars in the late twentieth century. The American historian Rudi Lindner and the Turkish born North American trained Ottoman Historian Cemal Kafadar have constructed some memorable metaphors to highlight the stakes of this debate. Troubled by the contradictory nature of the early sources and convinced that *Gaza* was sneaked into Ottoman historiography in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, Lindner incorporated readings of both Ottoman and Greek sources as part of his rebuttal of the *gazi* thesis. He held that the realities of early Ottoman Anatolia could be revealed only by peeling away these misleading layers of fifteenth-century historiography, which obscured the kernel of truth as the onion's skin obscures its fruit.²³ Kafadar responded to Lindner's argument with an equally organic simile. Believing that the historical reality of the fifteenth century had a true, if more veiled representation in each of its sources, he suggested that the totality of documents resembles a head of garlic, endowed with many separate cloves which are each required to capture the essential aroma. For example, Kafadar taught that *gaza* did in fact play a role in this reality, but not in the glorified, central way Wittek had envisioned. Kafadar was thus untroubled by the conflictual nature of the sources, since every documentary representation--each "clove" -- contained an equally valuable piece of the historical whole. Production of sources such as Aşıkpaşazade and Neşri in the late fifteenth century did not refute the notion of *gaza*, but only indicated the subtle reality that the *gazis* played a role in the formation of the early Ottoman state as they had played a role in previous Moslem states.²⁴ Kafadar therefore rejected the ways Lindner and critics of Wittek's theory

²³ Lindner, "Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia," (Bloomington: Curzon Press, 1997); Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*, 98-99. Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003), 32-34.

²⁴ Linda Darling, "Contested Territory Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Contexts," *Studia Islamica*, (2000), 145-

understood *gaza*--as canonical Muslim doctrine, and judged the critics' perspective as no less essentialist than Wittek's Gazi thesis.²⁵

Alexander the Great and the Ottoman Fifteenth century.

The Ottoman recension of the *Iskendername* tradition was a delicate fusion of the Greek Alexander Romance, and Persian medieval models of kingship, and the Persian *Iskendername* tradition. Ahmedi's Ottoman version of the *Iskendername* was begun under the patronage of either the court of Süleyman of Germiyan or Sultan Bayezid I. It ended with the patronage of Emir Süleyman, the son Bayezid I and the obvious designated successor to Bayezid I after the battle of Ankara in 1403. The period after the death of Bayezid I - often known as the Ottoman Civil War (*Fetret Devri*) was characterized by internal dynastic struggle among the four sons of Bayezid I: Emir Süleyman, Musa, Isa and the ultimate successor Mehmed Çelebi (Mehmed I). Both it and Bayezid I's death strike chords of circumstantial parallelism with the Alexander narrative.

And yet, to what extent did this period of political strife resonate in the minds of Ahmedi and functionaries with the internal struggles for succession that followed the death of Alexander? Bayezid I certainly fit the image of conqueror, although one would be hard pressed to argue that he fit the mold of a world conqueror; his rival and nemesis Timur was better suited to that role. His extensive assault and near capture of the city of Constantinople (1394-1402) and his military campaigns in the European and Anatolian regions propelled the Ottoman dynasty to new heights of hegemonic consolidation over the region. Bayezid I presented a palpable threat to the Byzantine Empire — One of several rivals in the eastern Mediterranean region to Ottoman hegemony was the Byzantine Empire.

25 Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy*, 210. (see note 6).

Such consolidation and the ultimate capture of Constantinople would not be realized for another fifty years in the reign of his great-grandson Mehmed II, who would not only succeed in capturing Constantinople but identified with and actively promoted an association with Alexander the Great. Mehmed II strove to achieve Alexandrine levels of success not only in his identification as ruler but also in his designs on the conquest of the Mediterranean and the city of Rome, and in his adoption of Alexander as a role model. Also, by reestablishing and revitalizing Constantinople as an Ottoman capital worthy of a world conqueror, his actions resonated with the theme of city building inherent in the Alexander Romances and histories. His grandson and great grandson — Selim I (1512-1520) and Süleyman I (1520 – 1666) also drew upon Alexander as model of world conquest as they focused on military campaigns and against the growing Shiites of Safavid Iran. For Selim I, the model for conquest applied to a different goal. The territory to be conquered, represented the territory which Alexander himself had conquered — Syria and Egypt and Safavid Persia. In the same way, for his son and successor Süleyman I, Alexander provided a model for how to conquer and manage a vast empire. Narrative histories such as the *Süleymanname* and *Bayan-e Menazil* followed the model of the *Shahname*, one of Ahmedî's own inspirations for the *Iskendername*.²⁶ Its purpose, to highlight the steps of the military campaigns of a king and conqueror, reflects Arrian's *Anabasis*. So, Sultan Süleyman I had his own deeds of conquest captured in these two narrative histories one for western imperial expansion and one for eastern imperial expansion. Ottoman association with Alexander in the second half of the fifteenth century will be the focus of the fourth chapter and will show a lasting importance of Alexandrine tradition in the Ottoman identity of the late Medieval and early modern world.

²⁶ Sinan Çavuş, *Tarihi-i Feth-i Siklos, Estergon ve Isto-Belgrad (Suleymane)*, (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1987); Nasahu's Silahi (Matrekçi) *Bayan-Menazil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn-i Suleyman Han*, (Ankara: Maydonose, 2000).

The Significance of Recasting Ottoman Identity in the Fifteenth Century

Much of the past historiography has been overshadowed by the figure of Mehmed II, partly resulting from Franz Babinger's (1953) monograph *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit*. Babinger's monograph, while substantive and well-received, was hobbled by the paradigms through which he screened the sources--the late-nineteenth-century military and political ideological baggage of German scholarship, intensified by his experiences as an officer on the WWI Ottoman front. In this respect, *Mehmed Der Eroberer* bears a striking similarity to Ernst Kantorowicz's biography of Friedrich Barbarossa and to Paul Wittek's Ghazi thesis,²⁷ but lacks even their sense of Ottoman participation in a larger Mediterranean sphere. Indeed, during this era exchanges between the Ottoman Empire and European powers ranged from cooperation to full-scale military conflict. Following the 1453 capture of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed II appropriated much of the material and ceremonial culture of Byzantium. These ideological and artistic borrowings bolstered an already-extensive, consistent pattern in the Islamic view of the ruler as an integral part of a system balancing military might and moral society.

Not surprisingly, European powers in the region vigorously refuted Mehmed's vision and depicted him as a barbarian heathen capable only of savagery. This propaganda reached a frenzy after the capture of Constantinople in the form of crusader-inspired rhetoric condemning Mehmed's successes.²⁸ Despite this, or perhaps in response to this, Mehmed initiated a continued

²⁷ Ernst Kantorowicz, *Friederich II 1194-1250*, E.O. Lorimer, trans, (New York: Friedrich Unger, 1957); Paul Wittek, *The Rise of the Ottoman Empire*, (New York, Franklin, 1971). On Wittek, see Colin Heywood, "Boundless Dreams of the Levant: Paul Wittek, The George "Kreis", and the Writing of Ottoman History" in *Writing Ottoman History* (Burlington: Variorum, 2002), 35-50. Heywood notes that Kantorowicz and Wittek were both part of the Georg Kreis.

²⁸ Marios Philippides and Walter Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, Historiography, Topography and Military Studies*, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011). Agostino Pertusi, *Testi inediti e poco noti sulla Caduta di Constantinopoli*, (Bologna: Patron Editore, 1983). *La Caduta di Constantinopoli, Testi a cura di Antonio Pertusi*, 2 vols. (Roma: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, 1976). For a broader Mediterranean response see Ana Echevarria, *The Fortress of Faith: The Attitude towards Muslims in Fifteenth Century Spain*, (Boston: Brill Boston, 1999).

policy of artistic patronage drawing artists and poets from both the Italian city-states and the Persian-Timurid East.²⁹ These exchanges have troubled both art historians and historians of the late-fifteenth-century Mediterranean. While such interactions clearly demonstrate complex cultural, political and diplomatic interrelations, most investigations into them derive from the field of art history and underemphasize the importance of deeper ideological transfers between the Ottoman Empire and the Papacy, Naples and, by extension, Aragon, Florence, Venice, and Hungary. Appreciating the matrix of these western Mediterranean polities is essential for placing the Ottomans within the larger Mediterranean context of the period. For in addition to establishing its cultural influence, Ottoman self-identification in the mid-fifteenth century included dynamic religious and political relations among a dizzying array of ethnicities. While previous scholarship has studied exchanges between Venice and the Ottoman Empire, artistic patronage between Florence and by Mehmed II and transformed conceptions of urban space between the Byzantines and Ottoman Constantinople, it has ignored the wider ideological context of such exchanges and has in effect frozen the fluidity of contemporary Ottoman identity.³⁰

Further complicating this dynamic context, ongoing attempts to achieve ecclesiastical unity roiled the mid-century. Not only did the hope for a newly-unified Christian church prove vain, it

²⁹ Julian Raby's work is particularly helpful on the issue of court patronage. See Julian Raby, "Pride and Prejudice: Mehmed the Conqueror and the Italian Metal Tradition," *Studies in the History of Art* 21, 1987; "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II," *Journal of Courtauld and Warburg Institutes*, 43 (1980); A Sultan of Paradox: Mehmed the Conqueror and Patron of the Arts, *Oxford Art Journal* 5, 1 (1982). *El Gran Turco, Mehmed the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts of Christendom*, 2 vols, Doctoral Diss. Oxford University, 1980. Julian Raby and Zeren Tanindi, *Turkish Bookbinding in the Fifteenth Century: The Foundation of an Ottoman Court*, (London: 1993). On the issue of portraiture medals see Susan Elizabeth Spinal, *The Portraiture Medals of Mehmed II (1451-1481)*, PhD Diss., Harvard University, 2003.

³⁰ Gülrü Necipoğlu, *A Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation*; Çiğdem Kafesçiolu, *Constantonopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital*, (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2009); Seth Parry, *Fifty Years of Failed Plans: Venice Humanism and the Turks*, PhD Diss, City University of New York, 2008; John Jefferson, *The Holy Wars of King Wladislas and Sultan Murad: The Ottoman Christian Conflict from 1438-1444*, (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2012).

also underscored the conflicting methods by which different Christian communities received classical texts and knowledge. Thus, began a painful dialogue between the Italian city-states sympathetic to Plato and Byzantine Greek Orthodox interpreters. Seen in this light, controversies over the reception of Ottoman self-depictions in the western Mediterranean parallel the squabble between Italian Platonic humanists and Byzantine Aristotelian stewards of classical antiquity.³¹ By largely ignoring such complications, traditional historians have distorted the Ottoman past. Mehmed's appropriations and exchanges of material and textual culture occurred within a furiously dynamic context of shifting religious, cultural, intellectual and political identities. Earlier historiographical interpretations that favored one linguistic source over another, have hidden the intra-linguistic and interlinguistic conflicts among sources, and have yielded an impoverished view of the rich textual discourse possible in the fifteenth century.³² As an example, previous investigations of Ahmedi's *Iskendername* generally classify it as an uninspired Ottoman adaptation of the Persian text and entirely ignore its established status within Ottoman literature and the extensive Armenian tradition of Alexandrine Romances originating in the sixth century.³³

Past readings of important events in Ottoman history, as well as of its literary works, also failed to capture its echoes in the multiplicity of Mediterranean sources, including those of the Papacy, Aragon, and the Italian city-states. Each scholar has focused on Greek, Ottoman, Latin or Italian responses, but none has attempted to read them comparatively, across linguistic boundaries, and all have wholly ignored classical Armenian Laments on the fall of

³¹ James Hankins, *Renaissance Crusaders*, 5. See also Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1959). Nancy Bisaha, *East and West, Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004).

³² I use these terms to differentiate conflicts in the sources within a single language from conflictual readings of the sources across languages.

³³ Murat Inan, *Writing a Grammatical Commentary Hafiz of Shiraz: A Sixteenth Century Ottoman Scholar on the Divan of Hafiz*, (PhD Diss, University of Washington, 2012).

Constantinople.³⁴ Traditional unilingual historiography thus flattened the topology of the later fifteenth-century dynasty itself. Models such as Babinger's evaluated Ottoman sources only in terms of historical accuracy, justifying a narrow choice of sources that dichotomized religious and political identities and presented a misleadingly streamlined process of state formation through Mehmed's serial conquests. As a result, later historians have had difficulty reconciling the wide ranges of response from eastern Mediterranean and central European polities. This disjunction might have been explained better by an attitude towards the sources that expected conflict rather than sought perfect reliability. Finally, standard historiography has falsely viewed different languages as a natural barrier to textual transmission. Considerable recent scholarship, particularly under the leadership of Cemal Kafadar, has helped correct this distortion by highlighting the permeability of cultural, linguistic and religious identities on the Anatolian frontier--a correction long overdue for Ottoman sources.³⁵

Chapter Summary

Focused on the early and mid-fifteenth centuries, *Mirrors of the World*, explains how the Persian and Ottoman recensions of the Alexander Romances created an Ottoman historical imagination that not only contributed to the broader Mediterranean production of Alexander literature but also forged an aspect of cultural continuity that unified the eastern and western Mediterranean on a level reminiscent of Late Antiquity. The key lies in understanding the Ottoman *Iskendername* as part of a broader category of *Alexandriana* that encompasses

³⁴ Abraham Argiriatsi's *Vogh i vera Arman Konstandnupslo* [Lament on the Fall of Constantinople] and Arakel Baghishetsi's *Vogh i Mayrakaghakin Stampolu* [Elegy on the City of Constantinople], Agop Jack Haghayan; Gabriel Basmajain, Edward Franchuk, Nourhan Ouzounian, *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, 3 vols. (Detroit: Wayne State Press, 1999-2005), 19.

³⁵ Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (Berkeley: University Press, 1995), 140.

historicized and romanticized narratives, folkloric tradition and material culture. This overarching category creates a framework for contextualizing the Persian and Ottoman recensions of the manuscript as the ultimate narrative contribution to this ongoing dialectic begun in the third century CE. The Persian tradition offered a model for kingship that superseded the model of the Greek Alexander. Furthermore, it places the poet as instrumental in the development of *shahi* (kingship)

The Ottoman installment served a function of dynastic legitimization to promote a fifteenth century conception of the world-conqueror to a Mediterranean audience already familiar with Alexander narratives, folklore and material cultural representations. It facilitated a mid-century recasting of the Ottoman imperial paradigm that focused on the conquest of the Mediterranean. The capture of the city of Constantinople helped to fuel this new cast Ottoman Empire as the previous Ottoman Imperial paradigm became fused with that of the Romano-Byzantine paradigm. The Ottoman Mediterranean project was never wholly Byzantine nor ever wholly Roman. Indeed, it was colored by the succession dynamics of the Ottomans so well-encapsulated in the *topos of translatio imperii*. Indeed, it withstood another process well-defined in the Ottoman fifteenth century – *translatio studii*. This transference of knowledge is perhaps best encapsulated in Mehmed II's Greek scriptorium and his own personal interest in Antiquity. And yet, it does not last beyond Mehmed II's reign.

The first three chapters of *Mirrors of the World* provide the chronological scope of the Alexander Romance tradition. They examine the development of the Alexander tradition from the third century BCE through the sixteenth century. Chapter One provides a broad overview of both the historic and romantic narratives of Alexander the Great. It underscores the broad

linguistic and geographic ranges which these works cover from the third through the fifteenth centuries.

Chapter two, focuses on the Persian recensions of the Alexander Romances. It demonstrates their extensive role as the final epic component of the Persian quintet (*khamses*) from the tenth through the fifteenth centuries. As part of the final epic the *Iskendernames* portray Alexander as the epitome of the world conqueror and worthy to stand among the long line of legendary and historic Persian kings.

Chapter three explores the Ottoman tradition of the Alexander Romance, centered on Ahmedi but also represented by several documents within the Süleymaniye Library that echo themes within the Alexander Romances. It encapsulates the historical context of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century. It draws the *tezkiye* bibliographic dictionaries to highlight the social and literary circles in which Ahmedi, the author of the Ottoman *Iskendername* moved. The fourth chapter, turns more fully to the fifteenth century as a liminal period for the eastern Mediterranean and as a period of paramount importance for the Ottoman State. Focusing on the first and middle decades of this century, this chapter introduces the model of *translatio imperii* to show how such transitions of power present a fertile ground for a literary narrative such as the Alexander Romances to take root in the Ottoman context. It proposes four contexts in which *translatio imperii* occurs with the Alexandrine and Ottoman narratives. Using *translatio imperii* as an analytic framework for understanding the fifteenth century underscores the importance of several instances of circumstantial parallels with the Alexander Romance narrative that resonate with the Third century and fifteenth century BCE.

Building from the *topos* of *translatio imperii*, the fifth chapter elaborates the concept of circumstantial parallelism within these narratives. It elaborates several types of circumstantial

parallelism that link the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE. It demonstrates how these parallel narrative structures may be used for deeper readings of historical context by stripping away the layers of the imagined history of an early modern expanding state such as the Ottoman Empire.

Finally, the dissertation aims to open new possibilities for cultural readings of the Ottoman *Iskendername*. To be sure, Ahmedi's work stands out as 'mirror for princes' and as a part of *Nisihatname*. Yet, it represents so much more. It is an Ottoman installment in a long Mediterranean literary tradition. It builds on the Persian conception of kingship to create a new Ottoman imperial paradigm. The Ottoman *Iskendername* stands alongside other productions of Ottoman *Alexandriana* to testify that the Ottoman state strove to build a new Mediterranean imperial paradigm second only to Roman Empire.

A Final Note on Orthography

Given the linguistic breadth of studying the Alexander Romances there are several orthographic conventions to consider for the names and terms throughout this discussion. This project maintains the assumption that works and terms use the spelling conventions of the language from which they have originated or have been borrowed. However, discrepancies may occur in some cases where the term is reused and assumes a different orthography, ie. Khusrow/Khosroe (Persian) and Husrev (Ottoman). So, it is important to note that in some cases two spellings may appear for the same person. For example, *Husrow* and *Heşt* and *Khosroe* and *Hesht* denote the respective Ottoman and Persian spellings of these names, respectively. In these cases, I have tried to use the appropriate term for the context of the discussion. Turkish and Ottoman spelling conventions predominate for terms or works that originated in Ottoman

Turkish.³⁶ Persian spelling conventions predominate for any Persian or Middle Persian Terms. In the case of Greek and Latin, I have maintained spelling conventions that reflect the terms respective languages of origin. In the case of references within the archives, orthography has been kept as close to the catalogue entry as possible for ease of archival reference. Although in some cases I have used the more popular Latin spellings over the Greek, i.e. Porphyrogenitus as opposed to Porphyrogenetos. See footnotes for any exceptions or changes to these conventions.

³⁶ In Turkish the *ğ* is silent, the *c* is pronounced as *j*; and *ö* and *ü* are similar to the German and Hungarian counterparts. The “dotless ‘i’” “ı” is a back vowel pronounced like the French *e* in *je*. The *ş* is pronounced as “sh” in ship. I use the Turkish spelling of Ottoman sultans Süleyman and Mehmed Bayezid, except when citing Latin and Italian texts. Because the predominant orthography for this discussion is Persian and Ottoman differentiation is generally not made between variations in the Arabic consonant system, such as between the letters “ث” and “س”

Chapter 1 – “To the Strongest” - *Alexandriana* The Romances and Histories.

It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the legends of Alexander are as widely disseminated and as influential on art and literature as is the story of the Gospels. Each age makes its own Alexander; the Hebrew tradition makes him a preacher and a prophet, the later Christian Greek and Syriac versions emphasized the obedience to God; and the European Middle Ages is an exemplar of the chivalrous knight; for the Persians, he is in one tradition, the Arch-Satan because he destroyed the fire altars of the Zoroastrian religion, while in the epic authors he is the legitimate king of Persia because he is really the son of Darius and not of Philip; for the modern Greeks he is one of the half magical bears of the real Romiosyni, Lord of storms and father of the mermaids.¹

Historical Imaginations and Literary Romances

The use and appropriation of narratives of Alexander the Great to create a historical imagination varies between historical periods and linguistic media. These narratives incorporate universal traditions and themes. The themes of dynastic legalization, world conquest, empire, *translatio imperii*, and the distant past stand out in the narratives that circulated about Alexander III of Macedon. Focusing on the historical and romance traditions of the narrative, this chapter aims to give the reader an overarching understanding of the tradition that leads up to the Persian and Ottoman traditions. This overview focuses on the Greek manuscript tradition, studied at length by the British historian Richard Stoneman. This research addresses renderings in Armenian, Hebrew, Syriac, and Latin, English, and French. It limits the discussion to the textual (literary and historical) narrative representation of Alexander but recognizes the need for more holistic incorporations of material (archaeology), visual (art and architecture), and oral (folkloric) cultural representations.

¹ Richard Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romance*. (Penguin: London; New York, 1991), 2.

This approach will shed light on the historical imagination of the fifteenth century Ottoman context as it produced its own rendering of the Alexandrine traditions. Manipulation of the narrative structure creates an opportunity for dynastic legitimization and warns against transgressions of the *translatio imperii* process that could lead to dynastic fragmentation and political disaster.

During this study, the term ‘Alexander Romances’ refers to the whole genre in all its versions and registers. The term still leaves out the Alexander histories, material culture, and folkloric traditions. The term *Iskendername* refers to the Persian and Ottoman recensions of the Alexander Romances. The distinction between these two terms, underscores the inclusion of the Persian and Ottoman *Iskendernames* to this broader Mediterranean and Middle Eastern literary genre. This distinction between *Iskendername* and Alexander Romance highlights the changes that occurred in the narrative structure of the romances in their Ottoman and Persian manifestations. Such changes over the *longue durée* of this literary genre include the transference from an Egyptian model of kingship to a Persian one (*shahi*), a filial relationship between Alexander and Darius and a fabricated genealogical connection between Alexander and the Ottoman dynasty.

Alexandriana

Since the third century BCE, why is it that the tales of Alexander III of Macedon “the Great” have endured as a desirable archetype of the world conqueror? His military conquests were unprecedented at the time of his death, setting a high standard for the later centuries. He stands alongside several other model world conquerors such as Mahmud of Ghazna (998-1002), Genghis Khan (1206 – 1227) and Tamerlane (1370-1405). These models of a world conqueror were available through the narrative histories and through the ‘mirrors for princes’ literature produced at the beginning of the eleventh century. Eleventh century Persian political works -

‘mirrors for princes’ - such as the *Siyasetname* offered the Ghaznavids as an example of the qualities that a king should have to become a world conqueror.² Alexander the Great stood out from these later examples in two remarkable ways. First, histories and epics referencing Alexander III differed in linguistic and geographic scope containing both fantastic and historic narratives. While the historic narratives are limited to Greek and Latin, the romance narratives represent a dizzying array of languages. Second, the period of production of these narratives stretched from the Hellenistic period (ca. 323 BCE – 33 BCE) well into early-modernity. Interest in Alexander did not fade in modernity. Throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, scholars paid attention to Alexander as a world conqueror, king and unifying ruler. Seen in this light, Alexander the Great’s image is complex and multi-layered; it has a great amount of both textual and material culture narrating his achievements. The textual image of Alexander is a composite narrative image, with both literature and history representing his deeds and accomplishments. Both the historical and literary textual traditions try to paint a picture of Alexander that speaks to his character and his accomplishments as a world-conqueror. Before delving into the textual — the historical and literary tradition — of Alexander, it may be useful to first define *Alexandriana* and identify the material cultural and oral traditions that have made up this broad framework.

Defining *Alexandriana*

The term *Alexandriana* refers to the corpus of textual, material and folkloric culture relating to Alexander. I have borrowed this term from a 1939 catalogue privately published by Julio Berzunza about the collection of material on Alexander available at the University of New

² Nizam al-Mulk, *Siyasetname*, trans. Mehmet Taya Ayar, (Istanbul, Türk İş Bankası, 2009).

Hampshire library.³ This collection included the library holdings on Alexander the Great from the New Hampshire University Library. It served as a starting point for understanding the production of textual *Alexandriana* from the fifteenth century until the nineteenth century. This catalogue, focused on histories and romances of Alexander, will serve as a starting point for positioning the Ottoman *Iskendername* in a larger Mediterranean analytical framework. This position runs against models in Ottoman scholarship that place the Ottoman Mediterranean project in the sixteenth century and read Ahmedi's work only as a 'mirror for princes', and thus, separate from the Alexander Romance traditions. Thus, it overlooks an Ottoman participation in the Mediterranean beginning in the fourteenth century that includes the production of Alexander Romances.

While the term *Alexandriana* has somewhat orientalist and classicist undertones, it offers an analytical construct to understand the breadth and scope of the textual and material culture surrounding Alexander the Great. These objects and narratives give a continuous line of material pertaining to Alexander III. This body of material shapes later historical imagination and gives models for kingship, *translatio imperii* and provided a mirror [for princes], for how a world conqueror/emperor should behave. The Alexander Romance narratives form a homogenous genre of literature that, while diverse in terms of language, narrative events and composition, share a core narrative structure that connects the third century BCE to later periods of history.

This broad category of analysis provides a rich cross section of cultures around the world. It includes the textual narratives of the romances and histories; art historical and archaeological material, including material cultural media and the folk cultural narratives of more localized national traditions. This focus here will be on the romances and histories. By proposing the

³ Julio Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification of Books, Pamphlets, and Pictures concerning Alexander the Great and the Alexander Romances*, (University of New Hampshire: Privately Published, 1939).

broader umbrella of *Alexandriana*, one hopes to draw the reader's attention to a larger category of analysis into which the Alexander romances and histories fit. The diversity of the textual sources is relevant for understanding how the Ottomans perpetuated the image of Alexander in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ottoman reception of Alexander in the fifteenth century is significant; it provides a model for how the Ottomans received and related to the distant past during a period of dynastic succession and imperial chaos to create an historical imagination that placed the Ottoman dynasty in the Alexandrine legacy both in its historic and romanticized traditions. Ottoman production preceded a western Mediterranean revival of histories of Alexander that followed the infusion of rare Greek texts into the western Mediterranean. The discussion begins by introducing examples of the material and folkloric culture as manifestations of *Alexandriana* before moving on to textual *Alexandriana*. The investigation of textual *Alexandriana* will look at the core story behind the life of Alexander the Great and then moves to the textual narratives that have the most relevance for our understanding the role the future of Alexander played in the fifteenth century Ottoman context: historical narratives and the romance narratives.

The tombs at Vergina and Greek Karagiozi (Turkish: *karagöz*) give two examples of folkloric and material cultural examples of *Alexandriana*. They open a broad range of material focused on the figure of Alexander in textual (literary and historic), material (archaeology) and folkloric (oral) formats.

***Alexandriana* as Material Culture: The Tombs at Vergina**

On November 8, 1977, Manolis Andronikos discovered three tombs at Aigai, the former capital and burial site of the Argead Kings.⁴ These tombs at Vergina represented three high status graves, each containing human remains and associated grave goods. The surrounding burial ground has more than 300 tumuli some dating from 11,000 BCE.⁵ The associated grave goods of these tombs were thought to have been the remains of Alexander's father, Philip II; his half-brother, Philip III Arrhidaeus and his wife, Eurydice; and Alexander IV.⁶

The graves at Vergina serve as one example of the developing material cultural record surrounding Alexander and the period after his death. Yet, there are several other examples of material culture surrounding the figure of Alexander that range from portrait sculpture, mosaics, and coinage. Other objects such as the Alexander Sarcophagus, held in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum, have been fictitiously attributed to Alexander. The objects promote a historical imagination that connects the Ottoman period with the third century BCE.

Museum Exhibitions of Alexander

The Vergina excavation coincided with two "blockbuster" exhibits in London and New York - Tutankhamun (1976-79) and Pompeii (1976-78).⁷ Within three years, the objects excavated from the site were featured in a new traveling blockbuster loan exhibit *The Search for Alexander* (SFA). This exhibit traveled to a consortium of seven cities in the United States and Canada on a

⁴ Aigai was the former capital of the Macedonian kingdom before it was moved to Pella. However, it remained an important religious center and held the royal tombs of the Argead kings.

⁵ "Archaeological Site at Aigai modern name Vergina," UNESCO Cultural World Heritage website, accessed October 11, 2016, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/780>.

⁶ Eugene Borza, "The Graves at Aigeai," in *The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*, ed. James Romm, (New York: Random House, 2010), 411-16. Both Alexander IV and Philip III played a significant role in the period after the death of Alexander the Great. They were political bargaining chips in the Wars of the Diadochi of the last decades of the third century BCE.

⁷ John Cherry, "Blockbuster! Museum responses to Alexander the Great," *Responses to Oliver Stone's film Alexander: Film History and Cultural Studies*, ed. Paul Cartledge and Fiona Res Greenland, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), 312.

three-year tour that lasted from 1980 - 1983.⁸ The *Search for Alexander* exhibit was not unique. In the summers of 1978-1979 an exhibit in Thessaloniki - *The Treasures of Ancient Macedonia: History and Legend in Art* — rushed to capitalize on the publicity of the excavations at Vergina.⁹

The SFA exhibit generated great popular and academic interest in Alexander. There were approximately nine symposia with the SFA exhibition over the fifteen-month duration of the exhibit.¹⁰ SFA symposia oversaw the production of several works on numismatics.¹¹ The publisher of the catalogue for SFA worked with Robert Lane Fox a scholar on Alexander in the early 1970s to produce a popular biography of Alexander entitled *The Search for Alexander*, that coincided with the exhibit and a television special.¹²

In 1988, six years after the SFA exhibit, a large exhibit entitled *Ancient Macedonia* opened in Melbourne, Australia. The exhibition catalogue states that the exhibit was “a gesture of goodwill to Australia for its bicentennial celebration.”¹³ The Greek Ministry of Culture and the Hellenic National Committee of the International Council of Museums and the Museum of Victoria in Australia coordinated the exhibit. The International Cultural Corporation of Australia provided managerial oversight. The Australian government indemnified the exhibit, which received funding from the OTC Telecommunications Authority and the Australian Bicentennial Authority. This international collaborative effort coordinated with the Bicentennial resulted in

⁸ John Cgerry, *Blockbuster!*, 312.

⁹ Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 312. This exhibit had no association with Alexander in its title and shared several of the objects in the SFA exhibit. See Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 316.

¹⁰ Cherry, *Blockbuster!* 315. For the published papers from these symposia see also W. Lindsey Adams and Eugene N. Borza, eds, *Philip II, Alexander the Great, and the Macedonian heritage*. (Lanham, University Press of America, 1982); N. G. L. Hammond, "The Evidence for the Identity of the Royal Tombs at Vergina." W. Lindsey Adams and Eugene Borza, eds, *Phillip II, Alexander the Great, and Macedonian Heritage*, (Chicago: Ares, 1982), 111-27; Beryl Barr-Sharrar and Eugene N. Borza, eds., *Macedonia and Greece in late classical and early Hellenistic times*. (Washington, D. C. National Gallery of Art, 1982).

¹¹ Soterios Gardiakos, *The Coinages of Alexander the Great*. (Aurora, IL, Obol International, 1981); Al N. Oikonomides, "Decadrachm Aids in Identification of Alexander", *Coin World International* 11, No. 25 (1981): 31-2.

¹² Robert Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great*, (London: Allen Lane, 1973); Robert Lane Fox, *The Search for Alexander the Great*, (London: Viking, 1981).

¹³ Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 315.

yet another high-profile exhibit. It catered to a high population of Greek expatriates living in Melbourne — the third largest Greek speaking population outside of Greece and Cyprus (as of 2010) and sister city to Thessaloniki. This high-profile exhibit did not feature Alexander as its primary attraction, even though it shared several common objects featured in SFA.¹⁴ It displayed recent finds in Macedonian archeology and highlighted material culture from recent excavations such as Dermeni (1962) and Vergina (1977). This was a rather unique position that broke precedent as “mainstream” archaeology of southern Greece superseded Macedonian.¹⁵

The emphasis on Macedonian culture coincided with a shift in the political climate in the former territory of Yugoslavia after the death of Marshall Tito in former Yugoslavia in 1980. The emphasis on Macedonian Hellenism and archaeology showed political and ethnic tensions between Macedonia and Greece. Macedonian independence did not happen until 1991 when it became the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). Greece feared a non-Greek Greater Macedonia that would comprise portions of Northern Greece, Bulgaria, Albania and former Yugoslavia. Macedonia laid cultural claims to certain symbols such as the “Macedonian star” found on the lid of the gold Larnax in temple II at Vergina. In the twentieth century, Greece had minted the reverse side of the 100 *drachma* with the same symbol. These Macedonian debates were most heated in the expatriate communities of large metropolitan areas such as Melbourne and Toronto. These objects promoted a Greek nationalist agenda that appropriated the Macedonian history dating back to the Iron Age.¹⁶

¹⁴ Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 316.

¹⁵ The accompanying exhibition catalogue - unlike the SFA catalogue provides a *long durée* approach to the Macedonian past: The Early Neolithic period until the Roman Conquest in 146 BCE. It emphasizes the fourth century - the reigns of Philip II and Alexander the Great and the “Macedonian Hellenism” which spread in the eastern Mediterranean, Persia, Central Asia and Western India. Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 316.

¹⁶ Cherry, *Blockbuster!*, 317.

The excavations of a site associated with Alexander and the exhibition of that material demonstrate how broader readings beyond the textual can and should be considered in testing the textual representations and receptions of a figure such as Alexander the Great. Despite the two millennia between his death and these events, nationalist agendas appropriated the narrative of Alexander the Great at the end of the twentieth century, thus serving as evidence for the durability of cultural fascination with the figure of Alexander. Another example, Greek *karagiozi* -- a shared Ottoman cultural tradition -- shows the durability of Alexander's image in folklore and oral tradition.

Alexandriana as Folk Culture: The Greek Karagiozi

Greek Karagiozi (Turkish: Karagöz) is a form of shadow puppet theatre that preserves the Alexander Romance tradition and provides a folkloric and mythologized presentation of Alexander's heroic deeds. Karagöz developed during the Ayubbid dynasty (twelfth to thirteenth centuries as Khayyal al-zill). It became popular throughout the Ottoman Empire including North Africa and the Balkans with Syria, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Greece all adopting their own imitations.¹⁷ This style of performance shares a common origin from the Byzantine and Ottoman period. It may give an important link in understanding the Alexander romance narrative in the cultural memory during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In one of these performances of *Karagiozi*, Alexander, is said to have slain an accursed snake (dragon). This resonates with a motif of dragon slaying that was appended onto the hagiography of St. George and appears in the tenth or eleventh century in Cappadocia and Georgia.

¹⁷ Puppet theater preceded Ottoman *karagöz* and was divided into five different types of puppets: jiggling puppets (*iskele kuklasi*) - presented by gypsy street showmen, hand or glove puppets (*el kuklasi*), marionettes (*ipli kuklasi*) rod puppets presented from a carriage and a variety of gigantic puppets used in public festivals and guild processions. Metin And, "Theatre in Turkey," *Turkish Studies Bulletin*, Vol 7. No. 2 (1983): 21.

Karagiozi/Karagöz is a non-textual, non-material medium that preserved the Alexander narrative. It manifests throughout regions in the Ottoman Empire and beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire in Central and Southeast Asia and China. It offers a suitable cultural medium that resonates with the broad geographic scope of the Alexander Romances. The relationship between such cultural manifestations and the Alexander Romances provides an opportunity for further study. It stands out as one method for conceptualizing the broader corpus of material surrounding a figure such as Alexander the Great that could be applied to understanding the past.

Textual *Alexandriana*

The literary and historical traditions give a complex series of narratives that paint Alexander in the colors of a model world conqueror, king and Mediterranean cultural figure. Understanding the role that *Alexandriana* played for fifteenth century Ottoman audiences begins with the textual tradition. This overview will not be comprehensive; the ancient historiography on Alexander the Great is complex, as many of the authors used sources that are no longer extant to construct their narratives. Modern historiography has offered varied readings of Alexandrine conquest and rulership. However, it drags with it the baggage of nineteenth century scholarship, which often emphasized a damning or laudatory summary judgment of Alexander's character and deeds. The modern historical tradition is rich in textual criticism. It tested the historical sources based on their reliability and not on the conflicting nature of the sources.¹⁸

The Alexander Romances have received great scholarly attention since the nineteenth century. The broad dispersal of the of the Alexander Romance in many European and Asian

¹⁸ I have in mind here Cemal Kafadar's (1995) assessment of reading Ottoman sources not solely for their reliability but also for their conflictual nature. I contend that there is still room in the scholarship for a similar approach to be done for the Alexander historical texts. For a further discussion of the conflicting nature of the sources see Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds*: (Berkeley and Los Angeles: California University Press, 1995).

languages has made the Alexander Romance the single most translated text next to the Bible.¹⁹ Richard Stoneman or George Cary have done broad orientalist studies of the genre.²⁰ These studies have either ignored the Persian/Ottoman tradition or Orientalized and minimized its value within the larger genre of Alexander Romances. The scholarship has yet to produce a comprehensive study of the Alexander Romance tradition that posits the Ottoman tradition in equal standing with its Greek and Armenian counterparts.

Hellenism and the Historical Tradition: The Narratives of Alexander the Great

The process of Hellenization had profound implications for the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. Territories of the Byzantine empire such as Egypt and Syria — themselves former Seleucid and Ptolemaic territories — had ingrained Hellenistic roots that changed and developed over the intervening centuries but remained intact until the Arab conquests of the early seventh century. To be sure, some aspects of this Greek culture remained as constants in the early Islamic world alongside near eastern cultural traditions. The Alexander Romances in Syriac, Middle Persian, Arabic, and Hebrew recensions testify to the cultural imprint that the Hellenization of these territories left. Hellenistic texts contributed to the corpus of Arabic texts during the ninth and tenth century-Abbasid translation project. During this period, texts were translated from Syriac, Middle Persian and Greek into Arabic. This movement provided an important nexus of continuity for the texts and narratives of the ancient world and facilitated their survival into the Ottoman period.²¹

¹⁹ Richard Stoneman, “Introduction,” in *The Greek Alexander Romance*, (New York; London: Penguin, 1991), 2.

²⁰ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1955). Catherine Goullier-Bougassas, *La Fascination pour Alexandre le Grand dans la littérature européenne (Xe – XVIe siècle) : Reinvention d’un Mythe*, Tomes I-IV, (Turnhout; Chicago; Brepols, 2014).

²¹ Like the fifteenth century, the historical context of the fourth century BCE represented a liminal period of transition between the classical Greek antiquity and the Hellenistic world. Alexander conquered the Eastern

The Ancient Sources

As the son and heir to Philip II of Macedon, Alexander III inherited many of the court functionaries who served his father. Inherent in the Macedonian system was a complex organization of fighting groups who prided themselves on personal loyalty to the King. The *heteroi* (companions) and the *somatophylakes* (bodyguard) were the most important. For much of Alexander's reign (336-327), the *somatophylakes* numbered seven of his most trusted infantry.²² The discussion will return to how these military groups may have resonated with fifteenth century Ottoman audiences and as a representation of the Persian literary theme of *razm u bazm* in the next chapter. However, for now, it will suffice to point out that this specialized cavalry unit held a special place in the military ranks of the Macedonian military organization. Historical narratives of Alexander the Great's campaigns originate with the close companions (*heteroi*) who traveled with him through Asia Minor, Persia and into India. He inherited some of these companions from Philip II's court at Pella in Macedonia. Others, closer to the prince's age grew in importance and became instrumental functionaries for his extensive military campaign. Callisthenes, a nephew of Aristotle remained an integral part of this court circle until his death in 328 BCE for his refusal to do the *proskynesis* (prostration). Callisthenes' histories, now lost, provided one of the earliest models for Alexandrine historiography. In its style, Callisthenes' history panegyricized Alexander's deeds resulting in a biased view of his campaigns. Two other historians give early narratives for Alexander's campaigns: Alexander I's close friend and

Mediterranean and Persian Empire, the ancient Middle East, imprinting them with a veneer of Hellenism. The degree to which this Hellenistic model took hold in the Near East has been debatable. The German historian, Johann Gustav Droysen first coined the term "Hellenistic/Hellenism". See R. Malcolm Errington, *History of the Hellenistic World, 323 – 30 B.C.*, (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2008), 1.

²² After 326 BCE, Alexander added an eighth member, Peucestus, after he saved Alexander's life during a siege in what is now Punjab.

General Ptolemy, later Ptolemy I Soter (Savior) of Egypt, and Aristobulus. While their works too are no longer extant; they were fundamental sources for Arrian's later second century CE account.

The "Vulgate" Sources

Diodorus Siculus

Diodorus Siculus wrote in the second half of the first century BCE. His *Bibliographia Historika (Library of History)* is one of the most important works for understanding the Eastern Mediterranean from the fourth through the first century BCE. The work covers a broad geographic scope that includes the eastern Mediterranean, Egypt, but also India. Book 17 begins with Alexander's accession and covers his complete political career and military campaigns. It ends with his death in Babylon in 323 BCE. Book 18 covers the wars of succession beginning with Alexander's death and ending in about 317 BCE.²³ Diodorus refers to Cleitarchus as an authority for the size of Babylon. (Book II.7.3) Diodorus mentions Ptolemy not as an historical source but as an actor in Alexander's military campaigns.²⁴ Diodorus appropriated the moralizing work of Ephorus and ran into difficulty trying to reorganize his work which conflated two pieces for the years 375 and 371. Diodorus' narrative of Alexander is a useful source; it provides material absent in Arrian and Plutarch.

Quintus Curtius Rufus

²³ Simon Hornblower, "The Sources and Their Uses," in D. Lewis, J. Boardman, S. Hornblower, & M. Ostwald (Eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (The Cambridge Ancient History, pp. 1-23). (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). (doi:10.1017/CHOL9780521233484.002), 9.

²⁴ William Napoleon Hendricks III, *A Comparison of Diodorus and Curtius' Accounts, Alexander the Great*, (PhD Diss, Duke University, 1974), 8.

Perhaps the most difficult of the historical narratives of Alexander the Great is that of Quintus Curtius Rufus. This source most likely dates to the first century CE. during the Julio-Claudian period. Q. Curtius Rufus' work has been assigned to the reigns of twelve Roman emperors - ranging from the reigns of Augustus in the first decade CE. to Constantine in the fourth century CE. This history appears to have been disseminated in both in manuscript and print formats as before the rediscovery of Plutarch in the fifteenth century, along with Justin/Trogus it was one of two histories of Alexander circulating in Latin. As the only full length Latin history of Alexander of Macedon it survives in approximately 123 manuscripts, the oldest of which dates to the ninth century.²⁵ Quintus Curtius Rufus is the most represented author in the Berzunza catalogue, suggesting a wide readership in the early modern and modern world alike (see Appendix A.)²⁶ The debate has settled to the early first century during the reign of Claudius or perhaps as late as the reign of Vespasian. There have been two suggestions for the identity of Quintus Curtius Rufus.²⁷ The accounts of Q. Curtis Rufus, Justin and Diodorus Siculus were all thought to have been derived from Cleitarchus of Alexandria.²⁸ Q. Curtius Rufus cites Cleitarchus (IX.v.21, IX.vii.15) and Timagenes (VIII.v.21) but no other sources.²⁹ There was a significant amount of material that Diodorus Siculus shared with Curtius. Curtius Rufus' reliability as an historical source has been questioned by modern historians; he exaggerated and

²⁵ Waldemar Heckel, "Introduction", in Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander*, ed. John Yardley, (London and New York: Penguin, 1984), 1.

²⁶ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 11-41.

²⁷ Waldemar Heckel, "Introduction" in Quintus Curtius Rufus, *the History of Alexander*, ed. John Yardley, (London and New York: Penguin), 4.; The first is the Quintus Curtius Rufus mentioned in Suetonius' *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* (On Grammar and Rhetoric) Using relative dating this Curtius Rufus would have been active during the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius, and Claudius. The other likely candidates are the Quintus Curtius Rufus of Tacitus (*Annales* I.20.3 - 21.3) and of Pliny the Younger *Epistulae* 7.27.2 -3 who was a soldier and politician. This Quintus Curtius Rufus rose from obscurity to a senatorial career. Were the consul and the rhetorician the same man? If so, he would have written his history of Alexander after the fall of Sejanus, during the reign of Tiberius and before the accession of Claudius. (41 - 54 C.E.)

²⁸ A. Brian Bosworth, "Introduction," in *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, eds A.B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3.

²⁹ Hendricks, *A Comparison of Diodorus and Curtius' Accounts*, 8

punctuated his text with rhetorical moralizing comments. He has a love of set speeches both long and short.³⁰

Marcus Junius Justinus (Justin) and Pompeius Trogus

The last of the so-called vulgate sources to survive to the present day is Justin's third century *Epitome of the Philippic Histories*. Originally written by Pompeius Trogus in the first century BCE, Trogus' original work was forty-four books long. It narrated Mediterranean history from the Assyrian Empire in the ninth century CE until the reign of Augustus. Alexander the Great's career was the sole topic of books eleven and twelve.³¹ Despite the title of the work, Trogus incorporated Philip II as part of Book VII, which dealt with early Macedonian history.³² At its heart, Trogus' work was an ethnography.³³ Justin's version omitted these ethnographic aspects. Book XI resembled an Iliad-inspired struggle between East and West ending with the death of Darius and signifying the triumph of the West. Similarly, Book XII adopted qualities of the Odyssey wherein Alexander wandered the distant kingdoms of the East, but never returns home.³⁴ Book XII concluded, as did Arrian with a suitable eulogy to Alexander.³⁵ Justin/Trogus' portrayal of Alexander was "favorable": he succeeded his father humbly (11.1.9), he provided lavish funerals for those who served him (11.16.13 and 12.1.1), conferred high status to those of low status (11.10.9). He showed mercy towards his enemies in his treatment of Darius' family

³⁰ A. Brian Bosworth, *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, 8.

³¹ Randolph Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great: A Historical Commentary*, (PhD Diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1973), 1.

³² Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great*, 10, Diodorus Siculus may have used Trogus for his narrative of Philip II. Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great*, 1.

³³ Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great: A Historical Commentary*, 9.

³⁴ Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great: A Historical Commentary*, 13.

³⁵ Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great*, 13.

(11.9.13; 15.12.6-13). Alexander fought valiantly in the face of death (11.14.5; 129.8) and conquered worlds and listened to counsel (2.18.16).³⁶

The Greek Sources

Plutarch

The Greek writer Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus (C.E. 46-120), from Chaeronea used several of the available sources and some of the lesser-known sources in his *Lives*.³⁷ He studied in Athens, one of the most prestigious education centers of his day. Plutarch traveled in Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt and Italy. He read and lectured in Rome. Finally retiring to a small country home, he wrote several works including the *Moralia*, which provides an indispensable prelude to the *Lives* of Greeks and the Romans.³⁸

Plutarch also made significant use Aristobulus and Ptolemy as sources. Thus, he is a useful source to juxtapose next to Arrian. Plutarch's image of Alexander is favorable. His accounts of Alexander's campaigns offer far less detail but as one would expect he tries to capture the personality of Alexander. There is no history for Alexander's father, Phillip II, which has remained a puzzling historiographical question for Plutarch's *Lives*. This absence may have meant that only Theopompus was available. Plutarch may have wanted to pair Caesar with Phillip and Augustus with Alexander.³⁹

³⁶ Lytton, *Justin's Account of Alexander the Great*, 14.

³⁷ Hornblower, "The Sources and their Uses", 10.

³⁸ Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, Introduction, xi-xii.

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Introduction*.html

³⁹ Simon Hornblower, *The Sources and their Uses*, 18; The production and dissemination of Plutarch's works is long lived. Beginning from the first century, he appears to have been well read. The oldest and most authoritative manuscript is the *Codex Sangemanensis* dating to the ninth century. Housed in the Library of the Monastery of St. Germain de Prés, the second oldest is in the monastery near *Seittenstetten*, the *Codex Seittenstettensis*, near Waldhoffen in Austria. The print editions of the *Lives* start in 1517 with the *Editio Princeps*, and were followed with an Aldine edition in 1519. An extensive multi-volume edition—the Reiske—was published from 1774-1782 - with an additional edition—the Coraës published in from 1809 - 1814. Simon Hornblower, *The Sources and their Uses*, 18.

Arrian

Lucius Flavius Arrianus Xenophon (ca. 86-160 CE) wrote in the second century CE. During the time of Hadrian and Trajan. He named his history after Xenophon's *Anabasis*, which told the story of the ten thousand Spartans who embarked on a revenge campaign against Artaxerxes II. Arrian begins his history of Alexander by defending his decision to write "yet another history of Alexander the Great" (*Anabasis*, 1.1 3). His approach to the period of Alexander is methodical. He claims that the two most trustworthy sources for the campaigns of Alexander the Great were the history of Ptolemy I Soter and Aristobulus. Both men were on campaign with Alexander. Arrian says in many places the two eyewitness accounts agree but where they disagree Arrian has followed Ptolemy's account. Ptolemy was the main source of Arrian.⁴⁰ Ptolemy's histories affected the historical tradition of the period. Ptolemy was most influential in propagandizing the life and deeds of Alexander the Great, which evolved over the centuries into the Alexander Romance.⁴¹ Equally important the court of Ptolemy I appears to have had a lasting effect on promoting the image of Alexander in visual and material culture.⁴²

Returning to Stoneman's assertion — that much of the Alexander Romance narrative was planned by the end of Ptolemy's I reign in 283 BCE, one can conclude that much of Alexander narrative carried with it the literary, historical, and narrative baggage of early Ptolemaic Egypt. Thus, the Alexander Romances preserve a late fourth century BCE – early third century CE historical imagination of Alexander the Great. Much of this historical imagination lasted until the

⁴⁰ Bosworth, "Introduction," 14.

⁴¹ Bosworth, *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, 2000, 16.

⁴² For a more detailed discussion of the production of Alexander the Great's Image see Andrew Steward, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), 1993.

tenth century CE when a new Persianate historical imagination replaces it. The historical and romance narratives came out of the decades after Alexander's death. So, historical imagination sought to legitimize the Ptolemaic Dynasty (and by extension the other Hellenistic rulers) and to cast Alexander III in a positive light. As the next chapter will illustrate, the role of the Persian poet accomplished a similar task with respect to Persian kings to that which the Ptolemaic court imagination accomplished with Alexander the Great's image. These Ptolemaic narratives (i.e. the Alexander Romances) were not preserved and circulated in written form until the third century: the first appearance of the α -recension of the Greek Alexander Romance. The inspiration for these romances dates to the third century BCE; it was the gossip and slander, which circulated in the aftermath of Alexander's death.⁴³

Ptolemy I remained a close companion and friend to Alexander during his life and played a pivotal role in the events after his death. Perdikkas awarded the territory of Egypt and Syria to Ptolemy, in the Partition of Babylon in 323 BCE. Ptolemy I stole the body of Alexander intended for burial in Macedonia and entombed it in Alexandria. He also perpetuated a series of portraits of Alexander and histories of Alexander in his court at Alexandria.⁴⁴ So, Ptolemy and his court at Alexandria appear to have been instrumental in creating the image of Alexander. Equally important, Ptolemy most likely began writing his own history by 320 BCE. Ptolemy I seemed to have selectively treated the events unfavorable to Alexander, such as performing the *proskynesis* (prostration).⁴⁵ He justified his theft of Alexander's body and promoted the cult that sprang up in the years after Alexander's death.⁴⁶

⁴³ Bosworth, "Introduction," 16.

⁴⁴ Andrew Steward, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 10.

⁴⁵ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 11.

⁴⁶ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 12.

Other Sources

The chief primary source was the official history of Callisthenes of Olynthos, who was reputed to have been a nephew of Aristotle. Callisthenes accompanied Alexander to record his exploits and send favorable reports back to Pella. Alexander had him executed in 327 BCE for his alleged involvement in the Hermelaus conspiracy.⁴⁷ His *Deeds of Alexander* was a panegyric and inaugurated a court tradition of historiography that eulogized Alexander with a healthy dose of rhetoric.⁴⁸ Callisthenes history stopped with Alexander's visit to Siwa in 331.⁴⁹ For events after the visit to the temple at Siwa, ancient authors turned to Ptolemy, Aristobulus, or Cleitarchus,⁵⁰

Cleitarchus of Alexandria was the most popular of the ancient histories in antiquity. Most of our information on Cleitarchus comes from Quintus Curtius Rufus, Justin and Diodorus Siculus. Quintus Curtius Rufus occasionally quoted Cleitarchus but the latter's narrative was probably the source for the portions of the books that run parallel to each other.⁵¹ Cleitarchus did not take part in Alexander's campaigns. He was writing in Alexandria after 310 BCE. He began his work after Alexander's death in 323 BCE and probably used the accounts of Onesicritus and Nearchus for his information on India. Onesicritus was the helmsman of Alexander's ship on the Indus and falsely claimed to be the admiral of the entire fleet in his work - now lost - *How Alexander was Educated*, misleadingly focused on India. In response to this, Nearchus wrote his own account of

⁴⁷ It is possible that his account did not continue beyond the Iaxartes campaign of 329 BCE. He provided the primary written source for the later early histories of Ptolemy, Cleitarchus and Aristobulus. Waldemar Heckel, "Introduction", 5.

⁴⁸ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 10.

⁴⁹ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11.

⁵⁰ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11.

⁵¹ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 12.

the return voyage to refute Oneisicritus' work and in part to give his own account of the voyage from the mouth of the Indus to meet up with Alexander.⁵²

Cleitarchus supplemented the works of Oneisicritus and Nearchus with eyewitness accounts of other Macedonians and Greeks, many of whom served as mercenaries under Alexander. Cleitarchus' account was prone to exaggeration. He often credited incredible sources and sacrificed historical accuracy for rhetorical effect. He exaggerated Alexander's vices and emphasized the role of *Tyche* (fate) in Alexander's success and the degeneration of Alexander's character. He was popular in Rome during the late Republic and Early Empire.⁵³ The Roman historian Strabo was critical of Cleitarchus' description of the Amazons.⁵⁴

Other accounts include Chares of Mytilene who provided an account of the marriage at Susa, celebrated in 324 BCE. In this mass wedding, ninety-two leading Macedonians took Persian brides. Alexander himself took Stateira and Parysatis.⁵⁵ Ehippos authored a book that covered the death and funeral of Hephaestion and Alexander, leaving a full account of the king's dress, including his appropriation of Persian garb.⁵⁶

The Alexander Romance Tradition

This chapter has summarized the historical sources and problematized a broader category of *Alexandriana* that includes not only textual narratives but also material culture and oral folk traditions. The romance tradition developed alongside the historical. As a result, it weaves fact and fiction into the narration of the life and adventures of Alexander. What are the characteristics

⁵² Heckel, "Introduction," 6.

⁵³ Heckel, "Introduction," 6.

⁵⁴ Heckel, "Introduction," 6

⁵⁵ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 12.

⁵⁶ Steward, *Faces of Power*, 11; Stoneman, *The Greek Romance of Alexander*, 13; see also E.A. Fredriksmeyer, "The Origin of Alexander's Royal Insignia," *Transactions of the America Philological Association*, 127 (1997): 97-109.

of the Alexander romance genre? Where does it differ from the histories? How can one use the narratives of both the historical and romantic traditions to understand the Alexandrine period as a thematic roadmap for the later historical contexts in which these narratives are written? Which role do the Alexander Romances play in developing themes and roles for later audiences seeking to incorporate the Alexander narrative into their own historical imagination?

The Alexandrine Narrative of the Romances

Integral to the plot of the Alexander Romance is the last Pharaoh of Egypt, Nectanebo II. This mythologized Nactanebo is portrayed as a powerful sorcerer and diviner who seduced Olympias (I.1-3)⁵⁷, Alexander's mother, as a red serpent while Philip is away on military campaign. Philip suspected Olympias but could not prove the paternity of the child. (I.1-12)⁵⁸ Alexander grew s up and was educated by Aristotle at Pella. (I.13; 16)⁵⁹ During these years, he met and befriended Hephaestion. The two men traveled to Pisa. (I.18)⁶⁰ In his youth, he tamed the fiery horse, Bucephalus. (I.17)⁶¹ He competed and was victorious in the Olympic Games. Upon his return from the Olympic Games and in the chariot races. (I.18-21)⁶² Pausanias murdered Alexander's "stepfather" Philip. (I.24)⁶³ Alexander then defeated the joint armies of

⁵⁷ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 35-37.

⁵⁸ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 35-44. The birth of Alexander was treated differently in antiquity. Stoneman (2008) notes two representation of the event. The first is a late antique mosaic pavement from Lebanon. The second belongs to a series of illustrations that date to around the fourth or fifth centuries these illustrations occur in an illustrated manuscript of the Armenian Alexander Romance. Stoneman *Alexander the Great*, 12. Stoneman associates the manuscript with the fourth and fifth century based partially on the costume and dress of the figures but also (incorrectly) attributes the Armenian Alexander romance to Movses Khorenatsi (410 - 490s CE). My skepticism on the attribution to Khorenatsi arises from several conversations with S. Peter Cowe in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, with whom I had the pleasure of working during my graduate studies at UCLA. See also Albert Mugrdich Wolohogian, *The Romance of Alexander the Great by the Pseudo Callisthenes*. (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969), 6.

⁵⁹ Stoneman trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 44-7.

⁶⁰ Stoneman trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 49-50. Alexander later sailed for Sicily. (I.29). Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 61.

⁶¹ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 48-9.

⁶² Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 49-53.

⁶³ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 55-6.

Thebes and Athens. (I.26-27; I.46-47.)⁶⁴ He brought to heel the “barbarian” tribes to the north. After which, he set off for Asia Minor where he first meets the armies of Darius III at the River Granicus. Alexander went to Egypt and visited and the Oracle of Ammon at the shrine of Siwa, (I.30)⁶⁵ At the temple in Siwa, Alexander was confirmed as the son of Ammon. (I.30)⁶⁶ Alexander conquered Egypt and established the city of Alexandria. (I.32)⁶⁷ He then continued to conquer the city of Tyre. (I.35-37)⁶⁸ At this point in several of the Romances, Alexander’s campaigns diverged from the historical narratives. Alexander invaded Libya and conquered Jerusalem (Hebrew). (II.22-35A)⁶⁹ He invaded the western Mediterranean and attacked Carthage. Alexander invaded Rome. (I.27)⁷⁰ He then returned to the Near East and Asia Minor.

Alexander’s Persian campaigns continued. Darius and Alexander exchanged letters in which Darius asserted his sovereignty over Alexander. (I.38-39);⁷¹ Alexander defeated Darius at

⁶⁴ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 55-61; 79-86.

⁶⁵ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 61-2; Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 8-9. The God, Serapis, provides an interesting narrative and historical puzzle. He appears to have first appeared in Alexander’s sleep in Babylon during his final sickness, when he dreamt he was inside the “temple of Serapis”. This story is anachronistic, as the God Serapis did not exist at that time and was most likely a deliberate creation of Ptolemy I to unite the Greek and Egyptian populace, sometime after Alexander’s death in the early Ptolemaic period. The *Oracle of the Potter* describes Serapis as a private invention of Ptolemy’s. Therefore, it is entirely possible that Ptolemy inserted Serapis into Alexander’s final feverish hours. Richard Stoneman, *The Ancient Oracles: Making the Gods Speak*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 127. On the Serapeum, See *the Greek Alexander Romance*, (I.33); Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 65-68.

⁶⁶ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 61-2;

⁶⁷ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 64-65.

⁶⁸ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 69-72.

⁶⁹ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 168-179. This appears in the *γ-recension*. The story of Alexander in Jerusalem as has root in the historical writings of Josephus, who in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (11.331), writes, “When he learned that Alexander was not far from the city, the high priest went out with the priest to meet him... When Alexander ... saw the multitude in white garments the priests at their head clothed in linen, and the high priest in a robe of hyacinth-blue and gold wearing on his head the mitre with the gold plate on which was inscribed the name of God, he approached alone and prostrated himself before the Name and first greeted the high priest.” Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 49.

⁷⁰ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 166-7. This narrative appears in the *γ-recension*

⁷¹ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 72-74. The text of one such letter reads as follows “The King of Kings, the Great God Darius and lord of all nations to Alexander the plunderer of the cities. You seem to think the name of Darius is an insignificant one although the gods have honored him and judged him worthy to be enthroned alongside them. It was unlucky for you that you supposed you could get away with being king in Macedon without heeding my orders and went marching though obscure lands and foreign cities, in which you pronounced yourself king. You gathered a band of desperadoes like yourself, attacked cities inexperienced in war – which I in my discretion had regarded as not worth ruling, the merest detritus – and you attempted to gather tribute from them like

Gaugamela. (I.9)⁷² The Persian army was routed and while Darius fled abandoning the baggage train and several members of his family behind only to be captured by the Macedonian army. Then, Alexander and Hephaestion visited Darius's mother Sisygambis in disguise. Sisygambis mistook Hephaestion for Alexander. The Persian King Darius III, having fled to the Eastern regions of the Achaemenid Empire, sought the help of the Indian King, Porus. Alexander captured Persepolis and burned it to the ground. Alexander married Roxanne, in the romances a daughter of Darius who was a Sogdian Princess and the daughter of Oxyartes. After capturing the Persian capital of Persepolis, Alexander burned it to the ground. After Darius' murder by his own satraps, Alexander proclaimed to his subjects that Darius's murderers were criminals and he oversaw their executions.⁷³ Alexander explored the ocean in a diving bell (II.38)⁷⁴ and journeyed into the land of darkness. Alexander visited the land of darkness in search of the water of eternal life. (II.39)⁷⁵ He discovered the water of life but failed to drink it.⁷⁶ Two birds with human heads tell him to turn back. Alexander met the sirens and fought centaurs. (II.41-44)⁷⁷ As Alexander advanced to India and approached the city of the sun he received an oracle foretelling his death. Alexander's campaign against the Indian King Porus, was interrupted by a mutiny of his troops.

a beggar. Do you suppose we are at all like you? Make no boast of the place you have captured. You make the wrong decision about them. You should, before all, have corrected your ignorance and come to me. Darius, your lord, rather than accumulating you robber band. I ordered you in writing to come and pay homage to Darius, the King. If you do so, I swear by Zeus the most high god, my father, that I will grant you an amnesty for your actions. But if you persist in your foolishness, I shall punish you with an unspeakable death. Even worse will be the fate of all who failed to instill any sense in you. Stoneman, trans, " *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 74. Such narrative of exchange is reminiscent of the later fifteenth century exchange between Timur I and Bayezid I. Thus, reinforcing Bayezid's circumstantial parallel role with respect to Alexander III. See Chapter 5. See also Ali Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam*, (PhD Diss. UCLA, 2005), 116-130.

⁷² Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 96-7.

⁷³ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 108-9.

⁷⁴ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 117-119.

⁷⁵ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 119-120.

⁷⁶ See also Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 152-154. Stoneman compares Alexander's quest for the Water of life with Gilgamesh's search of the plant of immortality. in the Epic of Gilgamesh.

⁷⁷ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 122-5.

(II.12).⁷⁸ Alexander debated with the Gymnosophists (Brahmans). (III.5-17).⁷⁹ He encountered Candace of Meroe (III.18-9; 22-23).⁸⁰ Alexander visited the Amazons and made them his subjects. (III.25)⁸¹ All during this time, he corresponded with Olympias and repeated the account and described his visit to the city of the sun in the palace of Cyrus .(III.23; 27; 30)⁸²

When Alexander reached Babylon, Antipater the acting ruler of Macedon, sent his younger son to poison Alexander. Iollas, Alexander's cupbearer served him the poison.⁸³ Alexander became ill from the poison and said farewell to his close companions and died. (III.32)⁸⁴ Ptolemy, Alexander's childhood friend and close companion, then took Alexander's body to Memphis for burial. (III.34)⁸⁵ The Alexander Romances concluded with a description of the cities that Alexander founded. (III.35)⁸⁶

Thus, the Alexander Romance narrative contains both fact and fantasy creating an imagined history that contains aspects of both the historical and romantic narratives. Thus, there are several places with the historical narrative that serve as narrative *nexti* for how later audiences should judge the actions of Alexander. Alexander's capacity for mercy and clemency are often at stake in these events. In the Persian recensions of the Alexander Romance, the relationship between Darius and Alexander is familial. Darius was first Alexander's half-brother and after Alexander's marriage to Roxanne, Alexander becomes Darius' son in-law. In several of the Romance narratives, Alexander was present at the death of Darius at which point Darius made

⁷⁸ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 100. In the γ -recension (III.3); Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 180-181.

⁷⁹ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 131-35.

⁸⁰ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 135-6; 139-42.

⁸¹ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 143-4.

⁸² Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 114-5; 145-6; 148-52.

⁸³ On Antipater in The Greek Alexander romances see (III.22-23); Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 158-9.

⁸⁴ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 151-2.

⁸⁵ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 158.

⁸⁶ Stoneman, trans, *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 159.

him his heir and successor. Alexander's treatment of Darius' wife and children cast him in a positive light. He treated Sisymbria, Darius' mother as if she were his own. He called her mother and Lucius Curtius tells us she died from grief after Alexander's death in July of 323 BCE.

Although not present in all the Alexandrine narratives, the events after his death and the contested succession and so-called war of the *Diadochi* were of importance to the early fifteenth century Ottoman context. The late third century BCE encapsulates dynastic crisis and a rupture in *translatio imperii*, which resonates with the fifteenth century Ottoman experience of the *Fetret Devri*. This topic will be explored in more depth in Chapters four and five.

This overview of the Alexander narrative tradition provides a starting point and establishes a baseline from which we can move the discussion and address the larger issues of kingship that developed in the Persian tradition of the Alexander Romances. The next chapter will give a more in-depth discussion of kingship and the poet's role in the creation of the royal image through Persian *Alexandriana*. Exploring some of these key narrative points across linguistic genres in that chapter will give a stronger context in which to set the Persian and Ottoman traditions.

The Manuscript Tradition of the Greek Romances

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Alexander Romance narratives most likely took shape in the decades after the death of Alexander in the fourth century BCE as a part of rumors and propaganda generated at the court of Ptolemy I Soter. It took about six hundred years for the romances to be produced as manuscripts. An earlier section looked at the earlier histories of Alexander. Beginning in about the fourth century CE – no later than 345 CE – in the city of Alexandria, the earliest version of the Alexander Romance/histories of the life and military

campaigns of Alexander the Great circulated.⁸⁷ It was attributed to Callisthenes but later proven to be anachronistic because several of the events in the history/romance occurred after Callisthenes death in 328 BCE. The α -recension of the Greek Alexander romance resonates with several of the historical narratives, echoing the narrative of events in several of the historical texts. The α -recension is represented by a single manuscript from the third century CE.⁸⁸ It included detailed accounts of Alexander's exploits in Greece and formal rhetorical debates to talk about the issues.⁸⁹ It was the closest extant document that is the original form of the Romance that would have been derived from a hypothetical — α . The document includes several large lacunae that can be filled in based on two important transactions: the Latin edition translated by Julius Valerius in the fourth century CE and the Armenian manuscript most likely originating from the fifth century CE.⁹⁰ The β -recension derives from the α -recension. It is a fuller version known from several manuscripts and most likely dates to between 300 and 550 CE. It is the source of the λ -recension, which is represented by five manuscripts. In this version, the details of the letters to Olympias are expanded.⁹¹ It is the only version to contain the details of Alexander descending to oceanic depths in a diving bell. The β -recension includes manuscript L that is closely related to the λ -recension but has some added material. An eighth-century recension dates to the seventh or the eighth-centuries: ϵ -recension. The ϵ -recension is a composite of the α -recension, the β -recension and excerpts from a letter from Alexander to Aristotle on India, from Palladius on the Brahmans and from Pseudo-Methodius on the “unclean nations.” Stoneman suggests that the text dates after 640 C.E, the pseudo-Methodius is dated to

⁸⁷ Alan Samuel, “The Earliest Elements of the Alexander Romance,” *Historia Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte*, 4, (1986), 428.

⁸⁸ Richard Stoneman, “A Note on the Text,” *The Greek Alexander Romance*, 28.

⁸⁹ Stoneman, “A Note on the Text,” 28.

⁹⁰ Stoneman, “A Note on the Text,” 28.

⁹¹ Stoneman, “A Note on the Text,” 29.

around 640 C.E.⁹² The γ -recension derives from a combination of the ε -recension and the β -recension. This version includes material from both Christian and Jewish material. The δ -recension is no longer extant. It was based on either the A or another version of the archetype α manuscript.⁹³ It was the basis for the Latin translation of Leo the Archpriest, who took a Greek version of the manuscript from Constantinople to Naples in the tenth-century *The History of Proelis* — One of the most important medieval versions of the Alexander Romances.⁹⁴ He translated it into Latin under the title *Nativitas et Victoria Alexandri Magni Regis* (The Birth and Victory of Alexander the Great) but it later became known as the *History of Proelis*. The δ -recension was also the basis for the Syriac translation and was then translated into Arabic and Ethiopic.

The Armenian Alexander Tradition

The Persian-Ottoman representation of the Alexander Romance is also represented in Armenian literature. Here the Alexander Romance breathes in its purest form, and the extent to which it influenced its Persian counterparts warrants further investigation. Yet, the Alexander Romance served different educational and pious purposes in the Armenian context. One of the earliest secular Armenian language narratives, it fulfilled a late-antique and early-medieval educational aim as a text to be broadly disseminated. Also, Armenian manifestations of the Alexander Romance underscored the notion of a kingdom of heaven not represented on earth. Peter Cowe (2013) situated the Armenian Alexandrine Romances into the larger debate on Armenian statehood and ecclesiastical polity.⁹⁵ The church's denial of the validity of earthly

⁹² Stoneman, "A Note on the Text", 29; Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 176-8.

⁹³ Stoneman, "A Note on the Text," 30.

⁹⁴ Faustina Doufiker-Aerts, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus*, 15.

⁹⁵ S. Peter Cowe, "Print Capital, Corporate Identity and the Democratization of Early Modern Discourse in Early Armenian Society," in *Le Museon*, 126: 3-4, (2013): 320-368.

kingship may have helped forge a unique Armenian ethnic identity, and one that presented a minimal hazard to Byzantine and Ottoman rulers. Within the Ottoman Empire, this agreeably non-threatening position resonates with (and was rewarded by) the nineteenth-century *millet* system creating a separate community for the Armenian patriarchal church. The still un-researched Armenian paradigm of rulership and its version of Alexander Romances may well prove relevant to the larger discourse on Ottoman political ideology, particularly in its connection with the production of Persian Alexander Romances.

The Hebrew Alexander Tradition

There is a strong Hebrew tradition associated with Alexander the Great represented in historical, romance and biblical texts. This representation in *Alexandriana* may be linked to the relatively large Jewish community present in Alexandria in Antiquity. There are several references to Alexander in the Bible: Daniel 7, 8, 11 and I Maccabees 1:1-4. For historical texts, the first century Jewish historian, Josephus records Alexander's meeting with the Jews in Alexandria. F. Pfister (1976) pointed out that recension c (γ) has additions by a Jew of the first century C.E. to Alexander's adventures.⁹⁶ The significance of such passages highlights attempts by the late first century community to forge ties to Alexander and increase their legitimacy in the civil strife within Alexandria in the first century CE.⁹⁷ Rosalie Reich (1972) underscored the pattern of transmission between the Christian and Jewish narratives in the late antique period. Early Christian writers such as Origen Eusebius, and Jerome incorporated legends, found in

⁹⁶ Rosalie Reich, *Tales of Alexander the Macedonian*, (Brooklyn: Ktav Publishing House, 1972), 8; F. Pfister ed., *Kleine Schiften zum Alexanderroman*, (Meisenheim am Glan, 1976).

⁹⁷ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 8; It is supposed that the Book of Daniel alluded to Alexander when it refers to a mighty king that "shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion," whose kingdom shall be destroyed after his death (Dan. xi. 3). The vision of the "fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly," devouring and breaking all in pieces (*ibid.* vii. 7), may also be an allusion to Alexander.

earlier rabbinic texts and later became infused into the Christian religion — many legends of saints can be traced to Talmudic-Midrashic literature.⁹⁸ Also, Reich argued Solomonic legends have been infused into the legends and romance of Alexander. Reich identifies seven such Solomonic themes transferred to Alexander: 1) Filicide; 2) Supernatural perception; 3) Kosmocrator; 3) pride; 4) demonology; 5) the mountains of darkness; 6) the magic stone.⁹⁹ These parallels with Alexander deserve particular attention as they suggest Talmudic and Midrashic origins for the late antique and medieval literary images of Alexander.¹⁰⁰ The representation of Alexander in Jewish texts resonates with another important issue inherent in textual *Alexandriana*: the favorable and unfavorable treatment of Alexander. In the historical sources, negative treatment of Alexander is most obvious in sources such as Quintus Curtius Rufus. The Romances by their nature lionize the deeds of Alexander Yet, the Hebrew sources and the Medieval English sources give a much more critical view.

The Mongolian Alexander Romance

In our final example of the Alexander Romances as textual *Alexandriana*, we will turn to East Asia. Francis Woodman Cleaves (1959) first published on the Mongolian Alexander Romance, which focuses on four episodes of the Alexander Romance narrative.¹⁰¹ The Ascent to Mount Sumur, the descent to the bottom of the sea, the descent into the land of darkness, and the return to the city of Misr.¹⁰² In the narrative, Alexander is surrounded by his *nöked*, (nomads/companions). Sulqarnai (Dhu ‘l Qarnayn) is given a cup full of the water of

⁹⁸ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 9.

⁹⁹ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 12.

¹⁰⁰ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 12.

¹⁰¹ Francis Woodman Cleaves, “An Early Mongolian Version of the Alexander Romance,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 22, (1959): 1-99.

¹⁰² Cleaves, *An Early Mongolian Version of the Alexander Romance*, 7.

immortality. He is assured that after he drinks the cup he will live for three thousand years. One of his nõked tells him he will weary of immortality and Alexander pours out the cup of water, which falls on the leaves of a cyprus tree making them eternally green.¹⁰³ Of note, in the Mongolian recension of the manuscript is the focus on Egypt as a base of center of power for Sulqarnai's operations into the East.

Appearances in Middle English Literature

Sharing common ground with moralizing historical narratives such as Plutarch, the judgment of Alexander's character remains a consistent theme in both the histories and the Romances. Positive and negative assessments of his character can coexist within linguistic, ethnic and "national" traditions. For example, the Persian sources both condemn and praise Alexander's deeds. On the one hand, he is praised as worthy of his qualities of mercy and worthy in bearing the mantle of Persian kingship, on the other he is condemned for destroying the sacred texts of the Avesta and fire temples. We will give more attention to this topic in the next chapter. The Medieval English literary tradition runs against this paradigm. Often in Medieval English literature the figure of Alexander was not one to be praised but one to be condemned.

In Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the monk relates a story about Alexander. The monk cites a catalog of famous people in a non-dramatic narrative. He praises Alexander's courage and character as the flower of knighthood. Despite his many great conquests both of women and nations fortune turned its back on him; he died in treachery.¹⁰⁴

The English poet and friend of Geoffrey Chaucer, John Gower incorporated Alexander into several of his works. In his *In Praise of Peace* Gower, contrasts Alexander with the earlier great

¹⁰³ Cleaves, *An Early Mongolian Version*, 7.

¹⁰⁴ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 15.

King Solomon. Solomon sought to bring peace to the world but Alexander brought only war, violence and destruction. In the *Confessio Amantis*, Gower tells a story of a pirate King Alexander emphasizing the hostile figure in wanton cruelty that Alexander displayed in his conquests. The pirate's pilot justifies his actions by saying he only did a small scale what Alexander did worldwide. Thus, Alexander's premature, tragic death was divine punishment for his insatiable appetite; his death was an act of God's justice. In a later episode, Gower highlights Alexander's wars and conquests as an example of pride, arguing that no man should kill another. Tales of Alexander's pride are also captured in the Bodleian manuscript of the Hebrew Alexander Romance.¹⁰⁵

Alexander's pride and his wish to achieve godliness impressed authors of both the Alexander histories and the Alexander Romances. The story of Alexander's trip to the earthly paradise, which concludes with the exhortation that the king's eyes will not be satisfied (with riches or conquests) until he dies is a theme in the Hebrew manuscript. The Talmud 32B relates a tale of Alexander and his nights in India. Instead, a high stone is placed on the scale, the moral implication is the same as that in the Hebrew manuscript. Alexander's pride is further exemplified in his wish to visit the heights of the heavens and the depths of the sea. There are three versions of Alexander celestial journey in Talmudic literature.¹⁰⁶ This theme was particularly popular in the iconography of the Middle Ages.¹⁰⁷ It was often joined with a series of stories of Alexander's descent to the sea — also related in the Talmud. In the Middle English, *The Wars of Alexander*, the account of Alexander's ascent into the air is like that of the Bodleian

¹⁰⁵ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 16.

¹⁰⁶ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 17.

¹⁰⁷ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 16. See also R.S. Loomis', "Alexander the Great's Celestial Journey," *Burlington Magazine* XXXII (1918): 177-185.; D.J.A. Ross, *Alexander Historiatus: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature*, (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, 1963).

manuscript. Desiring to soar to the Heavens, Alexander orders the construction of an iron chair, bound with chains and meat fastened about so that the eagles would grab the meat and take Alexander into the sky. In the *Prose life of Alexander* four griffons carry him into the sky and he remains there for ten days, he soared to such a high altitude that he can see the earth.¹⁰⁸

Contrasting views to England's Janus-faced reception of Alexander, Jacques de Longuyon -- across the channel in France — listed Alexander among the nine worthies. Here Alexander the Great shares intellectual importance as one of the Nine Worthies named by him in the *Voeux du Paon* (1312). In this fourteenth century, medieval romance, Longuyon named nine princes who deserved emulation —representing three triads of Christian, Jewish, and pagan figures. Hector, Alexander, and Julius Caesar represented the pagans. Joshua, David and Judas Meccabeus represented the Jews. King Arthur, Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon represented the Christians. These figures represented model princes and rulers for fourteenth and fifteenth century audiences. Thus, far we have looked at Mediterranean and European Alexander romances. Yet, this Ottoman reception of Alexander remains another step in this textual phenomenon.

A New Model for Mediterranean Kingship

This next section explores Alexander in three roles: King, conqueror and as a unifying Mediterranean cultural figure. These three roles stand out as unifying images; they transcend the

¹⁰⁸ Reich, *Tales of Alexander*, 18. The Medieval English Alexander Romances highlight two aspects of the textual *Alexandriana*. They underscore the moralizing capacity within the text to judge the deeds of a past figure as positive or negative. It is important to remember that this quality is contextually dependent. Alexander's deeds were judged differently during Republican Rome than during the Principate. Republican Roman audiences had less tolerance for autocratic conquest than later imperial audiences. The Medieval English conception of Alexander may highlight his negative qualities but it also places him on pedestal as important figure. As an important figure of English Medieval Romance Alexander remains a central figure in the same genre that also features King Arthur.

historical and literary contexts. They fortify the durable nature of the narrative structures that created a cultural continuity for the period from the third century BCE into the modern world. This cultural continuity runs against the grain of models that suggest that the Mediterranean world was characterized by an east-west break in unity. A central theme in the development of Mediterranean historiography is the importance of Mediterranean unity. Mediterranean unity reached its pinnacle during the Roman Principate in the first century CE. when the entire Mediterranean region took part in a shared economic, linguistic, political and cultural reality. This unity does not overlook the degrees of pluralism within the Empire; regional variations occurred but overall a prevailing sense of unity encapsulated the Mediterranean region.

The nature of this unity changed in the third century CE under the Emperor Diocletian's massive restructuring of the Imperial system creating a noticeable separation between the eastern and western territories of the Empire and by extension the entire Mediterranean. After the third quarter of the fifth century CE. this unity weakened at best and fractured at worst. To be sure, Mediterranean unity did not and could reach the level it had held during the Roman imperial period. While political Mediterranean unity was broken cultural and economic unity could be measured in varying degrees through the rest of late antiquity into the early Modern. A new pattern of Mediterranean unity began as early as the fourteenth century as the Ottoman Empire became involved in the geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean. During the sixteenth-century Mediterranean unity again reached another crescendo. The Ottoman Mediterranean project did not surpass that of the Roman Empire in terms of geographic scope and political unity but it provided a level of unity that reflected its achievements and even rivaled them. The level of economic unity can also be weighed against the achievement of Italian city states in the eleventh

century; the Venetian Republic and the Republic of Genoa also contributed a layer of economic unity along an east west line of division.

The tales of Alexander - both fantastic and historical - offered a cultural glue that adhered not only through the Mediterranean, Europe and the Middle East - on a near global scale. Like Charlemagne in the Medieval West — whose deeds were narrated in histories (Einhard and Notker the Stammerer) and in romanticized tales (*The Chanson de Roland* and crusading tales.)— Alexander presented a model of kingship that the rulers of these regions could aspire to.

¹⁰⁹ Perhaps more importantly Alexander presented a model for how one could conquer the known world and redefine it by pushing beyond it's known boundaries.

The fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries stand for liminal periods of transition for the Eastern Mediterranean. The Mediterranean sphere of influence was an important yet ephemeral prize to be won. The Mediterranean markets were receding to the competition of Atlantic and Indian Markets.¹¹⁰ The extensive wars between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic beginning in the 1460s took their toll on the Venetian economic grip in the Aegean. By the early 1470s, the Genoese colonies- Caffa (1473) and Tana (1471)— of the Black Sea region were under Ottoman control. At the western edge of the Mediterranean, a new phase of Atlantic

¹⁰⁹ Charlemagne (774-814) stands out as an intriguing comparative model for understanding imperial paradigms. Historical and mythical narratives concerning Charlemagne as a Medieval king abound. Thus, he is the subject of both real and imagined historical narratives in the Medieval West. Indeed, he stands out both as a model king to be emulated by later medieval kings and as an itinerate king capable of asserting power over vast geographic territory. During the period of the Crusades, Charlemagne offered a model of Christian kingship to rally the crusader armies toward the goal of conquest. Recent scholarship on Charlemagne and his rule offer an in-depth study at the Carolingian imperial paradigm and thus offer a comparative model for subsequent European models of kingship and conquest. See Jennifer Davis, *Charlemagne's Practice of Empire*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2015); Rosamund McKitterick, *The Formation of a European Identity*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2008). McKitterick aims to trace the formation of Frankish political identity during the reign of Charlemagne. McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 7. Thus, her monograph provides a comprehensive discussion of the mechanisms at work to create Charlemagne's empire. These include material cultural and textual elements such as the capitularies, *Annales* and biographies of Charlemagne as well as mechanisms with the historical context that created the space of empire.

¹¹⁰ See Teofilo Ruiz, "The Mediterranean and the Atlantic," in *The Companion to Mediterranean History*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 409-424; Elizabeth Ann Pollard, "The Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean," in *The Companion to Mediterranean History*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 457-454.

exploration had begun. By the early fifteenth century, Portuguese exploration had begun. As Giancarlo Casale (2010) has pointed out the Ottoman State adapted to these economic and political shifts and would be competitive in the Indian Ocean markets while conducting their own Mediterranean project.¹¹¹ This topic lies beyond the present topic. The Alexander Romances in their capacity of representing Alexander as the conqueror of worlds - both known and unknown - may have provided inspiration to Ottoman readers. Alexander offered little in terms of a step-by-step model for Mediterranean conquest - Plutarch's biography of Pompey Magnus provides a much better model for such a task. Alexander — and by extension Aristotle — provided a model for the qualities that a conqueror should embody. These themes are more than captured in both the Persian and Ottoman recensions of the Alexander Romances — the *Iskendernames*.

Alexander as King

Alexander the Great must first be explored from the perspective of his role as king. By the second half of the third century BCE. The Argead line of kings had ruled the territory of Macedon since the fifth century BCE.¹¹² Alexander III succeeded his father Philip II in 336 BCE. His ascension to the throne came when Philip II had dominated the Greek city states to the south and was expanding Macedonian power into the Aegean. After the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE. Phillip had brought the city states of Greek Attica, Thrace, and the Peloponnese under Macedonian hegemony with the League of Corinth (338/7 BCE). Several factions in Athens under the direction of Demosthenes opposed the expansion of the powers of Macedon. Having brought the Greek city-states under Macedonian hegemony Philip II planned to expand power in

¹¹¹ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration*, (Oxford: University Press, 2010).

¹¹² Xenophon's *Helenika*, Diodorus Siculus' *Bibliotheka Historica*, and Justin's *Epitome of the Philippic History* provide suitable sources for understanding the history of the Argead line prior to Phillip the II.

the Mediterranean and Asia Minor at the expense of the Achaemenid Persian Empire which had since the sixth century BCE established satrapies there. In the years preceding his death, Phillip II was planning an extensive campaign east to conquer Achaemenid Persian territory and liberate the Ionian Greek city-states. He apparently intended to include Alexander in these plans of conquest but it is unclear what role Alexander would have served in these plans. Phillip's primary goal was to exact a campaign of revenge and conquer territory in Asia Minor back from the Achaemenid Persian King Darius III who had with the aid of the Eunuch Bagoas only acceded to the throne. The alleged root cause of this campaign of revenge originated in the fifth century BCE Persian campaign under Xerxes, who had invaded the Greek peninsula and became the topic of Herodotus' *Histories*. But, before Philip II could launch his Eastern Persian campaign he was murdered at the hand of Pausanias of Orestis in 336 BCE. The throne of Macedonian kingship passed to his son Alexander III without incident.¹¹³ Alexander's accession came at a favorable time; Philip II had brought to heel the city states of Thrace and Athens, and the Peloponnese after his victory at Chaeronea in 338 BCE. (Arrian, *Anabasis*, 1.1.1-3). Philip II had cultivated an effective inner circle of advisers and military generals many of whom transferred their loyalty to Alexander after Philip's death. Men such as Callisthenes, Aristobulus, and Ptolemy were the first narrators of Alexander's legacy. Macedonian sovereignty over the Greek city-states, still however received some resistance and is crystallized in the textual version of pro-democratic speeches such as Demosthenes' Philippic speeches of the mid-fourth century BCE. (Arrian, *Anabasis*, 1.7-1.10)¹¹⁴

Alexander was twenty years old when he became king. He quickly crushed the Greek city-states that rose in opposition with the hopes of once again reasserting a Greek sense of cultural

¹¹³ James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 4.

¹¹⁴ James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 13-21.

unity and independence.¹¹⁵ Alexander then sent his improved Macedonian phalanxes north to defeat the armies of *barbaroi* north of the Danube. (Arrian, *Anabasis*, 1.3-1.4.5)¹¹⁶ While this will be discussed in further detail in the chapter four, it may be helpful to point out the relative smoothness with which the mantle of Macedonian kingship passed from Philip II to Alexander III. This transference of power contrasted with the turbulent process of *translatio imperii* that occurred at the end of Alexander's life.

Returning now to Alexander's early kingship, he was not content to rest only with regional displays of power. He picked up the torch of kingship and refocused his efforts towards the reconquest of Asia Minor and the defeat of Achaemenid Persia. His first foray into Persian held Asia Minor began at the Granicus River where he defeated the Persian army and established a hold on Western Asia Minor. Alexander's conquest of Asia Minor continued around the southern coast of Anatolia, where it is well-represented in both the historical and archaeological record. Alexander finally reached the island city of (Phoenician) Tyre. (Arrian, *Anabasis*., 2.17-2.24)¹¹⁷ In what was perhaps one of the most impressive siege campaign of the Ancient world, Alexander captured the city. From here he moved on to Egypt. (Arrian, *Anabasis*, 3.5)¹¹⁸ Here a second process of *translatio imperii* occurred — that is the process of transferring the title of Pharaoh to Alexander.

¹¹⁵ While this term has notes of nationalism that might appear anachronistic to the third century BCE, it is important to point out that the discourse of Macedonian and Greek ethnicity has a long history. There have been significant scholarly debates on both the linguistic and cultural level as the extent to homogeneity between Greek and Macedonian. But, there does seem to be some agreement for cross-cultural context extending back to Alexander I's petition to the Greek city states to participate in the Pan-Hellenic games (possibly in 504 BCE) and gained admittance to participate. Alexander could prove his descent from Argos and was thus allowed to participate in the games. (Herodotus 5.22) See: Donald Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006), 229 – 249.

¹¹⁶ James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 8-10.

¹¹⁷ James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 85-94.

¹¹⁸ James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 107-108.

In his pursuit of the conquest of the Achaemenid Empire, Alexander far exceeded his father's wildest dreams. He established himself as a model world conqueror and redefined the epistemological understanding of the contemporary geographical space. The ancient Mediterranean was a different space before and after Alexander's Eastern campaign. These early victories within Alexander's kingship offer a significant example of successful *translatio imperii*. Such moments of *translatio imperii* show key moments in the Alexander narrative that resonate with the historical context of the fifteenth century. *Translatio imperii* plays a pivotal role in both the Alexander Romance tradition and the fifteenth century Ottoman context. I contend that there is not one, but several models of and contexts for *translatio imperii*, that occur within the romances and serve as practical models for the fifteenth century Ottoman State. (See Chapter 4)

Alexander and Aristotle

While they may differ in detail and accuracy, both the histories and the Romances agree that Aristotle taught Alexander at the court of Pella. (Plutarch, *Life*, 7.2-8.3)¹¹⁹ This relationship between Aristotle and Alexander is significant in considering Alexander as king and for understanding how the Alexander narratives may have resonated with Ottoman audiences. It highlights the education that a young prince should have. It is a 'mirror for princes' in which the philosopher Aristotle provides teaching to Alexander. This relationship carries with it a prescribed model for how one should rule and the qualities one should have as king. This relationship is important. It would have been familiar to and resonated with fifteenth century elite Ottoman audiences; such a relationship would resemble the relationship between the

¹¹⁹ Plutarch, *The Life of Alexander*, ed. and Trans, Bernadotte Perrin, Loeb Classical Library 99 (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1934), 241-243.

budding sultan and his *Lale*. (tutor), During the last decades of the fourteenth century into the sixteenth century, the Sultanic princes received both a courtly education and administrative practice in usually the cities of Amasya, Manissa, Konya, Edirne or Trabzon. This continued until the end of the sixteenth century — after the death of Mehmed III when the princes remained at court in the Topkapi Palace.¹²⁰ There is far less information on the earlier tutelage of sultans in the fifteenth century, but considerably more in the mid-fifteenth century. More attention will be given to Mehmed II's education in chapter 4.

Alexander's relationship with Aristotle in the centuries after his death took on a variety of meanings as the figure of Alexander oscillated between positive and negative perceptions. In several of the Romances, Alexander sends back to Aristotle (and his mother Olympias) to update him on his progress. In the Persian work of Nezami, these teachings and this relationship are separated and placed into the second part of the two part *Iskendername*. In the Alexander Romances, Alexander's meeting with the Brahmins (gymnosophists) in India also served as a Mirror for princes in which Alexander gains further insight into how one should rule. Likewise, Ahmedi's *Iskendername* parallels the Alexander Romance. Ahmedi includes several dialogues with philosophers that provide a mirror for princes and reflect the discussion with the Brahmins in the Greek Alexander Romances.

Alexander as World-Conqueror

Within a span of fourteen years, Alexander redefined the sense of boundaries of the known world to the Greeks and conquered as far as Bactria in what is today Afghanistan and brought the Achaemenid Empire to an abrupt end. Alexander's campaign infused a layer of Macedonian

¹²⁰ Leslie Pierce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, (Oxford: University Press, 1993), 234.

Hellenic culture on the broader Persianate, Central Asian and South Asian world. In scope Alexander established a new standard for world conquest. He challenged the limits of ancient knowledge of the known world - a theme that would resonate with audiences of the fifteenth century. This conquest turned away from the Mediterranean world. It took on a new model for kingship, unattested in the Greek speaking world. His untimely death in Babylon at the age of 33 in 323 BCE. sparked a vigorous rival for the succession to the throne of Macedon and culminated in the establishment of the Seleucid, Antigonid and Ptolemaic dynasties of the Hellenistic period. Much of this geographic territory was drawn into the political, economic and cultural unification of the Romano-Byzantine Empire and thus offered a tantalizing prize for the Ottoman Turks in the fourteenth and fifteenth century as they became involved in the geopolitics of their Byzantine and Eastern Mediterranean neighbors. As we shall see in chapter 5 - the three empires stand for circumstantial parallels to the fifteenth and sixteenth century empires of the Mamluks, Safavids, Moguls, and Serbs (Brankovići).

The Paradox of Rulership and Conquest

While the Alexander narratives advance the themes of Alexander as king and world conqueror, the two themes are paradoxical. As a king, Alexander failed. His empire doesn't outlast his lifetime. The choice of Perdikkas as regent ends with his death in 320 BCE. But, the role of Alexander as king remains an important part of both the histories and romances. As a king, Alexander exhibited the qualities of mercy, adaptability, and ambition. This paradox highlights the importance of rulership and conquest. A theme that as the third and fourth chapters demonstrate, resonates particularly with the periods of Bayezid I and Mehmed II.

The Mediterranean Alexander

How then, can the modern historian shed light onto fifteenth century Ottoman audiences' readings of events that occurred nearly two millennia prior? Given the changes in the political climate between the opening and the mid-fifteenth century, can one even treat the century as a single periodic unit of analysis?

Cities as a Theme in the Alexander Romances

Cities offer another barometer of change for the *longue durée* of this intervening period. The theme of the foundation of cities remains an important theme in the both the romances and the histories of Alexander; he is credited with founding several cities. New cities, such as Antioch arose as new Hellenistic capitals and achieved cultural currency, economic clout and political significance and then faded into backwaters. Other cities, such as the Alexandria of Northern Egypt, began their urban histories at the beginning of this period and continued to thrive. Others such as Byzantium/Constantinople were in a transitional period having reached an apex of cultural and political clout that the Ottoman rule would reinvigorate in the recasting of Constantinople as *Konstantiniyye*. There is an aspect of re-foundation and rededication of the city of Constantinople that saturates the rhetoric of the second half of the fifteenth century that would have resonated well with the theme of city foundation in the Alexander Romances.¹²¹

Alexander in the Eastern Mediterranean

¹²¹ For more on the rededication of Constantinople as an Islamic World Capital, see: Ciğdem Kafesçioğlu, "Chapter 2 Constructing the City: Architecture and its Audiences, Part I, The Urban Program and Mehmed II's Foundation in *Constantonopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision and the Construction of the Ottoman Imperial Capital*, (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2009), 109-29.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, the Alexander Romances stood alongside the historical works of Arrian and Plutarch who both drew on ancient now lost sources such as Ptolemy and Aristobulus mentioned earlier. They also stood along a rich Persian tradition of Alexander that extended back to the tenth century production of the *Shahname* and a rich tradition of Arabic literature that included Alexander (Dhu'l Qarnayn) as a prophetic figure in the Quran and as a prominent figure with the composite histories of figures such as al-Tabari.

These histories told a more sobering narrative of the Macedonian king that emphasized the reception and acceptance of *translatio imperii* (transference of power) from the Achaemenid King Darius III to Alexander the Great and from the Achaemenid Empire to the Macedonian to the Macedonian-Hellenistic Empire. In his conquest of Persia, Alexander adopted Persian court ritual, trappings, and aesthetics that created tension between the Macedonian and Greek contingents of his army.¹²² These appropriations were enhanced with the image of Alexander III as world conqueror and learned student of Aristotle. As such, they created a new model of kingship perpetuated in both its romanticized and historicized images of Alexander. The Alexander Romance tradition played a significant role in the early centuries of the Ottoman Empire through the work of the Ottoman historian Ahmedi. Ahmedi's telling of the *Iskendername* bears several similarities with the twelfth century Persian version of the *Iskendername*, written by Nezami and divided into two parts. The *Sarafname* and the *Iqbalname*. The Ottoman version of the *Iskendername* differs from that of Nezami. It holds many of the episodic themes that make up the other Alexander Romances. Ahmedi's romance, however gives a unique interpretation of the lore and history that are comprised in both the romanticized and

¹²² There are two narrative traditions of Alexander in the Persian context one as the successor of Achaemenid Kingship and the other as the destroyer of Zoroastrianism and the Avesta. The two roles will be explored more fully in the second chapter.

historicized versions of the Macedonian king. Ahmedi traced a romanticized lineage from the death of Alexander through Parthian and Sasanian kings to the Ottoman line ending with Emir Süleyman following the defeat at Ankara in 1405 at the hands of Timur.

Alexander in the Central and Western Mediterranean

In the Western Mediterranean, there was a different model that did not derive from the Eastern Mediterranean cultural stewardship of Greek antiquity. Three histories circulated: the histories of Justin (Trogus), Quintus Curtius, and the Latin translation of the α -recension by Julius Valerius remained the dominant narratives until the ninth century when a version of the δ -recension was discovered in Constantinople and taken back to Italy for translation by Leo the Archpriest. Quintus Curtius Rufus seems to have been a particularly popular history in the Western Mediterranean with new publications coming out every year or so during the fifteenth and sixteenth century. The “rediscovery” of Plutarch at the beginning of the fourteenth century provides a Mediterranean context for the Ahmedi’s *Iskendername*. The translation of Plutarch’s works into Latin indeed coincide with the Ottoman interregnum and reintroduce a textual image of Alexander to the Western Mediterranean. This “rediscovery” of Alexander reinvigorated the production of *Alexandriana* and in effect culturally re-unites the Eastern and Western Mediterranean images of Alexander. This “Mediterranean Alexander” is a shared composite image of Alexander that is produced within the Mediterranean territory comprising the Modern Middle East. It is the beneficiary of the narrative legacy stretching back to the third century BCE encapsulating Alexander the Great as conqueror, model ruler, tyrant, adventurer, geographer, philosopher king, Muslim, Christian, and Jew. Alexander becomes an “Everyman” that can appeal to a wide range of eras and ethnicities and contexts. Alexander becomes a cultural chameleon who can adapt across linguistic boundaries as an archetype for the qualities of a

successful king and world conqueror. Seen in this light, the figure of Alexander can serve roles as cultural model for Shakespeare's Henry V and as political model for Mehmed II. This fluidity was achieved through the rich amalgamation represented in *Alexandriana*. Literature, history, material culture, visual culture and folklore all combine to form a figure larger than his historical reality that could suit the needs of the fifteenth century Mediterranean and Middle Eastern worlds.

Conclusion

Building on the discussion of *Alexandriana* and the image of Alexander in the histories and romances the discussion will now turn to the Persian tradition of the *Iskendername* and its rich tradition of Kingship. It will explore the role of the poet in shaping the paradigm of Persian kingship and close relationship between *shahi* (kingship) and the court poet (*shā'ir*) who created an image of both the person of the king and royal duty and custom appropriate to a Persian King. In cultural historical terms the historical Alexander enjoyed the Persian legacy of *Shahi* (Kingship), which provided an essential link in connecting the distant past with the fifteenth century Ottoman context.

Thus, Alexander the Great stood alongside both legendary and historic Persian kings to shape an imagined Persian history that was then appropriated and adapted by the Ottoman imperial paradigm.

Chapter 2 – Jamshid’s Cup and Alexander’s Mirror (*Jām-e Jam ve ‘Ayina-i Iskandari*): The Persian Romance Tradition

The Alexander Romances encapsulated an active, diverse practice of textual transmission and circulation. They named Alexander the Great as Greek, Macedonian and Persian. Moreover, he took up the functions of mortal and demigod; king and conqueror; explorer; and philosopher; savior and destroyer. Equally important, kingship acts as a lens through which the myths and histories of Alexander share common ground. Greek Alexander Romances gave a Late Antique model of kingship through the appearance of Nactanebo. Although this Egyptian representation of sovereignty might have been common to Antique and Late Antique audiences, writers of the tenth through the fifteenth centuries developed a different standard of sovereignty (*shāhī*), established in Persia. Furthermore, This Egyptian representation of kingship closed the gap between the Late Antique context of Sasanian Persia (sixth century) and the early modern context of Ottoman Anatolia. *Shāhī* (Persian kingship) resonated with patrons in the eastern Mediterranean, Seljuk and Mamluk Empires. This model exceeded the earlier Egyptian model, supplanting it with a Persian one. The Alexander Romances contextualized a change from a Late Antique Egyptian kingship to an early modern Persian one. Thus, the Persian and Ottoman *Iskendernames* acted as a literary bridge uniting the remote past with the concurrent era. Moreover, the Ottoman *Iskendername* expressed kingship within a genealogical and philosophical model. This model joined aspects of the *Shahname* and the Alexander Romance with the result that it linked the Ottoman Dynasty with the Argæad dynasty of antiquity through historical imagination.

The previous chapter discussed the broad tradition of the Alexander Romances and the role the Ptolemaic courts represented in the creation of Alexander's image in the decades following his death. This chapter examines the Persian model of kingship and the *Iskendernames*. It investigates the role that court poets and artists played in developing the idea of *Shāhī* (kingship) between the tenth and fifteenth centuries. The textual images of kings created in this period established a model that the Ottoman state adapted. Figures such as Bahram V, Khosrau I Anushiruwān and Iskender (Alexander the Great) feature as important royal archetypes in both Persian and Ottoman narratives. Thus, these concepts provided a necessary framework for making sense of how fifteenth century audiences engaged with the *Iskendername*.

The Role of the Poet in tenth century Persia

The close relationship between the poet and courts dates to pre-Islamic period when the poet-minstrels played significant roles in royal courts.¹ Equally important, the passage from the Sasanian to Islamic rule in seventh-century Persia created a significant cultural shift in historical imaginations and connections with the remote (Achaemenid) past. It produced a linguistic break with the Middle Persian and Sasanian past. So, it twisted the cultural orientation with the pre-Islamic past.² Fluctuations in continuity and change removed the Islamic and the (Sasanian) pre-Islamic periods sometimes confusing the Achaemenid distant past with legend and myth. At the historiographical and literary core of this volatile period is the so-called "two centuries of silence" in which literary composition had slowed following the Islamic conquest of Sasanian Persia. More recent studies have argued that Persian literary

¹ Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, 3. Mary Boyce, "The Parthian Ghōsān and Iranian Minstrel Tradition," in *Journal of the Royal Atlantic Society of the Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 1/2, (1957): 10-45.

² For a discussion of the ideological, political and social shifts in this transitional period, see: Patricia Crone. *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran: Rural Revolt and Local Zoroastrianism*. (Cambridge: University Press). For the economic and political incorporation of Sasanian Iraq, see Michael Morony, *Iraq After the Muslim Conquest*, (Piscatawa: Gorgias, 2005).

composition was not as bleak as originally thought.³ William Hanaway (1988) contests this two-century period of relative silence in Persian literature that accompanied the Arab conquest of Iran. He claims several "Iranians" produced works in the new official language of government and religion.⁴

Beginning in the tenth and eleventh centuries, literary production in New Persian surged, representing a linguistic shift and ushering in a new phase of literary production, particularly in the Samanid and Ghaznavid courts.⁵ The emerging Abbāsīd State beginning in the eighth century began drawing on Persian models of court protocol and etiquette to replace the outdated tribal ones.⁶ Julie Scott Meisami (1987) has underscored the central role that poetry production played in the Ghaznavid court under Mahmud of Ghazna.⁷ Furthermore, Meisami argues that court patronage was not a hindrance to poetry production but instead a necessary condition under which poetic creativity could flourish in the pre-modern Persian context.⁸ The first Persian writers following the Arab Conquest were very conscious of their Arabic literary tradition had reached full maturity by the ninth century.⁹ The nature of Mahmud's state encompassed territory associated with both the Sasanian Empire and with India, and thus overlapped with the Eastern

³ William L. Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," *Persian Poetry*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), 77.

⁴ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 76-77;

⁵ Hamid Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2012), 88. See also Julie Scott Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, (Princeton: University Press, 1987), 41.

⁶ Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, 5.

⁷ Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, 41. This spread of New Persian in the process is a little-known process. Although there are two possible insights. The first is in the region of Ghūr, which Mahmud invaded in 1020. Prince Mas'ūd had to take an interpreter with him when he entered the territory. The next century saw a notable increase in Power of the Ghūrī chieftains of the Shansabānī family. Yet there is no literary or historical source of any linguistic deviation suggesting Persian replaced any previous language in the area. Like the Ghaznavids, the Gūrīds had their own court poets who produced in Persian. Bosworth noted as a second more tenuous indicator. This indicator can be found in the present-day isoglosses of Afghanistan. Ghazna and Kabul are still bastions of Persian in Eastern Afghanistan but are separated by Pashto in the Logar and Wardak Valleys. This geographic-linguistic variation may result from the prominence of the cities of Kabul and Ghazna in the Pre-Modern period. C. E. Bosworth, "The Development of Persian Culture under the Ghaznavids," *Iran*, Vol. 6, (1968): 35.

⁸ Meisami, *Medieval Court Poetry*, 38.

⁹ See J.T.P. De Bruijn, *A General Introduction to Persian Literature*, General Ed. Ehsan Yarshater, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009).

portions of Alexander's conquest territory.¹⁰ As such, the early Ghaznavid dynasty developed a complex sense of Ghaza that was directed toward the Indian (non-Muslim) territory.¹¹

Reconnection to the Sasanian past reappeared in the tenth century with the Samanid Dynasty in Eastern Iran and with the court sponsored poets of the tenth and eleventh century. For example, the royal courts in Khorasan and Transoxiana played a central role in Persian literature of this new period.¹² The literary ambience of Khorasan used both Arabic and Persian.¹³ While the metrical patterns more often arise from Middle Persian, the sub-genres of the New Persian poetry originate from Arabic. The terminology of prosody for New Persian poetry includes *mesra'* (hemistich), *bayt* (distych), *qafiyya* (rhyme). Sasanian names for lyrical forms are still used —*Tarama*, *Chama*, and *Sorud*—which suggests they never fell out of use.¹⁴ The great poets of the period, Rudaki, Daqiqi, 'Unsuri, Faruchi, and Manuchehri, were professional craftsman who lived solely through the patronage of the sultan. A second group, composed of scribes, wrote poetry besides their regular court occupations. Yet, they shared an interest in literature and the skillful use of language with the professional bards. To this end, Hanaway (1988) argues for an inclination to blur the lines between the two groups. The earliest extant anthologies of Persian poetry are arranged according to the rank of the poet. The monarch holds pride of place and professional poets are placed lower than chief ministers, religious scholars, and learned jurists. Monarchs were never

¹⁰ At the time of Mahmud of Ghazna's death in 1030, Ghaznavid territorial possessions extended from Hamadan to the area near Delhi. Bosworth, "The Development of Persian Culture," 50.

¹¹ Bosworth (1962) notes that Ghaznavid imperial policy had to balance eastern territorial conquest with the western seat of Abbasid and caliphal power – Baghdad. The Sultanic image promoted by the imperial court established him as the protector of all Muslims and thus created a tension with the Caliph in Baghdad, thus underscoring the importance of Caliphal support in the tenth and eleventh centuries despite political fragmentation of the Abbasid Empire. Bosworth, "The Imperial Policy of the Ghaznavids," 76.

¹² See also, Bruijn, eds, *A General Introduction to Persian Literature*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009).

¹³ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 80.

¹⁴ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 77. For a more thorough discussion of the terminology see Julie Scott Meisami, *Structure and Meaning: In Medieval Persian and Arabic Poetry: Oriental Pearls*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 55-110.

court poets, nor were court poets ever monarchs. And yet, division between scribe and court poet is less pronounced, and Hanaway encourages scholars to search for the origin of the latter in the ranks of the former.¹⁵

In fact, later works support this distinction. Addressing the political and cultural status quo for the Seljuk period, the rhetoric of Nezami 'Aruzi treats the poet's office as cut off from that of the scribe, the astrologer, or the physician.¹⁶ Separate chapters in the *Qabusname* detail court positions of scribe and poet.¹⁷ Neither work indicated the offices are synonymous or that court poets were often selected from the chancery.¹⁸ Poets in the Samanid and Ghaznavid courts served an integral court functionary role. This is perhaps best captured in history writings of Abu al-Fazl Bayhaqi (995-1077).¹⁹ Born in Khorasan and educated in Nīshapur his prose work the *Ta'rikh-e Baykhaqi* (*Tarikh-e Mas'udi*) is the most reliable source of information on the Ghaznavid period.²⁰

To this effect, the simulation of Arabic poetry extended to content and form. As a result, knowledge of Arabic poetry became essential for the professional poet.²¹ Trained in the art of *Sha'iri* (poetry composition) and *'elm-e 'aruz* (prosody), he developed a profound knowledge of earlier Arabic and Middle Persian poetic forms and metrical structures.²² The poetry composition

¹⁵ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 79.

¹⁶ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 79.

¹⁷ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 79.

¹⁸ Hanaway, "Epic Poetry," 79.

¹⁹ Dabashi, "The World of Persian Literary Humanism," 129.

²⁰ Dabashi, "The World of Persian Literary Humanism," 129. See Mahmoud Omidasalar. Mahmoud Omidasalar, *Poetics and Politics of Iran's National Epic, the Shahaneh*, (Pelgrave Macmillan: New York; 2011). See also Abu 'l-Fadl Bayhaqi, "Tarikh-i Masudi, translated into English with a Historical, Geographical, and Linguistic Commentary Vol. 1- 3. ed. and trans. Clifford E. Bosworth, (New York: Columbia, 2006); Clifford Edmund Bosworth, "Notes on some Turkish Names in Abu'l Fadl Bayhaqi's Tārīkh-i Masudi," *Oriens*, Vol. 36, (2001): 299-213.

²¹ Jan Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1969), 143.

²² There has been some debate over the continuity of poetry production in the two centuries following the Islamic conquest in Iran. Scholars have long argued that the continuity of Middle Persian forms was limited. More recently it has been argued that continuation of the use of some Middle Persian names--*Tarama*, *Chama*, and *Sorud*--suggests a continuity of Persian poetry production in the eighth and ninth centuries. See William L. Hanaway,

linked both vocal and instrumental forms of musical composition. The *Qabusname* devoted a section to the poetic craft.²³ It outlined different sets of verbal skills for the aspiring poet to grasp.²⁴ In addition, the poet must have a keen understanding of metaphor, which he should use in excess; comprehend language; and evade “tasteless, unfamiliar Arabisms.” He must be acquainted with the rules of prosody and the seventeen metrical forms of poetry.²⁵ Panegyric poems he creates should be “strong, bold, and of lofty spirit.”²⁶ The poet should “know each man’s worth so that when you are composing a laudatory ode it should be suited to the person to whom it is addressed.”²⁷ So, the poet as a prominent court functionary shaped the images of their patrons and the narratives of the past. Much like the Ptolemaic courts, which shaped the image of Alexander in the decades after his death, these courts created the historical imagination of the pre-Islamic past. The Achaemenid distant antique past was at risk in this narrative process and vanished to the more contemporary and attainable recent past of the Sasanian period.

Thus, the poet’s purpose was to praise the ruler and set up a model of kingship. Of equal importance, he should realize these through two processes. The first process addressed an idealized example, established through his praise of the beloved's characteristics. The second process directly praised the ruler by highlighting the patron-monarch's deeds. Thus, the poetic

“Court Poetry at the Beginning of the Classical Period,” in *Persian Literature*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1988), 77.

²³ Qay Qa’us ibn Iskender, “Chapter Thirty-five: How to be a Poet,” in *The Qabusname*, trans. Reuben Levy, (London, Cresset Press, 1951), 182-185.

²⁴ These skills include paronomasia (punning), parallelism, antithesis, balance, simile, metaphor, duplication, refrain, pairing, coupling, equipoise, quotation, allusion, concatenation, rhymed prose, equalization, acrostic, “unshackling”, the ornate poem, the ingenious two-rhymed poems, the *rijāz* and the *mutaqarib*. Ruben Levy, *A Mirror for Princes*, 182.

²⁵ These forms are listed in the text: *Hazaj, Ramal, Hazaj-i makfuf, Hazaj-i akhrab, Rijaz-i matwe, Ramal-i makhbun, Munsarih, Khafif, Mudari’ Mucktadib, Sari’ Mujtathth, mutaqarib Aarib-i akhrab, Tawil*. See Ruben Levy, *A Mirror for Princes*, 183.

²⁶ Levy, *A Mirror for Princes*, 184.

²⁷ Levy, *A Mirror for Princes*, 184.

standard is built up in two layers. The first, subtly begins with a scene of feasting, wine-drinking and merriment. Often, not only does the beloved partake in the celebration, but in terms of the sensory qualities of the scene: wine-or blood-colored face or cheeks; hair the color of musk and black as the night; eyelashes sharp as pointed spears, arrows or the weapons of legendary Persian kings. Through such details about the beloved, the poet communicated to the ruler the royal qualities of *razm u bazm* (fighting and feasting) and the love and devotion the ruler-patron might win from the poet, as had the beloved, for such merits. On another level, the poet reminded the ruler of the romanticized characteristics a Persian king must have and of the requisite beauties of the physical setting of the court and its feasts.

The second source of praise targeted the ruler himself. It was semantically represented by the shift from the third person singular (*u*, or he/she/it) to the second person (*tu*, or you). In the *mahd*, or encomium section of the *qaside*, the poet praised the deeds of the monarch. He listed the acts, physical traits, and personality characteristics which mark him as worthy of bearing the *farr*, or becoming a king. In the *du'a-ye tabid*, the poet blessed the ruler by wishing that, so long as X universal constant endures, the king should own or carry out Y. In this final part of the *qaside*, the poet linked—and overcame—the mortality of the prince with the permanent cyclical qualities of the universe, reminding both ruler and courtiers that while the king himself may be mortal, the institution of kingship, *Shāhī*, is archetypical and fused to the long line dating back to the legendary Persian kings.

Ruzm u bazm as Unifying Themes

There are four things for kings to do:
To feast, hunt, play polo, and make war.

-Divan of Farrokhī Sīstānī²⁸

Alexander held games to celebrate his victories; he offered magnificent sacrifices to the gods and entertained his friends lavishly. One day when the Companions were feasting, and intoxication was growing as the drinking went on, a violent madness took hold of these drunken men. One of the women present (she was an Athenian called Thaïs) declared that it would be Alexander's greatest achievement in Asia to join in their procession and set fire to the royal palace, allowing women's hands to destroy in an instant what had been the pride of the Persians.

-Diodorus Siculus, *Bibloteka Historika* 17:20-22

The glorification of wine-drinking and drinking scenes were a central theme throughout Classical Persian poetry.²⁹ Whereas in earlier Umayyad and Abbasid contexts such activity was attributed to outside corrupting foreign influence, in the early Persian poetic context it appears as an integral part of royal court activity.³⁰ Themes of wine drinking are strongly associated with the Achaemenid and Sasanian contexts.³¹ Drinking scenes from the *Shahname* reflect late Sasanian court practice that continued into the Samanid, Ghaznavid and Seljuk court contexts.³² Drinking generally accompanied main meals. Festivals and holidays such as *Nehruz*, *Mihirigan*, *Sadih*, and the feast of the sacrifice (‘*aid-e Kurban*’; Turkish: *Kurban Bayramı*) were opportunities for wine-drinking and celebration that were accompanied with the liberal serving

²⁸ Anne Marie Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 113. (For the comparison of Khosrau I and Omar see Farrokhī Sīstānī *qaside* 137).

²⁹ Ehsan Yarshater, “The Theme of Wine-drinking and the Concept of the Beloved in early Persian Poetry,” *Studia Islamica*, 13, (1960): 44.

³⁰ Yarshater, *The Theme of Wine-drinking*, 45.

³¹ Yarshater, *The Theme of Wine-drinking*, 45. Herodotus (I.133) writes of the Achaemenid courts: “It is their custom to deliberate about the gravest matters when they are drunk; and what they approve in their counsels is proposed to them the next day... when they are now sober, and if being sober they still approve it, they act thereon, but if not, they cast it aside. And when they have taken counsel about the matter when sober, they decide upon it when they are drunk.” Loeb Library edition, Vol. 1. 173 – 175.

³² Yarshater, *The Theme of Wine-Drinking*, 46.

of wine. Central to the serving of wine was the *sāqī* (wine bearer), a young slave trained in horsemanship, the handling of arms, marksmanship, and the serving of wine.³³ Works such as the *Siyasetname* provide guidelines for wine-drinking, and holding festivals and banquets and establish the expectations of a young prince or king.³⁴ Dominic Bradshaw (2009) has also explored the imagery behind wine in particular showing how the image of the “inebriated Turk” has been expressed in the work of ‘Ubayd al-Zabānī.³⁵

The theme of *razm u bazm*, resonating with other themes in the Alexander Romances, gave one set of criteria for royal protocol at court.³⁶ Instances of *bazm* (feasting) appeared in both Alexander Romances and histories. They showed Alexander and his Macedonian supporters celebrating their victories with wine, food and merriment. The drunkenness of the feast functioned as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it symbolized a royal duty to be shared with royal companions. On the other, it was a catalyst for altercations between Alexander and his men. To illustrate, the murder of Cleitus the Black described in Plutarch (Chapter 49), and the burning of Persepolis in Arrian (*Anabasis*, 3.18.11-17); Plutarch (*Life* 38); Quintus Curtius (*History*, 5.7.3-8) and Diodorus Siculus (*Biblio.* 17.20-22) were shining examples *bazm* gone astray. They warned against the dangers of *bazm* to excess. They warned the king against the

³³ Yarshater, *The Theme of Wine-drinking*, 49. According to the *Siyasetname* a properly educated slave was taught to serve wine in the sixth year of his training

³⁴ In his chapter entitled “The Arrangement of Drinking Banquets and their Etiquette,” in the *Siyasetname*, Nizam al-Mulk objected to the recent practice of guests bringing their own wine vessels and *sāqīs* to royal banquets, citing it as a breach of tradition. The earlier tradition had been to take wine and sweets from the king’s banquet table and not the other way around. The emerging custom implies that guests own wine and food are of better quality than that royal wine and food served at the royal banquet table. Yarshater, *The Theme of Wine Drinking*, 47.

³⁵ Dominic Parviz Brookshaw, “To Be Feared and Desired: Turks in the Collected Works of ‘Ubayd al-Zabānī,” *Iranian Studies* Vol 42 No. 5, (2009): 739-740. See also Dominic Parviz Brookshaw, “Odes of a Poet Princess: The Ghazals of Jahān Khātūn,” *Iran* Vol. 43, (2005):179; Dominic Parviz Brookshaw, Revivification of an Ossified Genre” Simon Behlbahani and the Persian Ghazal,” *Iranian Studies*, Vol 41 no. 1. (2008): 75-90.

³⁶ Meisami (1987) discusses of the physical prowess that facilitates *razm* (fighting) in proper kingly duties in the *Mesnavi Vīs u Rāmīn*. Meisami, *Medieval Persian Court Poetry*, 186-188.

dangers of drinking and celebration to excess that would undermine royal authority in a moment of rash judgment.

Thus, these examples acted as narrative evidence against Alexander's worth as king. At the same time, they offered warnings against unfavorable royal behavior. In sources such as Quintus Curtius Rufus the results of such feasts offered opportunities to criticize the deeds of Alexander. Likewise, *bazm* played a significant role in the narratives of the early and mid-fifteenth century. Bayezid I was renowned for his love of wine and feasting, as was Mehmed II. Feasting and wine drinking represented a shared duty of kingship that transcended the centuries separating the distant past of Alexander and the fifteenth century. It established common ground between these periods for how a king should behave. *Razm u bazm* in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries reasserts this facet of kingship linking it with a Persian past and appropriated into an Ottoman context. Such themes set the stage for identifying and unraveling the circumstantial parallels within the narratives. As a result, *bazm* provided a theme within the narrative that unites audiences of the third century BCE and the fifteenth century CE alike.

Razm u bazm gave one aspect of the Royal duty that resonates with Ottoman and Hellenistic audiences alike. In this pre-modern context, the poet stood out in creating this image in promoting these models of kingship. And yet, how did this model stand up during the early years of the Islamic conquest as Persian kinship transitioned to the Umayyad Caliphate? The qualities composing the Sasanian model of kingship were absent from the Arab/Islamic statesmanship. Of equal importance are the ceremonial aspects and accouterments of the Sasanian kings that had no analog in either the customs of the Umayyad and Abbasid courts or those in pre-Islamic Arabia. For the Abbasids and Umayyads, dynastic and political legitimacy derived from their social and

genealogical connection to the Prophet. These claims to dynastic authenticity were not available to the later Samanids and Ghazanavids, as the appropriation of military slave armies from Turkish, Khorasanian, Indian, and Transoxanian populations increasingly determined their legitimacy.

To be sure, the evidence of Iranian kingship traditions varies. Mas‘udi writes that he remembers seeing in Istakhr of 950 CE a history book of the various Sasanian kings with their portraits and discussions of their governments, buildings, and residences. The work was a purported copy of an earlier one from 731 CE, housed in the imperial treasury with illustrations in gold, silver and copper on fine parchment or paper. The opulent images of each king displayed his ceremonial robes, crown, and the cut of his beard. Other such collections were believed to exist, some of which were said to be illustrated versions of the rock carvings at Naqsh-e Rostam and Taq-e Bostan. These preserved images of the Sasanian kings offered a visual record of both the institution of kingship and the actual men who held it. Such luxury books, presumably produced for the court elite, immortalized both the formal trappings of kingship and the physicality of royal men.³⁷

Models for Kingship

Four Kings four royal jewels have owned;
And you the fifth – your life be long!
Much Wisdom Alexander bore
From Aristotles’s precious store.
Nurshīrvān’s feast with heaven vied, since Burzurjmīhr his earl did stride.
Parviz, a Barbad had, whose airs
A hundred – nay, a thousand were.
That Great King Malikshāh by name, had his Nizam, of pious fame.
But you, whose crown far greater ve, have such a poet as Nizami.³⁸

-Heft Paykar 4: 1-16

³⁷ Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, 221.

³⁸ See also Meisami, *Heft Paykar: A Medieval Persian Romance*, (Oxford: University Press, 1995).

The story of Iskandar became a legend and became old.

-Farrukhi, Qaside 157.³⁹

Certainly, any discussion of Persian kingship and textual *Alexandriana* must consider the *Shahname*. This heroic tale, later adopted as the national epic of Iran, traces the pseudo-history, history, myth and legends of Iranian kingship. Ferdowsi, a poet of the Samanid court assassinated around 980 CE, finished this work of Daqiqi in the tenth century. Many stories vie about his choice for the task. Schimmel (1992) points to a scene illustrating the meeting of four leading poets in the court of Mahmud of Ghazna, during which Ferdowsi won the right to complete the work by finding the most fitting and difficult rhyme for a poem on the ancient kings.⁴⁰ The *Shahname* presented a collection of ninth and tenth-century stories about ancient Iran's kings and a literary model for kingship. It treated kings from both the mythical past and those from the Achaemenids, Arsacids, and Sasanian historical past. It addresses the mythical, magical Pishdadiyan attributes and possessions, such as Jamshid's magical world-seeing cup, the *Jam-i Jam*. This goblet allowed Jamshid to look anywhere in the world. Similarly, the cup of Jamshid resembles the *Ayina-i Iskandari*, (Alexander's mirror), which showed the viewer what was happening in any location. The kings, their powers and possessions, represent a fluid amalgam of fact and fiction, and the work trades the narrative of one king for that of another. For example, from Farrokhī Sīstānī, King Jamshid was often said to have been fused with King Solomon—both of their thrones were carried by the wind, and Jamshid possessed a ring giving him mastery over the Djinn and demons.⁴¹ The final chapter will return to the importance of

³⁹ Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, 114-5. Farrukhi-e Sistani, "Qaside 157," *Divan*, Ed. Muhammad Dabir Siyaqi, Tehran: 1335/1956.

⁴⁰ Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, 109.

⁴¹ Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, 109-110.

Jamshid's cup and Alexander's mirror as metaphors for how a king should rule over his conquered territory.

Drawing from Antiquity, the justice of Solomon pertains to another significant figure in the *Shahname*, Khosrau I Anushiruwān, famed for his administration of justice and a model for every king. As seen in both the *Qabusname* and the *Siyasatname*, he personified the just ruler and his name outshone those of other rulers in panegyric and didactic writings. The Ghaznavid poet Farrokhī compared Khosrau I with Omar ibn al-Khattab, second of the *rashidūn* caliphs. His vizier Burzurjmīhr was often paralleled with Aslam - Solomon's vizier.⁴²

The twelfth century poet Nezami realized the romantic epic by the fable — his favored narrative technique—his psychological sensitivity, and the humane views he proclaimed in the spirit of social progress.⁴³ Three epics centered on representative figures of kingship, the last of whom, Alexander the Great, emerged from Greek Macedonian history and was revered in the Quran and Islamic literature. The Sasanian ruler Bahram V — Bahram Gor (420-438) — nicknamed the Wild Onager, was transformed into a hero two centuries after the *Shahname* in Nezami Ganjavi's *Heft Paykar*. This epic poem forms part of the *khamse*, the collection of five poems written by Nezami and later mimicked by the poet Amir Khusrow. In this text, Bahram Gor visited the seven pavilions of the seven princesses, each of whom is a day of the week, with its astrological aspects, colors, musical modes, and scents. Nezami inspired myriad imitators in Iran and Persian-influenced areas such as Turkey, Central Asia, and India. The Sasanian king Khosrau II Parvīz is the topic of *Khosrau u Shirin*, summarized by Ferdowsi and elaborated on by Nezami, who turned it into a romance of longing, treason, union and death. Khosrau's court

⁴² Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, 113.

⁴³ Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, 212.

musician, Barbad, appears in both the poem and in miniatures. Iskender (Alexander) looms large as *Dhu'l-Qarnayn*. Alexander, besides possessing a world-seeing mirror, constructed the wall that prevented Gog and Magog (Yajuj and Majuj) from breaking loose and terrorizing the world.⁴⁴ Schimmel suggested the Alexander Romance must have reached the Middle East at an early point in history after Farrokhī Sīstānī had written it in the eleventh century.⁴⁵ As a result, the *Shahname* gave the first narrative of Alexander in Persian recasting kingship in a Persian model which contrasts with the late Antique Greek model. The *khamse* of Nezami gave other examples of exemplary Persian kingship he places as steps in the ultimate embodiment of Persian kingship in the figure of Alexander the Great. Before continuing to a deeper investigation of Nezami and the other *khamse* poets two models for kingship that existed outside the poetry genre deserve consideration.

Mirrors for Kings

“I, a Macedonian who has inherited the ability to conquer the Persian in war, want to do my part at the present critical time.”⁴⁶

-Polyaenus of Bythina, (2nd century CE)

Prose — like poetry — addressed the theme of kingship. Two works the *Qabusname* and the *Siyasetname*, served as benchmarks for Seljuk, Ottoman, and Safavid rulers of the Late-Medieval and Early Modern period. Both writings acted as road maps for royal behavior, qualities, and the manner of conducting state concerns. As a result, they acted as handbooks which the ruler could consult and instruct a younger ruler—or an aspiring one—through a variety of complex political

⁴⁴ Schimmel, *A Two-colored Brocade*, 114.

⁴⁵ Schimmel, *A Two-Colored Brocade*, 114-5.

⁴⁶ Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, (Cambridge: Belnap Press, 2009), 242.

tasks. The Seljuk and Ottoman courts disseminated these manuals. And yet, such works were not exclusive to Islamic courts. Works such as the tenth-century *De Administrando Imperii* and *De Ceremoniis* expressed an analogue in the Byzantine context.⁴⁷ Furthermore, these works stood alongside a rich Byzantine tradition producing military text books and field manuals such as the seventh-century *Strategikon* by Maurikios (582-602) or the ninth-century *Taktika* by Leo VI “The Wise” (886-912).⁴⁸ Of equal importance, these texts provided a prose example of instructional manuals and taught a new king or young prince what qualities he should have and how he should rule. Although not of the ‘mirror for princes’ genre, Byzantine military literature provided practical advice on how to employ military means in the defense and expansion of the empire and as such represented an important aspect in the education of princes.⁴⁹ As educational

⁴⁷ Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *The Book of Ceremonies*, trans. Ann Moffat and Maxine Tall, (Canberra: Australian Association of Byzantine Studies, 2012); Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperii*, ed. Gyula Moravcsik, (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967). *De Ceremoniis (The Book of Ceremonies)* provided an account of all relevant ceremonial protocol for the Byzantine court. Constantine the VII Porphyrogenitus (913-959) commissioned *De Ceremoniis* and the *De Administrando Imperii* (DAI) (*Concerning the Administration of the Empire*) as a manual to aid in the rule of the Empire. *De Administrando Imperii* was specifically dedicated to his own son, the future Romanos II (959-963) to aid him in ruling the empire. In this respect, both works mirror the goals of educating a young prince and stipulating the qualities of a worthy king. As a source, *De Ceremoniis* sheds light on understanding the use and appropriation of urban space throughout the city of Constantinople and as a result might provide an intriguing comparison to the Ottoman appropriation and use of space following the capture of the city in 1453. For the Ottoman use and appropriation of urban space, see: Cigdem Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinople/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).; Gülrü Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1991).

⁴⁸ Both texts are attributed to Byzantine Emperors. The *Strategikon* attributed to the Emperor Maurikios (Maurice 582-602) remained relatively unknown until it was first printed in 1664 as an addendum to Arrian’s *Techne Taktike*. (Luttwak, 266) The ninth century *Taktika* of Leo VI draws heavily on the *Strategikon* but redirects its focuses to counter Muslim (Sarakenoi) incursions in Eastern Anatolia. (Luttwak, 266) The work is written as a series of letters to an unnamed *strategos*, (General or admiral). The work represents his second attempt at a military manual. His first was the *Problemata*, which excerpted texts from the *Strategikon*. (Luttwak, 305) The *Taktika* was written in stages and edited by Leo VI’s son, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. It contained excerpts and paraphrases of the *Strategos* of Onesander, the *Taktike Theoria* of Aelianus “Tacticus” and the *Strategikon*. (Luttwak, 305).

⁴⁹ The Byzantine practice of producing military field manuals and military text books is relevant to the broader topic of “mirror for princes” literature intended to guide a king and educate young princes. This practice provided instruction on how the ruler/king could best implement the military for rule and conquest. Byzantine military manuals have a rich tradition that extends into antiquity. Luttwak (2009) identifies two key periods in the production of this genre, the sixth century and the ninth century. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, 304-305. Works, such as Publius Flavius Regetius Renatus’ (Vergetius’) fourth-century CE *Epitoma Rei Militari* (*Summary of Military Matters*), the only extant military textbook, were produced in several manuscripts and ultimately printed in 1487, both in Latin and translation. (Luttwak, 239; 267). Earlier works such as Palyaenus’ of Bythina’s second-century CE *Strategika*, dedicated to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, focused

texts for young princes, these texts sought to serve a purpose in both *translatio imperii* and the act of rule itself. While they do not make up an example of textual *Alexandriana*, *per se*, they play an important role in Persian *shāhī*. As a result, they should be considered in any discussion of the fifteenth century Ottoman state.

Qabusname

The first work of political advice prose is the *Qabusname*, *Pandname* or the *Nisihatname*, or Book of Counsel, and dates from the year 475/1082-3.⁵⁰ It was written by the Ziyarid, prince Qayqavus bin Iskender bin Qabus b. Voshmgir, Amir Onsari al-Macali for his son Gilan Shah. Qayqavus was the grandson of the prince of Tabaristan, whose people had become vassals of the Ghaznavids and were conquered by the Seljuks under Sultan Tughril. Qayqavus later traveled to the Ghaznavid court and married a daughter of Mahmud of Ghazna. The Ziyarids claimed royal descent tracing back to the Sasanian kings.⁵¹

The author presented the work as the distillation of crucial knowledge for the soon-to-be ruler Gilan Shah. It had practical advice on age and youth, dining etiquette, wine-drinking,

more on “stratagems” over “strategies”. Polyaeus’ text drew on classical examples from conflicts between the Greek city-states. Of note, Polyaeus claimed Macedonian heritage. (Luttwak, 242). Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and Nikophoros Ouranos, who wrote a ninth-century *Taktika* of his own, received Polyaeus’ work positively. (Luttwak, 242). For more on Byzantine Military literature see Edward Lubbok, Part 3: The Byzantine Art of War, in *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, Cambridge, Belnap, 2009), 235-293. Luttwak’s monograph drew heavily on the scholarship of Alphonse Dain. In the 1930s and 1940s, Dain conducted a survey of the earlier writings that influenced Byzantium that was posthumously edited by F. J. A. De Foucault (2000). See, Alphonse Dain, “*Les Strategistes Byzantin*”, ed J.A. de Foucault, *Travaux et mémoires du Centre de recherche d’histoire et civiles byzantine*, no 2, (Paris : De Boccar, 2000), 317-392 ; Dain, *Naumachica*, (Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1943) ; Dain, ed. *Sylloge Tacticorum, formerly Inedita Leonis Tactica, Annotations in Latin*, (Paris : Les Belles Lettres, 1938); Dain, *La tradition du texte d’Héron de Byzance*, (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1933). Furthermore, he focuses on the Early and Middle Byzantine periods (fourth to thirteenth century). For a discussion of the Late Byzantine use of tactical manuals see Mark Bartusis, *The Late Byzantine Army, Arms and Society, 1204 – 1453*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). There is no indication that Ottomans continued the tradition of producing military manuals in the Byzantine tradition.

⁵⁰ Qayqavus ibn Iskendar, *The Qabusname*, trans. Reuben Levy, (London: Cresset Press, 1951).

⁵¹ J.T.P. De Bruijn, “Kaykavus b. Iskendar,” in *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed 12/18/2013, available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kaykavus-onsor-maali>.

hospitality, hunting, warfare, and playing backgammon, chess, and polo. They represent the regal activities of *razm u bazm*. In Chapter 8, the work discussed the recommendations given by Khosrau I Anurshiruwān to his son, memorializing the Ziyarid family connection to the Sasanian dynasty. At the same time, it provided a model of just kingship for his own son. This pattern of fatherly advice highlights the intended parallel between Khosrau I and his son Hormizd IV, and Qayqavus and his son Gilan Shah. Later sections discuss practical matters of household finance: gaining wealth; safeguarding possessions; purchasing slaves, property and horses; and marriage and child-rearing.

The *Qabusname* offered personal and practical tips on everything that a young man and future prince like Gilan Shah needed for success in the medieval Persian world. Yet, its utility attained universal applicability, and reception of the *Qabusname* was widespread. Murad II had it translated into Ottoman Turkish in the mid-fifteenth century.⁵²

Siyasetname

The *Siyasetname* by the eminent Seljuq Vizier Nizam al-Mulk dates from 484/1091-1092, about ten years after the *Qabusname*.⁵³ Nizam al-Mulk served for thirty years as Vizier for Seljuk sultans Alp Aslan and Malik Shah.⁵⁴ Rypka (1966) noted that the *Siyasetname's* style is less polished than that of the *Qabusname*. And yet, it possessed a similar intrinsic importance and shows much about the structure and opinion of contemporary society.⁵⁵ The work comprised long and short chapters of advice, quotations, traditions, sayings, long narratives and anecdotes, and contemporary stories. Like the *Qabusname*, the *Siyasetname* focused on how to rule. For

⁵² Qayqavus ibn Iskendar, *Qabusname*, trans. Ruben Levy, London: Cresset Press, 1951, xxi.

⁵³ Nizam al-Mulk, *Siyasetname*, trans. Mehmet Taya Ayar, (Istanbul, Türk İş Bankası), 2009.

⁵⁴ Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, 104-05.

⁵⁵ Jan Rypka, *History of Persian Literature*, 221.

example, its first two chapters addressed the theory and the theology of kingship, including holding court, redressing wrongs, collecting taxes, running a household, meeting expectations at court, and managing a range of military matters. Nonetheless, it dwelt less on personal matters of family, marriage and children. Unlike the *Qabusname*, the *Siyasatname* relied on the technique of narrative to illustrate preferred approaches to various aspects of rulership. These stories were drawn from the Rashidūn, the Abbasids, and the Ghaznavid and Sasanian past, adopting as role models caliphs and kings like Umar, Harun al-Rashid, Mahmud of Ghazna, Mas'ud, Khosrau Anushiruwān, Bahram V Gor and Khosrau II Parvīz. As a result, these two examples of prose *mirrors for princes* show how mythologized genealogical connections were used to legitimize existing rulers. They recalled rulers from the distant past for whom the historical record was fragmented or non-existent. These connections to the distant past are packaged with practical advice on the qualities one should have and how one should act to be a successful ruler.

The Death of Kings

Returning once again to the theme of Alexander as King explored in Chapter 1, the relationship between Persian kingship and the *Iskendername* deserves elaboration. The Persian *Iskendernames* highlight the role of kingship and acts of *translatio imperii*, encapsulated in the death of Darius III. As noted in Chapter 1, the death of Darius is an event universal to both the histories and the romances.⁵⁶ It highlights an important event in the career of Alexander. On one level, it marks the point where he finally defeats the Persian king and completes the revenge

⁵⁶ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 28-9. Stoneman notes that: Darius' death is one of the most recognizable scenes in the *Shahname*, pointing to the illumination from Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Elliot 325 f. 379r. See color plate 1, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*. Stoneman writes: "The image of Alexander succouring, and hearing the last words of Darius might seem to belong purely and simply to a Persian version: Darius' words make Alexander the legitimate successor of the dying king. Stoneman *Alexander the Great*, 28. This crucial scene will be revisited again in Chapter four as a shining example of *trans-imperial translatio imperii*, which stands out as a circumstantial parallel for the fifteenth-century passage from the Byzantine to the Ottoman Empire.

campaign directed at Achaemenid Persia by his father. It stands out as an important moment that ends the subjection of Asia Minor and the Aegean to the armies of Achaemenid Persia that began in the fifth century BCE. On another level, the campaign signifies an important moment for Alexander as king. It is the moment where he becomes King of Persia. As a result, he must create a new identity that encapsulates both the Macedonian and the Persian. As noted earlier, this resulted in dissension among the ranks of his troops and caused him difficulties as the eastern campaigns continued. Darius' death carried with it a nuance of the passing of Persian *Shāhī* from Darius to Alexander and made Alexander the rightful inheritor of the Achaemenid legacy of kingship. His act of *translatio imperii* carries important resonance with the events of the fifteenth century. Alexander is a beneficiary in this process of *translatio imperii*. He must care for the members of the royal family and seek justice for Darius' murder — a task which he assumes.

The work of Arrian illustrates this point. Arrian (3.21.6-9) recounted how two of Darius' Satraps Bassus and Nabazanes murdered him following the Battle of Gaugamela (321 BCE).⁵⁷ After the murder, Bassus fled to Bactria. While a victory for Alexander, the death of Darius raised several problems. Alexander devoted another two years to hunting Bassus, who crowned himself Artaxerxes IV.⁵⁸ In Arrian's account, Alexander found the body of Darius and was said to have wept for him. Alexander ordered Darius's body to be transported to Persepolis and be buried with the full honors and ceremony befitting a Persian *Shahanshah*.⁵⁹

In contrast, the Romance tradition told a different story. In at least one Persian tradition, Alexander found Darius while he was on his deathbed. Darius gave Alexander the rites of

⁵⁷ Arrian, *Anabasis*, 3.21.1-5; See James Romm, ed. *The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*, (New York: First Anchor, 2005), 136-7.

⁵⁸ Arrian, *Anabasis*, 3.25.3; Romm, ed. *The Landmark Arrian*, 141.

⁵⁹ Arrian, *Anabasis*, 3.21.10 -3.22.1; Romm, ed., *The Landmark Arrian*, 137.

Persian kingship. In at least one strain of the narrative, Darius gave his daughter Roxalanna (Roxanne) to Alexander — incorporating Alexander into the royal Persian line. This fantastic association between the Persian royal house and Roxalanna emphasized the theme of *translatio imperii* (transfer of power). While Alexander married Roxalanna, she was, in reality, a Sogdian Princess and not the daughter of Darius III. At least one manuscript depicts Darius dying in Alexander's lap. In the *Shahname*, Darius's last words are "See to my children and my loved ones whose faces are veiled. Marry my pure-bred daughter and keep her in security in your palace. Her mother named her Rowshanak and with her provided the world with joy and adornment. It may be by her you will have a noble son who will restore the name of Efsandiyar to glory." Thus, the linking of Darius and Alexander through the fictional marriage offers a symbolic act of *translatio imperii* in which Alexander and his descendants might share in the Persian kingship. Although it contradicts historical fact, its preservation in a popular narrative crystallizes a perceived continuity between Greek and Persian traditions from seventh to eleventh century CE when Ferdowsi wrote his epic. It remained important when considering Ahmedi's *Iskendername*; Ahmedi connects the Ottoman dynasty to Alexander through the Sasanian line of kingship.

The *Iskendername* touched upon a crucial point in *translatio imperii* - the death of a King. This transitional period threatens to become one of crisis for both the dynastic succession and the state. In the process of his campaigns into Persia, Alexander appropriated both the ceremony and regalia of the Persian royalty. The Macedonian and Greek contingents among his invading army often took issue with such policies. As noted earlier, Alexander executed Callisthenes for his

failure to do the *proskinesis*.⁶⁰ Alexander became more committed to expressing his sovereignty through a Persian vocabulary of kingship as he became a workable contender for imperial rule. The romances and the histories echo the importance of the process in their own distinct ways. Arrian's history gives a sense of obligation to avenge Darius' death. He pursued Bassus and condemned him as pretender to the throne. His pursuit was an act of retribution for Bassus' treason against Darius. Alexander demanded that Darius be buried with the honor due to a Persian King of Kings. He extended a high level of respect to his defeated rival.

This extension of respect resonates as a circumstantial parallelism with Plutarch's *Lives* in his pairing of Julius Caesar with Alexander. Alexander's response of retribution for Bassus' murder of Darius (*Anabasis* 4.7.1) recalls Plutarch's narration of Julius Caesar's response to Pompey's death.⁶¹ Following his betrayal by his Egyptian clients Gnaeus Pompey was to receive full honors and respect due to a consul of Rome. Without doubt, Plutarch's moralizing biographies provided a common link in that Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great are set up in the *Lives*. Plutarch's work played an important role in educating Sultan Mehmed II; Kritovoulos of Imbros noted that Mehmed II admired the lives of Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Pompey Magnus. The themes of conquest, political struggle, and civil war provide unifying themes for these chronologically distant periods and yet offer critical lessons in kingship for reigning and aspiring monarchs and sultans in the fifteenth-century Ottoman context.

The death of kings is a sensitive issue for the Ottoman state throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries — periods ripe with civil war or the threat of civil war. In the Ottoman state, such periods were viewed as a potential *causus belli* for any of the remaining heirs to the throne.

⁶⁰ Arrian, *Anabasis*, 4.14.3; Romm, ed. *The Landmark Arrian*, 172; Q. Curtius Rufus 8.8.21; Q. Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander*, John Yardley, ed. (New York: Penguin, 184), 195.

⁶¹ Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, 80.5-6; Plutarch, *Life of Caesar*, 48.2-4.

The death of an Ottoman sultan might be concealed to preserve the office of the sultanate and the security of the state until the rightful heir could arrive at the capital and ascend the throne. Such an event occurred following the death of Murad I and the Battle of Kosovo Polje (1389). Murad's assassination was concealed from the Ottoman army until Bayezid I could succeed him as sultan. Alexander's death presents a circumstantial parallel; uncertainty in dynastic succession that might entertain early fifteenth century audiences who were faced with state crisis following the Timurid victory at Ankara. Ahmedi draws a continuous line of succession from Alexander through the Persian lines of kingship to legitimate the reign of Emir Süleyman. This attempt at legitimatization is moot. Süleyman's bid for the throne failed. Mehmed I defeated his brothers and became sultan. This period marked a period of political crisis for the Ottoman dynasty. It resonated with the issues of legitimacy raised by Darius's death (*trans-imperial translatio imperii*) and the issues raised by Alexander's death (*intra-dynastic translatio imperii*. See chapter Four). As a result, Alexander served as one model for addressing this period of transition. Yet, it was not the only model available to the Ottomans in the fifteenth century. Other models, such as Timur's death and succession and Mahmud of Ghazna presented competing models for transitions of power. The Persian literary tradition provided a rich model for the Ottoman maintenance of a long line of dynastic kingship. This model was best expressed in the *Shahname* and in the Persian *Iskendernames*.

Alexander in Arabic Tradition

It may be helpful to discuss the treatment of Alexander the Great in the Quran and the *sīr al-ʿasrar* (the Secret of Secrets).⁶² Alexander appears in Sura 18 of the Quran as the figure Dh'ul

⁶² Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 154-162.

Qarnayn who travels to the Far East and walls in the forces of Gog (Juj) and Magog (Majuj). The Quran gives *Dh'ul Qarnayn* the status of a prophet. The identification of *Dh'ul Qarnayn* with Alexander the Great has been debated.⁶³ Quranic stories surrounding Alexander incorporate his deeds into the narratives of the past. Alexander's empire did not include the Arabian Peninsula. But, he apparently planned to use Arabia as a testing ground for his reorganized Macedonian legions.⁶⁴ This dream never came to fruition. Later stories of Alexander in Persian and Arabic attest to his conquest of the Arabian Peninsula and his conversion to Islam. The Quranic view of Alexander is largely positive. The story of *Dhu'l Qarnayn* appears in Suras 18:83 - 18:98. It recounts his travels to the East and to the ends of the earth. He established a power on earth (18:84). He then went toward the rising sun and found a people who had no protection from the sun. (18:90) They begged him to protect them. He continued east until he came to two mountains where he found a people who barely understood a word. (18:94) These people begged him to build a wall that could keep out the armies of Gog and Magog. He asked the people to help him with strength and labor (18:95). He set to building the wall out of iron — making it both impossible to scale and dig under. (19:97) The theme of walling out the armies of Gog and Magog is significant in the Persian and Arabic recensions of the Alexander romance. They represent an overwhelming concern that armies from the east might threaten and conquer the territories of Persia and the Arabian Peninsula. This concern most likely came from the Mongols' invasion of the thirteenth century. Yet, it could represent the growing number of Turkish mercenary troops who were coming in from Central Asia to serve as troops in the caliphal and royal courts of Baghdad and Persia. Reference to Alexander appears later in the *Sir*

⁶³ Emeri J. Van Donzel and Andrea Barbara Schmidt, *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Faustina Doufiker-Aerts, *Alexander Arabicus Magnus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition through the Seventh Centuries from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Suri*, (Amsterdam: Peeters, 2010).

⁶⁴ Q. Curtius Rufus, 4.3.1 Yardley ed., *The History of Alexander*, 56; 276 (see note 23).

al-asrir, (*Secret Secretorum*, *The Secret of Secrets*). The text took the form of a long letter written from Aristotle to Alexander a “mirror for princes”.⁶⁵ However, in actuality, Yahya ibn Batriq wrote this work in Arabic around the year 800 although he claimed to have translated it from a Syriac translation of the Greek original.⁶⁶ It was rumored to contain letters from Aristotle to Alexander that provided counsel on how to rule and govern wisely.⁶⁷ Parts of the work were translated into Latin in the twelfth century, However the first complete Latin translation did not appear until 1232.⁶⁸ Finally, the work was translated twice into Persian and Ottoman Turkish, and Hebrew, Latin and Spanish.⁶⁹

Al-Tabari and Bal‘ami

Much as with the earlier Greek narratives of antiquity, narratives of Alexander are manifest in both literary and historical narrative. Islamic historiography played a role in building textual *Alexandriana*. The *Tarikh al-rasul wa al-muluk* (The History of Prophets and Kings) of Abu Jafar ibn Jarir al-Tabari (839-923) and the author of the Persian rendering of al-Tabari’s work - *Tarikh-e Bal‘ami* by Abu Ali Muhammad Bal‘ami, contributed to the historical-textual *Alexandriana*.⁷⁰ Often seen as a simple translation of Al-Tabari’s text into Persian, A.C. S Peacock (2007) has argued that Bal‘ami’s rendering of al-Tabari into Persian is not a translation but performs added functions that resonate with a Persian audience. The pre-Islamic section

⁶⁵ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 87.

⁶⁶ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 87.

⁶⁷ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 87.

⁶⁸ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 87.

⁶⁹ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 238-9. See also, Mahmoud Manzalaoui, “The Pseudo-Aristotelian “Kitāb Sīr al-Asrār”: Facts and Problems,” *Oriens* 23/24 (1974): 147-257.

⁷⁰ See also Patricia Crone and Masoud Jafari Jazi, The Muqanna’ Narrative in the Tārīkhnāma, Part 1, Introduction, Edition and Translation,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol 73 No. 2, (2010): 157-177; Patricia Crone and Masoud Jafari Jazi, “The Muqanna’ Narrative in the Tārīkhnāma, Part II: Commentary and Analysis,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 73 no. 3, (2010): 381-413.

focused on the tales of prophets but it acknowledged kings; Alexander the Great stood out in both the Iranian and Islamic traditions.⁷¹ Bal‘ami focused on the Quranic tales of Dhu’l Qarnayn. The building of Herat, Marv and Samarkand was attributed to Alexander. After conquering China and Tibet, he was reported to have entered the land of darkness in search of the Spring of Life. Bal‘ami notes that al-Tabari only mentioned what was recorded in the Quran.⁷² He noted the *hadith* as describing how the Meccans were unsure whether to believe Mohammed sent Abu Jahl to the Jews of Khaybar to learn questions from the Torah the Prophet could be asked to test him. Among these suggestions was a question about Alexander. The angel Gabriel interceded at the last moment and taught Mohamed the correct answer to the questions as Quranic verses 18.83 - 98, cited by Bal‘ami and discussed at length. Moreover, Bal‘ami discussed two traditions: in one Alexander was both King and Prophet, in another he was just a king. He didn’t prefer either position. Bal‘ami closed by quoting two *hadiths*: one by Ali b. Abu Talib and one by ibn Abbas. Gog and Magog's release was an ultimate sign of the resurrection. They would cause a famine by eating all the crops and drinking dry the Oxus and the Tigris Rivers. The second quotation of *hadith* is from Ali. It stated that every day 100,000 of the tribe of Gog and Magog will come to the wall and chip away at it until only an egg-shell thick crust remains. Then they walk away saying, “Tomorrow we shall penetrate it.”⁷³ Above all, Bal‘ami presented Alexander as a religious figure, a prophet-like figure who could save the Muslim world at the end of time.⁷⁴ The Zoroastrian view portrayed Alexander as the destroyer and as such one of the great enemies of Iran (Eranshahr). Hamza al-Isfahani (d. after 350/961) says he had access to

⁷¹ A.C. S. Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography and Political Legitimacy*, (New York and London, Routledge, 2007), 114; Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, 59.

⁷² Peacock, *Medieval Islamic*, 116.

⁷³ Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography*, 116.

⁷⁴ Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography*, 116.

many Iranian sources such as the *Khwaday Namag* - the Pahlavi Book of Kings, which recorded only Alexander's destruction of cities and his murder of the royal family.⁷⁵

The Persian *Iskendername* Tradition

The next section provides a more in-depth overview of the textual production of Persian Alexander narratives. The Persian tradition stressed the *Shahname* as an important bridge between the Middle Persian texts and the Ottoman period. The extensive works of the twelfth and thirteenth century of Nezami and Amir Khosrow incorporated *Iskendernames* into their *khamases* along with several other *mesnavis* (epic poems) that featured the themes of Persian kingship and literary depictions of past Persian kings. These narratives were created within and as a part of the Persian court milieu. As a result, they contributed to a past Persian historical imagination that sealed the cultural historical breach created by the Islamic conquests and reconnected with the distant past. Past Persian kings such as, Khosrau and Bahram V offered a connection to the Sasanian past, just as Alexander represented a connection to the distant past of Achaemenid antiquity.

The Persian Tradition before the *Shahname*

The Parthian *ghōsān* or minstrel certainly played a role in the dissemination of stories in the courts of Persian nobles for the intervening centuries between the death of Alexander and the writing of the *Shahname*. Mary Boyce (1957) has written on the role of the *ghōsān* in the

⁷⁵ Peacock, *Medieval Islamic Historiography*, 116-17. Hamza al-Isfahanī, *Tarīkh Sini Mulūk al-ard*, ed. I. Gottwald, (Beirut: Dar Maktabāt al-Hayah, 1961), 38-9; William Hanaway, *Persian Popular Romances before the Safavid Period*, (New York: Columbia University, 1970), 94. Peacock points out that Bal'ami ignores both Iranian perspectives on Alexander

Parthian, Persian, Armenian, and Georgian contexts as a crucial installation in royal court settings.⁷⁶ These narratives most certainly would have made up the oral part which Ferdowsi then joined with the written sources such as al-Tabari and al-Dinawari.⁷⁷

Dick Davis and Olga Davis have produced recent scholarship on the *Shahname*. In addition to his translation of the *Shahname* into English, Davis has addressed the issue of the sources that Ferdowsi had at his disposal. He raises the question of the so-called “older-preface” edition arguing that Ferdowsi most likely used versified oral prose as opposed to written sources. In his characterization of the style of the *Shahname* Davis has noted identifying characteristics. The poem uses constricted and conservative vocabulary and it makes free use of epic formulae.⁷⁸ Ferdowsi uses formulaic phrases and lines and often provides lists.⁷⁹ Although it is presented as a continuous narrative it is broken up into episodes. The inner life of characters often changes from one episode to another. Formulaic phrases often introduce the poems imagery.⁸⁰ Finally, the poem employs “simple, forceful and memorable rhetoric and structural organization.”⁸¹ Whereas Davis has focused on sources and style Davidson (2000) has contextualized the *Shahname* within both national and comparative literature.⁸² Furthermore, she has produced several studies on the imagery of the *Shahname*.⁸³

⁷⁶ Mary Boyce, “The Parthian ‘Ghōsān’ and Iranian Minstrel Tradition,” in *Journal of the Royal Atlantic Society of the Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 1/2, (Apr. 1957), 10-45.

⁷⁷ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 31.

⁷⁸ Davis, *The Problem of Ferdowsi’s Sources*, 53.

⁷⁹ Davis, *The Problem of Ferdowsi’s Sources*, 54.

⁸⁰ Davis, *The Problem of Ferdowsi’s Sources*, 54.

⁸¹ Davis, *The Problem of Ferdowsi’s Sources*, 54.

⁸² Olga Davis. *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetics* (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2000); Davidson, Olga. “The Text of Ferdowsi’s *Shahname* and the Burden of the Past.” *Journal of the America Oriental Society* 116 no. 1 (1996): 63-68; “The Crown-Bestower and the Iranian Book of Kings,” in *Acta Iranica, Papers in Honor of Mary Boyce*, 10 (1985): 61-68. See also Mahmoud Omidshalar, *Poetics and Politics of Iran’s National Epic, The Shahname*, (New York: Pelgrave-Macmillan, 2012).

⁸³ Davidson, Olga. “Singer of Tales in the Book of Kings in the Poetic World of Ferdowsi,” in *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetics*. (Costa Mesa: Mazda, 2000); Davidson, Olga. *Poet and Hero in the Persian Book of Kings*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994).

Stoneman (2008) suggests that considerable steps were taken to combine tales of Alexander during the reign of Khosrau I Anurshirawān (531-579). Greek tales were made known to Persians as part of Khosrau's broader interest in Greek philosophy and learning. This was perpetuated by an infusion of Greek scholars and philosophers, including the philosopher Damascius, who were given refuge by Khosrau I after the closure of the philosophical school in Athens during the reign of Justinian in 529.⁸⁴ During Khosrau I Anushiruwān's reign, Paul the Persian wrote a compendium of Aristotle's philosophy in Syriac for Anushiruwān and a translation of the Indian classic *Kalila wa Dimna*.⁸⁵ Stoneman (2008) also suggests that the Syriac Alexander rendering of the Alexander Romance may have also been prepared for Khosrau I. This underscores an important point; Theodor Nöldeke (1890) suggested that the Syriac rendering of the Alexander Romance had been made from a Middle Persian manuscript but this was later disproved by Claudia Ciancagliani, who argued that the names within the work were distorted not from transmission through Pahlavi but from self-dictation by a scribe as he worked from Greek.⁸⁶ As a result, the Syriac rendering of the Alexander Romance preceded any Pahlavi version.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 31. Stoneman (2008) references the Greek medical school at Gundeshapur (Jundishapur) founded in the fifth century by Nestorian refugees. This is a myth; for more see: Michael Dols, "The Origins of the Islamic Hospital: Myth and Reality," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 61, 1987, 367-391. The existence of the hospital was raised in Lawrence Conrad, *The Institution of the Hospital in Medieval Islam; Ideals and Reality*, typescript, 1986. Dols, "Islamic Hospital: Myth and Reality," 369. See also, Vivian Nutton, "From Galen to Alexander Aspects of Medicine and Medical Practice in Late Antiquity," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 38, *Symposium on Byzantine Medicine* (1983), pp. 12-14. Nutton (1983) contends the story of the Emperor Aurelian's daughter and the Roman settlement at Jundishapur is unfounded nor is there any evidence that academicians left Edessa to go to Jundi-shapur. Nutton, Vivian. "From Galen to Alexander Aspects of Medicine and Medical Practice in Late Antiquity"

⁸⁵ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 31.

⁸⁶ Claudia Ciancagliani, "Gli Antecedenti del Romanzo Siriaco di Alessandro," in ed. Rosa Bianca Finazzi and Alfredo Valvo, *La Diffusione dell'eredità classica Nell'età tardoantica e medievale: Il "Romanzo di Alessandro e altri scritti"*, 55-93, (Alessandria: Orso, 1998); Claudia Ciancagliani, "The Syriac Version of the Alexander Romance," *Museon: Revue des Études Orientales*, 114, (2001) 122; Theodor Nöldeke, *Beitrag zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*, (Wien: F. Tempsky, 1890).

⁸⁷ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 32.

Persian Pre-Islamic Historical Memory

Alexander represented the distant, pre-Islamic past. The Islamic conquests represented a disruption in the public memory of the period following the Islamic conquests. Historical imaginations following the Islamic conquests vacillated between Islamic roots centered in the *Rāshidūn* caliphs and Persian roots in the Sasanian and Achaemenid past. The Samanid dynasty in the tenth century marked a new phase in Persian cultural memory.⁸⁸ It reconnected with the pre-Islamic Sasanian past. It established narrative connections to the Sasanian past fortified in the works of Ferdowsi and Nezami. The attributed destruction of the *Avesta* by Alexander represented the historical reality that the pre-Sasanian past was less tangible for the later generation of Persian historians. Alexander represented an outside force that neutralized the historical record of the Achaemenid past. *Translatio imperii* within the Sasanian dynastic paradigm was short circuited by the Islamic conquests. The Abbasid translation project could be argued as a step in *translatio studii*. It possessed the goal of opening new opportunities for engagement with the texts of the distant past.

The *Shahname*

Ferdowsi's *Shahname* written in the tenth century provides one source for the Persian rendering of the Alexander Romances. Ferdowsi's sources for the *Shahname* include now lost middle Persian sources such as the *Khudayname* (Book of Lords) prepared for the last Sasanian King Yazdigird III. This work was translated into Arabic in the eighth century by a converted

⁸⁸Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the end of the Twelfth Century*, (Edinburgh: University Press, 1999), 281.

Magian Priest Ibn al-Muqaffa alone with a good quantity of Pahlavi literature. Ferdowsi's *Shahname* includes the narrative of the Alexander Romances.⁸⁹ It shares narrative aspects with the Arabic histories of al-Tabari and the Greek Alexander Romances. In both al-Tabari's *Tarikh* and the *Shahname*, the descriptions of Alexander's battles are generalized. In similar fashion, both Ferdowsi and the author of the Greek *Iskendername* devote a paragraph to describing Darius's attire and royal regalia.⁹⁰ Both versions include an event where Alexander attends the court of Darius in disguise.⁹¹ Alexander gets caught stealing cups from Darius' table, mistakenly thinking they were gifts.⁹² After he was caught, Alexander made his escape across the frozen river Stranga, which broke when the Persian army tried to pursue him. In at least one version, he escaped under the cover of darkness.⁹³ Ferdowsi's account following the death of Darius differed.

Stoneman (2008) suggested this deviation originates from Firdausi's use of the Syriac rendering of the manuscript which adds several episodes not available in the Greek. These included Alexander's visit to the Emperor of China and a battle with a dragon in the land of Narampai (Ethiopia).⁹⁴ Besides al-Tabari and the Syriac rendering of the *Iskendername*, Stoneman suggested Ferdowsi incorporated an episode relating Alexander's pilgrimage to Mecca from the ninth century author Al-Dinawari (d. 891). Al-Dinawari is the only author who claims Alexander

⁸⁹ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 32.

⁹⁰ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 29.

⁹¹ In a similar scene preserved by Curtius Rufus (3.12.15-17), he relates how Sisygambis, the mother of Darius mistakes Hephaestion for Alexander. Arrian II.12.3-8. "*Alexander... entered the tent accompanied only by Hephaestion... Darius' mother, in doubt, owing to the similarity of their dress, which of the two was the King, prostrated herself before Hephaestion, because he was taller than his companion. Hephaestion stepped back, and one of the Queen's attendants rectified her mistake by pointing to Alexander; the Queen withdrew in profound embarrassment, but Alexander merely remarked that her error was of no account, for Hephaestion, too, was an Alexander – a 'protector of men'.*" See Yardley, ed., *The History of Alexander*, 46; Romm, ed., *The Landmark Arrian*, 77.

⁹² Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 29

⁹³ Ferdowsi, *Shahname: The Persian Book of Kings*, trans. Dick Davis, (New York: Penguin, 1997), 460.

⁹⁴ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 30.

was buried in Jerusalem.⁹⁵ Ferdowsi described an event after Alexander's death where several philosophers gathered around Alexander's funeral bier to make moralizing comments on his fate.⁹⁶ For example, Persian elements replaced Egyptian strains of the narrative. While Olympias is omitted, she suffered from bad breath. Dara cured her with the spicy herb known as Sekender. He lost interest and returned to Pars where he took a new wife and had a second son - Dara. Alexander was the half-brother of Darius (Dara), born a year later. In Macedonia, Alexander grew up. Phillip accepted him as his son. Arestalis (Aristotle) became his tutor.

The *Shahname* recounted three military engagements in which Alexander and Darius met on the battlefield in person. The Greek tradition only focused on Gaugamela. The account of Gaugamela in the *Shahname* may have been taken from Al-Tabari. Following their first face-to-face meeting, Alexander and Darius meet on the battlefield three times. In the first engagement, Darius' massive army comprised a vanguard of war elephants and heavy cavalry. The battle lasted for seven days and the air turned black with dust. The Persians fled the battlefield pursued by Alexander's armies.⁹⁷

In the second engagement, Darius sent messengers across the Persian empire to summon more troops. The two armies met at a river and fought for three days. Darius fled and Iskender pursued him. His heralds proclaimed their defeat to the Persian army, and granted them quarter to return to their homes. Dara fled to Jahrom where he had access to the imperial treasury. He continued to Estakhr where he consoled the defeated troops and deployed his messengers to gather a third army.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 31.

⁹⁶ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 30.

⁹⁷ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, ed. Dick Davis, (New York: Penguin, 1997), 461.

⁹⁸ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 461-2.

In the third encounter, Dara led his army out from Estakhr where he met Alexander's army that had "neither center nor limit." Alexander vanquished the Persian army and Dara fled to Kerman. By the time he reached Kerman, two-thirds of his army had disappeared. The nobles conceded defeat and claimed that their mothers, sisters and daughters were in Sekander's hands. They pleaded with Dara to sue for peace with Sekander.⁹⁹ Dara sent a letter to Sekander's camp claiming fate and the heavens had determined the turn of events and offered a treaty of peace to Sekander. Dara promised Sekander the treasuries of Goshtasp and Esfandiyar, including their royal torques and bejeweled crowns.¹⁰⁰ He opened the treasuries to Alexander's armies. He promised terms of alliance if Sekander might return his family members. He addressed Sekander as a world conqueror. Sekander promised to protect Dara's family in Isfahan and grant sovereignty to Dara over his land, only if he might present himself to Sekander in Pars.¹⁰¹

The Persian Tradition after Ferdowsi

Exhibiting tantalizing differences between the works, the twelfth century prose work of Abu Taher Tarsus reprises Ferdowsi's *Shahname*. For example, Olympias, Alexander's mother, abandons Alexander on a mountain not far from Aristotle's dwelling. An old woman has her goat suckle the child and has Aristotle teach him the art of dream interpretation and wisdom until he is ten years old. Alexander married Darius's daughter — in this version her name is Parandukht — only after she brings an army against him several times and loses. Stoneman (2008) suggests that much is invention modeling the birth story of Alexander after the stories of Cyrus the Great (590

⁹⁹ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 464.

¹⁰⁰ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 465.

¹⁰¹ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 469.

530 BCE).¹⁰² In this version, Alexander has three guides for the water of life - Luqman, Elijah, and al-Khidr - and he ascends Mt. Qaf - recalling the horse of Mohammad.¹⁰³

Ferdowsi's *Shahname* catalyzed the spread of stories of Alexander to central Asia. The Mongol *Shahname* of the 1330s — now scattered throughout the libraries of the world — represented the epitome of this interest in the *Shahname*. This Mongol interest in the *Shahname* claimed Ghengis Khan was a descendent of Olympias.¹⁰⁴ Nestorians brought the stories of Alexander eastward as a form of Christian legend, which was then translated into Mongolian in the fourteenth century. The perpetuation of the Alexander myths carried the narrative to China. Epitaphs from the early fourteenth century have been found at Zaytun (Quanzhou) which give the date according to the birth of era of Alexander the Ilkhan, the son of Phillopos (Phillip II) the Khan from the city of Macedonia.

The *Khamases*

Ferdowsi gives one of the earliest appearances of the Alexander cycle in the New Persian context. It discussed kingship and placed Alexander as an essential link joining the Greek and Persian worlds. It aligned Alexander with the extensive tradition of both mythical and historic Persian kings. In doing so, the Persian tradition appropriated Alexander as conqueror, king and adventurer. It fused the Greek romantic conception of Alexander as world conqueror with the Arabic conception of Alexander the beneficiary of philosophical knowledge through Aristotle. Furthermore, the Persian *Iskendername* is a nexus for the Persian romantic tradition of the

¹⁰² Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 32;

¹⁰³ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 158-9.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 33; see also R. Hillenbrand, "The Iskandar Cycle in the Great Mongol Shahname," R. in M. Bridges and J. Bürgel, eds, *The Problematics of Power: Eastern and Western representation of Alexander the Great*, (Bern: P. Lang, 1996), 203-30.

mesnavi (epic). As Ferdowsi sets his Alexander narratives among a history of kings, Nezami and Amir Khosrow set theirs among the romantic legends of conquest represented in the poetry of the Persian epics. In a similar fashion to the *Shahname*, the *khamses* offer a literary procession of worthy Persian. In Nezami and Amir Khosrow's *khamses*, the *Iskendername* provides the concluding chapter to the literary compilation. It provides a grand finale to understanding, exploring, conquering, and ruling the known world. Much like the French *chansons de gestes*, the *mesnavis* provided both entertainment and an example for court functionaries and rulers alike. These stories could have resonated with the Ottoman courts of the fifteenth century as they did in the Ghaznavid and Samanid courts of the tenth and eleventh century. The Sasanian courts of the Late Antique world might have received heroes such as Khosrau and Bahram Gur. As a result, the kingship created an idealized cultural continuity between the Late Antique and the Early Modern.

Nezami Ganjavi

Abu Yusuf Nezami Ganjavi was both a poet and mystic. Nezami's achievement in the *Khamse* brought the Persian romance tradition to a similar height as Ferdowsi's *Shahname* brought epic poetry.¹⁰⁵ He dedicated his first version of his *Iskendername* to the Atabeg of Mosul. Later, He dedicated his revised *Iskendername* to Atabeg Nusrat al-din. Nezami's *Iskendername* was the fifth and final work of his *khamse* (quintet). The other works were *Khosrau and Shirin*, *Layla ve Majnun*, the *Heft Paykar* and *Makhzan al-asrar*. Nezami divided his *Iskendername* into two parts: the *Sharafname*, which provides an account of Alexander and

¹⁰⁵ Dabashi, *The World of Persian Literary Humanism*, 126.

his adventures; and the *Iqbalname* or the *khiradname*, which features dialogues on statecraft between Alexander and the philosophers assembled at his court.

In Nezami's version of the Alexander romance, Alexander was the son of Philip of Macedon, instructed by Nicomachus, — Aristotle's father. He executed a campaign into Egypt against the Zanjis and founded the city of Alexandria. Alexander sent the riches of conquered Egypt to Darius but received no thanks. He concluded after seeing two partridges fighting that inevitably, he and Darius might meet in battle.¹⁰⁶ Besides, the diplomatic exchanges between Darius and Alexander followed those of the other Alexander romances. For example, Stoneman notes divergence from the Greek and Syriac renderings of the Alexander manuscripts, Alexander destroys the Zoroastrian religion and travels to Mecca through Armenia where he encountered Nushaba — the queen of Barda -- who replaced Candace/Qaidafa in other versions of the narrative. Alexander visited several hermits, sat on the throne of Kay Khosrau, and marched against the Indian king Far, Porus. Porus sent him his daughter, a ruby, a philosopher, and a physician. From there Alexander went to China. Stoneman suggested this narrative of Alexander in China may have Byzantine origins. The first Byzantine author to place Alexander in China (Taugast - after the ruling Mongol dynasty in the 560s.) was Theophylact Simocatta. (C. 580). The "barbarians" say, the Macedonian Alexander founded Taugast when he enslaved the Bactrians and Sogdians and burned twelve myriads of barbarians.¹⁰⁷ Afterwards, in this city the ruler's wives have carriages made of gold, each of which is drawn by one bullock decorated with

¹⁰⁶ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 33-34.

¹⁰⁷ Theophylact Simocatta, vii, 9.8-9. Michael and Mary Whitby, *The History of Theophylact Simocatta: An English Translation with introduction and notes*, (Oxford: University Press, 1986), 192.

gold and precious stones. Finally, there is a report that Alexander founded another city a few miles away, which the barbarians name Chubdan.¹⁰⁸

H. Wilberforce Clarke (1881) translated the *Iqbalname* of Nezami's *Iskendername* into English but not *Sarafname*.¹⁰⁹ J.C. Bürgel translated the *Sarafname* into English. It recounted conversations between Alexander and various Philosophers of the ancient and late antique world including Aristotle, Thales, Apollonius, Socrates, Porphyry, Hermes and Plato. It had episodes which became themes for painters, an interview with a Shepherd, a discussion with Aristotle on Magic Stones, and a visit from Plato.¹¹⁰

The Production of Nezami in the Ottoman Context

The Suleymaniye Manuscript Library retained a sizable collection of around fifty-six of Nezami's works — there were several copies of the *Iskendername*, his *khamse* and his *divan*. Sometimes Nezami's two-part *Iskendername* appears to have been produced both in its complete form as either *Iskendername* or *Ayine-i Iskender*; the two parts of the *Iskendername* were produced as individual works: and are recorded as the *Iqbalname* and the *Sarafname*.¹¹¹ In the Ottoman archives of the Suleymaniye Library, there are eighteen Alexander romance narratives penned by Nezami. Several of these documents belong to the Aya Sofya collection suggesting that they were part of the converted imperial mosque, formerly Hagia Sophia and thus, may have been produced or collected by request/order of Imperial Palace at Topkapi.

¹⁰⁸ This information was part of a letter sent to the Emperor Maurice. Stoneman (2008) suggests that the contraction of geography is due to the To'pa Mongols who conquered China and western Turkistan, too. Charbdan may be Changan the capital of China. Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 35.

¹⁰⁹ H. Wilberforce Clarke, *Sekandername e bara*, (London: W.H. Allen and Co, 1881).

¹¹⁰ Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 37-8.

¹¹¹ These are represented by two documents: accession numbers Aya Sofya 03857-006 and 03860-006.

Amir Khosrow Dehlavi¹¹²

It should not surprise that the Alexander romances took form in India as Persian narrative. Amir Khosrow, known as the parrot of India (1253 - 1325), was born in Patiali India. He studied poetry under Rehab al-din Mahnmer Bada'uni. He entered the service of Sultan Balban's family and accompanied two of his sons to Bengal. In 1284, Amir Khosrow was captured, following an attack by the Mongols resulting in the death of Bogra Khan. He returned to Delhi in 1289. He was the court favorite of Sultan Jalal al-Din Khalji. (1290-1296) and his assassin Ala al-Din Khalji and wrote most of his works under the later. Amir Khosrow reproduced Nezami's *khamse* between 1298 and 1301. His version included the *Matla' al-anwār*, *Majnun u Layle*, *Shirin u Khosroe*, *Ayina-ye Sekendari*, and the *Hasht Behisht*. The work was often illustrated in the later periods. Amir Khosrow produced several *divans* and contributed to the historical epic.¹¹³ Perhaps his most significant work was his imitation of the *khamse of Nezami*. Amir Khusrow contributed a new style of poetry: the historical epic. In 1289, he described the meeting of Bogra Khan with his son in Oudh (Qerān as-sadayn). In 1291, he described the four victories of Jelāl al-Dīn Khalji in the Meftah al-Futuh. In the *Noh Sipih*r (1318), he represented the nine spheres in the nine different meters. The work has vivid descriptions of Indian culture, customs, languages and festivals, providing a source for India in the fourteenth century. In 1320, he produced the Toglakname to celebrate Toglak al-din's achievements. The *Khaza'en al-Fotuh* (Tarik-e ala'i) counts among his prose works; it described Ala' al-din Khalji's conquests. He produced a

¹¹² The spelling in catalogues of Süleymaniye Library consistently spells his name Emir Husrev Dehlavi. When referring to productions of this author's works kept in the Ottoman archives. This dissertation will preserve the Ottoman spelling. Similarly, it will use Amir Khusrow as a standardized Persian spelling to distinguish the poet from the two Sasanian kings, Khosrau I and Khosrau II.

¹¹³ "Amir Kōsrow Dehlavi", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/amir-kosrow-poet>, (accessed 3/30/2015)

work of epigraphy: the *Ejaz-e Khosravi*. The first four parts of this work were collected in 1292 and it was completed in 1319.

Amir Khusrow shows broad representation in the manuscript archives of the Süleymaniye Library. The catalog at Suleymaniye has around 104 manuscripts associated with Amir Khosrow. The collection of Amir Khusrow's works include his *Iskendername*, the *Ayine-ye Iskendar*, poetry *divans*, and his *khamse*. The most represented work is the *Ayine-ye Iskender* of which seven copies (not including complete *khamses*) are now held at the Suleymaniye library.¹¹⁴ Several documents are part of the Aya Sofya collection and two are part of the Halet Effendi collection and the final is preserved on microfilm. The seventeen copies of his *divan* suggest an interest in his short poetry works. There are three full *khamses* of Amir Khosroe. There is an added manuscript catalogued as *Hikaye-i Khamse-i Dehlavi*.¹¹⁵ The remaining work of Amir Khosrow appeared to be a sole production of *mesnavis* from the *khamse*. Additionally, there are seven copies of the *Hesht Behisht* - written as a response to Nezami's *Heft Paykar*. There are eight copies of the *Matla' al-anwar* - the first work of his *Khamse*.¹¹⁶ There are four versions of *Leyla u Majnun*. There are only seven versions of *Shirin u Khosrau*. The *Nuh Sipihr* is represented in two versions of a manuscript. Finally, copies of the *Mutahu'l futuh* and a handful of other works are available. [See Appendix B]

Jāmī 's *Iskendername*

¹¹⁴ The Accession numbers for the *Ayine-ye Iskendar* texts are Aya Sofya 4212-008; 03912-005; 03859-004; 03776-002; 00101-004; and 03604-005 (microfilm); For a full list see Appendix B - - Summary of Ottoman Textual Alexandriana Currently Housed in the Süleymaniye Library.

¹¹⁵ This work is catalogued as Fatih 05325-005.

¹¹⁶ This work is catalogued as Halet Effendi 00377-003.

A second significant stage in the tradition of the Alexander Romances for Ottoman identity is the fifteenth century work by Jāmi who was born in Karjerd but took his pen name from the nearby village of Jam where he grew up. Before coming to Khorasan, the family lived in the Dašt district of Isfahan. Jāmi moved to Herat in his adolescence. Later, he pursued education in theology, Arabic grammar and literature. He established himself as a scholar in Samarkand, the center of learning in the first half of the fifteenth century. He continued his studies there expanding his knowledge in astronomy and mathematics. Jāmi returned to Herat and followed a Sufi path under Sa'd ad-Din. He became intertwined with the Naqshbandi order, linked to the Timurid dynasty. During this period of his life Jāmi was introduced to the Timurid court. One of his earliest works is the *Helya-ye halal* (1452) dedicated to Abu'l Qasem Bābor. Jāmi began his first major poetic work — the book of the *Silsilāt al-dhahab* and wrote the first of his Arabic commentaries on the works of Ibn al-‘Arabi in 1459.¹¹⁷

In 1470, Sultan Huseyn of Bayqara seized power in Herat. Jāmi was a respected teacher and spiritual leader in the city and developed close ties with the Sultan's chief vizier, ‘Alishir Navai. He placed Alishir in charge of his personal affairs when he set off on the Hajj in 1472. His *hajj* entourage was equipped by the Sultan and provided with letters of introduction. Jāmi traveled through Nishapur, Semnān and Qazvin. When he reached the city of Hamadan, Jāmi received a warm welcome from the ruler Shah Manuchehr and dedicated a famous mystical treatise to him — the *Laywāyehá*. After completing the *hajj* in 1473, Jāmi began his return trip to Khorasan. While in Aleppo Jāmi was invited — and encouraged with gifts and money to join Mehmed II at Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. Jāmi was not enticed by these gifts and instead continued to Tabriz, and the court of Uzun Hasan. There he was welcomed and declined a

¹¹⁷ Paul Losenski, “Jāmi, i. His Life and Works,” *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/Jāmi>.

similar invitation to join the court of the *Ak Koyunlu* (White Sheep Tribe). He returned to Herat in 1474. His position with Sultan Huseyn and Alishar was improved when sons of Abu Sa'id regarded Herat as part of their patrimony, and thus planned a campaign against Sultan Huseyn. Jāmi stood with Sultan Huseyn. Afterwards 'Alishar joined the Naqshbandi order with Jāmi as his spiritual guide. For the final fifteen years of Jāmi's life the three men governed Herat as a unified triumvirate acting as a unifying force of political, spiritual and administrative unity in the city.¹¹⁸

Jāmi's *divan* was revised several times in 1468 and again in 1475 he added the poems he wrote while making the hajj. The final version of the *divan* was written 1479 and dedicated to Sultan Huseyn Bayqara. His *divan* has over 1,000 *ghazals* but includes poems in shorter forms: *qasida*, *tarji'* and tarkington-band, *qet'a* and *rubay'a* and thirteen short *mesnavis*. Jāmi dedicated several panegyrics to various rulers: Abu Sa'id, Jahanshah Qara Qoyunlu, Sultan Ya'qub and Mehmed II, thanking them for their gifts or congratulating them on building projects.¹¹⁹

Jāmi's seven long Mesnavi's are known as *Heft Awrang* (the seven thrones). The first is the *Silsilat al-dhahab*, patterned after Sana'i's *Hadiqat al-Haqiqāt* and written between 1468 and 1472. The second *mesnavi*, *Salaman ve Absal* was dedicated to Sultan Yakub of the Aq Qoyunlu and composed around 1480. The third mesnavi The *Tohfāt al-ahrār* (Gift of the Free) was written in response to Nezami's *Makzan al-Asrar* and Emir Khosrow's *Matla' al-Anwār*. The *Sihbat al-abrār* (rosary of the pious) contains twenty discourses on various religious and moral themes with illustrative anecdotes. It is the central work of the *Heft Awrang*, composed in a meter unique to the *mesnavi* tradition. In 1483, Jāmi wrote a single continuous narrative of *Yusuf*

¹¹⁸ Paul Losensky, "Jāmi: i. Life and Works," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed May 18, 2014, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/Jāmi>.

¹¹⁹ Paul Losenski, "Jāmi, i. His Life and Works", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/Jāmi>.

ve Zeliha, which follows the meter of Nezami's *Khosrau ve Shirin*. Besides Jāmi produced his own version of *Leyla ve Majnun* for his sixth volume of the *Heft Awrang*, which was completed in 1484. His final work was his own contribution to the Alexander romance tradition - the *Khiradname-ye Iskender*. (The Alexandrian Book of Wisdom). Jāmi's rendering focuses less on the military accomplishments and political success of Alexander the great and instead focuses on the philosophers and wise men whom Alexander encounters on his travels.¹²⁰

Jāmi's works on Alexander are well represented in the Suleymaniye holdings suggesting they were read and circulated in the literary circles of the Ottoman Empire. A total of twenty manuscripts of the *Khiradname* are in the *Suleymaniye* Library, which have dates recorded in the collections database. There remain five more documents under the title *Iskendername*. Three documents are recorded under the title *Iskendername*. Documents are recorded under the title *Ayine-e Iskender*. One document is logged in as *Sedd-i Iskender*. There is another work — the *Maktub fi Nisayihil-hukema li'l Iskender*. Outside the *Iskendernames* there are five copies of Jāmi's divan. Based on the documents cataloged in the database Jāmi was well-copied and disseminated. Textual production favored his version of the *Iskendername* but, there are copies of his divan. The earliest date in the collection is 895/1490 CE.¹²¹

Other Persian Romances

There is an anonymous fourteenth century Persian popular romance. Like Ferdowsi, it begins with the birth of Alexander and his campaigns against Dara but wanders into a land of fantasy unrelated to the other narratives. Fur (Porus) appears and is at odds with the Indian King

¹²⁰ Paul Losenski, "Jāmi, i. His Life and Works", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/Jāmi>.

¹²¹ Paul Losenski, "Jāmi, i. His Life and Works", *Encyclopedia Iranica*, accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/Jāmi>.

Kayd and the Emperor of China. The work is unfinished. Alexander's adventures gave an extensive geographical scope ranging from Iran to Ceylon, Kashmir, Mecca, Yemen, and Andalusia. Alexander accumulates several wives during his adventures and travels to the land of the fairies, Ethiopia, and the land of the Sunrise through Russia.¹²²

Besides his portrayal as world conqueror and adventurer, the Persian romances take a completely different approach casting Alexander the Great as the destroyer. For example, in the *Zeyn al-Akhbar* of the historian Gardizi, written in the eleventh century, Alexander destroyed the Zoroastrian temples and with those the knowledge of the Zoroastrian books. With Alexander's death, the world is plunged into chaos until Ardashir, the first of the Sasanian kings reassembled the dispersed books of learning. Furthermore, Julie Scott Meisami (1999) notes that Gardizi connects the transfer of learning (*translatio studii*) with that of power (*translatio imperii*). This is expressed in his account of Alexander's conquest: Alexander devastated Iran and burnt the Zoroastrian books; he had the books of learning translated into Greek, sent the translations to Rum and then destroyed the library of Istakhr; he buried whatever treasure he could not carry off.¹²³

The eleventh-century Persian Islamic geographer, Abu Sa'id Abul Hay ibn Dhahhak ibn Mahmud Gardizī attributes the loss of Pre-Arsacid (Parthian) and Sasanian Zoroastrian knowledge to Alexander. He cast Ardashir, the Sasanian dynastic founder, as a restorer of that lost knowledge, by casting Alexander as a destroyer of knowledge. This serves two purposes: it advances the Sasanian dynastic project and provides legitimacy and advances Zoroastrianism as a state religion under the Sasanian state. This narrative connects the knowledge of this

¹²² Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 39.

¹²³ Meisami, *Persian Historiography*, 79; Richard Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 41.

reinvigorated religion to that of the Sasanian dynasty at the expense of the then long dead conqueror Alexander. Of course, this polemic narrative against Alexander is not unique to the Persian Romance. It has an analog in the historical sources *vis-à-vis* the destruction of the royal palace at Persepolis. Arrian contends that the fire that destroyed the Achaemenid royal palace resulted from a celebration gone out of hand since Lucius Curtius supports the rumor that Alexander deliberately set fire to the palace.¹²⁴ The conqueror-adventurer of the romances is recast as the conqueror-destroyer who disrupts the continuity from distant antiquity and razed the repositories of knowledge.

Conclusion

The Persian tradition of the textual *Alexandriana* was engrained with the role of the poet as central court figure. The Persian *Iskender* emerged out of the royal court sponsored poetry production that began in the tenth century. It drew upon Arabic and Middle Persian models to make an image of Alexander as a world conqueror and king. The construction of this image was accomplished despite a complicated understanding of the Late Antique and distant Antique past. Unfavorable readings of Alexander that made him a destroyer of Persepolis and the *Avesta* were white-washed in favor of an Alexander who is worthy to stand among a long line of Persian kings. The tenth century image of Alexander emerges within the context of the Persian *Shahname*. The image of Alexander that emerged in the ninth century court context was not a Persian conception; it merged with the extensive Arabic tradition crystalized in the Quran and hadith that pointed to Alexander as a prophet and protector of the world. Likewise, this Arabic tradition pointed to Alexander not just as king and conqueror but as Aristotle's most famous

¹²⁴ Q. Curtius Rufus, (5.7.3-12); Yardley ed., *The History of Alexander*, 107.

student. The Persian model updated the late antique trope and theme of Egyptian kingship to one that could be well-received by Persian, Arabic, and Seljuk audiences. Indeed, the introduction of the New Persian after the *Shahname* shifted to the master poets Nezami and Amir Khusrow who set the *Iskendername* as a final piece in their quintets. In this context, Alexander as with the *Shahname* was weighed against other Persian and mythic kings. In Nezami's *khamse*, Alexander is the archetype for what a king should be. Nezami divided his *Iskendername* into two parts that show Alexander deeds and conquests. The first part follows more like an early romance. It highlights Alexander as a world-conqueror. In the *Sarafname*, his royal aspects are highlighted. He is portrayed as the student of Aristotle and set out as a model for how a king should rule. Amir Khosrow and Jāmi follow in Nezami's footsteps including their *Iskendername* as the grand finale of their *khamses*.

Finally, this chapter looked at the manuscripts preserved in the Ottoman Manuscript collections of the Suleymaniye Library. A bird's eye view of the collection shows that all three of the *khamse* authors were copied during the Ottoman period. The collections emphasize not only each author's renderings of the Alexander Romances but also the individual *Khamse* and individual productions of the *Mesnavis* and *divans*. Jāmi's fifteenth-century *Iskendername* appears to have the best representation in the collections, produced both as a complete work and as separate parts — the *Sarafname* and the *Iqbalname*. The next chapter, will investigate the Ottoman production of the *Iskendername*, beginning with the crown jewel of Ottoman textual *Alexandriana*: the *Iskendername* of Ahmedi. It will look at the range of textual *Alexandriana* that are preserved in the Ottoman archives which draws on and enhances themes of the Alexander Romances.

Chapter 3 - From the Argaead to the Ottoman Narrative: Connections between Fifteenth Century Ottoman Reality and Fourth Century Alexandrine Reality.

“By the eighth century the name *Iskender*, an Arabic substitute for Alexander, had been one of the clearest epitomes of the ideally dynamic, triumphant and prudent ruler that was derived from a non-Islamic past, and used by Islamic authors in proposing to paint a portrait of an ideal monarch.”¹

The previous chapter explored the Persian renderings of the Alexander Romance. It discussed the Persianate tradition based on the δ -recension of the Greek Alexander Romance. In addition, Ferdowsi’s *Shahname* provided the first appearance of New Persian into the Alexander Romance genre. This connection highlighted an elusive pre-Islamic past best-expressed in the concept of Sasanian *Shahi*. The nature of Persian kingship was central to this engagement. Court poets beginning in the tenth century set the deeds and characteristics of past kings into Persian meter. Thus, the *khamse*s of Nezami, Amir Khusrow, and Jami, juxtaposed Alexander with past Persian kings of legend and history (Jamshid, Bahram Gur and Khosroe I Anushirwān) establishing them as models of *Shahi*.

This chapter investigates the Ottoman rendering of the *Iskendername* best exemplified in Ahmedi’s production at the cusp of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These centuries signaled the early years of growth for the Ottoman state. Furthermore, the period underscored Ottoman expansion in Bithynia including the cities of Nicaea (Iznik) and Prusa (Bursa), and across the Dardanelles straits and into the Balkans. Ahmedi’s *Iskendername* drew its image of Alexander from Ferdowsi’s *Shahname* and Nezami’s *khamse*. Yet, Ahmedi innovated the Alexander Romance genre advancing a new conception of Ottoman kingship (*padişahi*) that served the successive generations of Ottoman Sultans and legitimated the Ottoman Dynasty

¹ B. Babut Turna, “The Perception of History and the problem of Superiority in Ahmedi’s *Dasitun-I Tevarih-i Al-i Osman*”, *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 6(3), (2009): 267.

during a turbulent period of transition. Finally, Ahmedi's conclusion of the *Iskendername*, the *Dasitan-i Tavarih-i muluk-i Al-i Osman*, created an ideological link between the Argaeid dynasty of the third century BCE and the Ottoman dynasty of the fifteenth century CE. Furthermore, the dynastic narrative of Ahmedi's closing of the *Iskendername* pointed to a larger Mediterranean tradition of creating dynastic histories of the Ottoman dynasty best expressed in the *De Orginibus Turcarum* literature and *De Familia Otthomanorum* literature of the fifteenth century.

The Fourteenth and Fifteenth-Century Context

The Anatolian Beyliks

The geo-political context of fourteenth and fifteenth-century Anatolia provided an important backdrop to understand how the Ottoman state developed into a world empire. Following the Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century, Anatolia broke up into several principalities or emirates (*Beyliks*), each with its own *emir/bey* and attached court. Drawing from their power base in Bithynia, the Ottomans took the lead among the other *beyliks* in Anatolia: Aydin, Mentеше, Germiyan, Karaman and Kastamonu. *Beyliks* such as Aydin and Mentеше occupied key geographical positions along the western Anatolian coast on the Aegean Sea. As a result, these western Anatolian *beyliks* were interconnected with the broader Mediterranean world and as such drew the Ottoman dynasty beyond the limits of Bithynia into an empire that straddled both sides of Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits.²

² The Emirates of Aydin and Mentеше were located to the north and south of the Meander River. They took to the sea and raided the Aegean coastline and islands. The emir of Aydin captured Ephesus and Izmir (Smyrna) in 1304. Both Mentеше and Aydin benefited greatly from Andronikos II's decision to disband the Byzantine navy. Many former Byzantine sailors sailed under the Aydinoğlu and the Menteşoğlu banner to threaten Venetian trade routes in

Several of these emirates had active economic and diplomatic interactions with western Mediterranean powers such as Genoa and Venice.³ Moreover, several of these western Mediterranean powers held territorial and economic stakes in the Aegean and Black Sea. Exchange between the emirates occurred in an Aegean context. For example, Menteshe and Rhodes engaged in commercial exchange.⁴ Interconnectivity also occurred between the eastern and western Mediterranean, for example the Florentine companies of the Bardi and Peruzzi established a presence in Rhodes⁵ and the Genoese established a colony in Pera.⁶ Furthermore, cooperation between eastern and western Mediterranean stakeholders was not unknown; Menteshe and the Genoese fleet attacked Rhodes but failed to take the island.⁷ The Venetians got involved after 1318 CE in the affairs of Chios and Rhodes.⁸

It is equally important to consider that this complex, dynamic environment of Anatolia offered a cultural and geographic bridge for the Mediterranean world and the Persianate world. The Persian language provided a unifying cultural component during the years of Seljuk rule, prior to the Mongol invasions.⁹ Poets such as Rumi (1207-1273) produced literary works in

the Aegean. Donald Nicol, *A Biography of John Cantacuzene, Byzantine Emperor and Monk 1295-1383*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 14.

³ Equally important was the presence and role of Venice in the eastern Mediterranean. A Venetian Byzantine Treaty of 1302 - most likely with Menteshe — provides one such example of Venetian political and diplomatic involvement in the eastern Mediterranean. Furthermore, it is important to consider interactions among the Anatolian Beyliks that may not have involved the Byzantine and Ottoman states. Military affairs between Menteshe and Aydin at first did not affect the Venetians but later became a point of Venetian concern. See Elizabeth Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin*. Venice: Hellenic Institute of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies, 1983, 5-6; Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 11.

⁴ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 11.

⁵ For a broader discussion of interconnectivity as a theme in Mediterranean history see Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, Chapter 5 “Connectivity,” in *The Corrupting Sea*, (London: Blackwell, 2000), 123-172.

⁶ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 11.

⁷ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 12.

⁸ Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, 13.

⁹ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire: 1300 – 1600, The Structure of Power*, (New York; London: Pelgrave McMillan, 2009), 4-5.

Persian within the geographic context of Anatolia. Western Anatolian *beyliks* relied on trade relationships with smaller regional, eastern Mediterranean powers.

Middle Mediterranean powers such as the papacy, Venice, and Genoa held geopolitical and economic stakes in the eastern Mediterranean. These powers fostered diplomatic relations with both Byzantium and the various individual emirates. The Mamluk empire and the emirate of Karaman played a significant role in the eastern Mediterranean. Mamluk Egypt offered a rival to the fledgling Ottoman state project and was an important ally for emirates such as Karaman. Cairo was an urban center that exceeded both the Ottoman capitals of Bursa and Edirne as a center of learning. As a result, Ottoman consolidation was key. To this end, the Ottomans besieged the Constantinople between 1395-1402. This assault threatened to end Byzantine imperial power and unify power on both sides of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits. Timur's invasion of Anatolia in 1402 forced Bayezid I to redirect his efforts to Anatolia. By 1403, an intra-dynastic civil war divided the Ottoman dynasty. This war ended in 1413 when Mehmed I emerged victorious as a single ruler over both the *berlerbeyliks* of Rumelia and Anatolia.

Early Ottoman expansion came at the expense of both the neighboring emirates and the Byzantine state.¹⁰ Following the capture of the city in 1204, Byzantine territory had waned; its territorial holdings barely extended beyond the walls of Constantinople. Despite its diminished state, the Byzantine Empire was still an active political player in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The end of the fourteenth century marked a transitional period for both the empires of the eastern Mediterranean. The Byzantine Empire, led by Manuel II Palaeologus, had continued its practice of appealing to the western Mediterranean powers during the late Byzantine period -.

¹⁰ For the Late Byzantine period see Donald Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium, 1261-1453*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1993; Johnathan Harris, *The End of Byzantium*; (New Haven, Yale University Press), 2010.

Yet, the Byzantine government in Constantinople was split. One contingent promoted a policy of peace and honored the Byzantine position as an Ottoman vassal state. Another faction sought a more belligerent policy of Western aid as a crusade to defeat the growing Ottoman state.¹¹

Similarly, the later decades of the fourteenth century represented a transitional period for the Ottoman state. In the mid-fourteenth century, following an earthquake in 1354, Ottoman forces captured the key naval port of Gelibolu (Gallipoli). Thus, they inserted themselves into the Byzantine civil war between John V Paleologos and John VI Kantakuzenos.¹² Thus, this intervention allowed them to expand across the Dardanelle straits into the Balkans and culminated with a decisive victory at *Kosovo Polje* in 1389.

Reversing the pattern of Ottoman expansion, this victory was short-lived as the Ottoman Sultan Murad I died in the conflict, assassinated by a Miloš Oblović. His son and successor, Bayezid I, merged the *beyliks* under the control of a consolidated Ottoman state. Bayezid I expanded Ottoman holdings to encompass Serbia and Bulgaria, including the territory that included ancient Macedonia. In 1395, Manuel II's practice of appeal to the West paid off; a joint Polish, Hungarian, and Burgundian army marched on the Ottomans as the Crusade of Nicopolis. The two armies met on the field on September 25, 1396. The battle resulted in an Ottoman victory over the joint crusader army. In addition to his victories in Europe, Murad I exercised sovereignty over the *beyliks* of Anatolia and merged them into the Ottoman state. Extending his reach into the eastern Mediterranean he engaged with the Mamluk sultanate under the leadership of Barquq.¹³

¹¹ Jonathan Harris, *The End of Byzantium*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 15-19.

¹² For more on this internal struggle see Donald Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor: A Biography of John Cantacuzene*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Donald Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium: 1261-1453*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

¹³ For more on Ottoman Mamluk interaction in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries see: Cihan Yüksel Muslu, *The Ottomans and the Mamelukes: Imperial Warfare in the Islamic World*, (London: I.B. Tauris), 2014.

The key to Yıldırım Bayezid's plan for strangling the economic revenues of Constantinople was the small fortress of Anadolu Hisarı that he built on the Bosphorus. In the mid-fifteenth century, Mehmed II repeated this strategy in 1452-1453 improving on Bayezid I's effort to cut off Constantinople from the Black Sea by building a second larger fortress across the water at *Rumeli Hisarı*. Bayezid I's consolidation of Ottoman state power put him in a favorable position to conquer Syria. Furthermore, it evoked Tamerlane who sent an army to engage with Bayezid's forces. This engagement at Ankara in 1402 was a disaster for Bayezid, as his army was defeated and routed, and he was captured by Timur. The privilege of rule then fell on the shoulders of Emir Süleyman, to whom Ahmedi dedicated his *Iskendername*.

Fetret Devri: The Ottoman Civil War (1402-1413)

With all his Thracian and Eastern troops and newly conscripted forces assembled, and with the Serb Stefan, Lazar's son, and a host of Lancers, Bayezid set out to meet Timur, as he approached Galatia, he heard that Timur had set up camp in the city of Ankara, Bayezid pitched his tents in the middle of the plain near Ankara on the river, flowing directly by, provided potable water for the needs of the army and the horses and the entire expeditionary force.

-Doukas¹⁴

The years following the Battle of Ankara were difficult for the Ottoman state. Timurid reassertion of sovereignty over the *beyliks*, the sieges of the Ottoman capitals of Bursa and Izmir, and the disputed Ottoman succession were a complicated matter. The Timurid invasion of Asia

¹⁴ Doukas, *Decline and Fall of Byzantium*, trans. Harry Margoulias, (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1975), 90-91.

Minor interrupted the siege of the Byzantine capital at Constantinople. This siege damaged the city's population; several of the city's residents fled the city between 1398 and 1402.¹⁵

Ahmedi dedicated his *Iskendername* to Bayezid I's son, Emir Suleiman. Kastritsis (2007) has investigated the years between Bayezid I's death and Mehmed I's accession.¹⁶ Kastritsis argued that in the hours after Bayezid I's capture, Emir Süleyman was the intended successor. Several of Bayezid II's viziers left the battlefield with Emir Süleyman. For his evidence, Kastritsis has pointed to the *Ahval*, a history dedicated to Mehmed I that was assimilated into Mehmed Neshri's *Cihannama*.¹⁷ This work points to a failed rescue by Mehmed I to restore his father as Sultan.¹⁸ The Ottoman dynastic narrative promoted during the reign of Bayezid II later sanitized this attempted rescue because it represented an unfavorable image of Mehmed I.¹⁹

Ahmedi and the Ottoman *Iskendername*

Ahmedi and his Works

Ahmedi had a vast breadth of knowledge that may have included science and medicine. Sehi Bey references *'ilm* (science), which Sawyer notes could have referred to juridical knowledge implied in becoming a *mullah*.²⁰ The *Tezkires*, as biographical dictionaries, provide a useful source for understanding literary and historical production in the fifteenth century. Two of the

¹⁵ Jonathon Harris, *The End of Byzantium*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 10-11. Doukas writes: "He did not set up siege engines to demolish the battlements and walls, nor did he utilize any other kind of military engine. He did not order his lightly armed troops to make skirmishes. He employed instead more than ten thousand troops around the city to guard the exits so that nothing could either leave or enter. There was, therefore, a terrible dearth of grain, wine, oil, and other provision within the city. There was no bread of any cooked food because of the lack of wood." Doukas, *The Rise and Fall of the Byzantine State*, trans. Harry Margoulias, (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1975), 83.

¹⁶ Dimitris Kastritsis, *The Sons of Bayezid, Empire Building and Representation in The Ottoman Civil War, 1402-1413*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

¹⁷ Mohammed Neşri, *Cihannuma*, ed. Necdet Öztürk, (Istanbul, Bilge Kultur Sanat, 2013).

¹⁸ Kastritsis, *Sons of Bayezid*, 67-68.

¹⁹ Kastritsis, *Sons of Bayezid*, 42.

²⁰ Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety: A Study of Ahmedi's fifteenth century Ottoman Iskendername*, (PhD Diss, Columbia University, 1997), 70.

oldest *Tezkires*, Latifi and Taşköprüzade, note that Ahmedî wrote significant treatises on medicine, believed to be the *Tervhu'l Ervah*.²¹ Ahmedî, the author of the Ottoman *Iskendername*, traveled within the court circles of Anatolia and Egypt. During his career, he produced ten known works, the first was his poetic *divan*. The second two works he patterned after the Persian authors, Nezami and Ferdowsi: The *Iskendername* and *Cemşid ü Horşid*.²² The fourth work was a treatise on medicine, the *Tervhu'l Ervah*. The fifth work was a translation of the *Esrarname*. His sixth work was the *Deayi'u's-sihr fi sanayi'ish-shir*. The seventh work was the *Mirkatu'l-edeb*. The final two works were the *Mi'yarü'l-edeb* and his commentary on the *qaside-i sarsari*.²³ Many of these manuscripts are in the archives of Aya Sofya (now part of the Süleymaniye Library) collections and at Topkapı Library.

The *Tezkires* – Ottoman Bibliographic Dictionaries

Incorporating previous studies of Ahmedî, such as Kortantamer's monograph on Ahmedî's poetic *divan*, Carolyn Goodwin Sawyer's dissertation (1997) investigated Ahmedî's life career and work. Sawyer incorporated useful sources for understanding the careers of poets during the Ottoman period: the *Tezkires*.²⁴ The Ottoman *Tezkires* (biographical dictionaries) were written after the early fifteenth century and offer the best biographical information on the lives of poets.

²¹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 70.

²² *Cemşid ü Horşid* is the second *mesnavi* written by Ahmedî. It tells the story of Jamshid (Cemşid), a prince who falls in love with a Byzantine princess Horshid upon seeing her portrait. The epic mimics the Persian poem, written by Salman Savaji, whom Ahmedî is said to have admired. Sehi's *Tezkire* mentioned the work and attributed it to Ahmedî. There was no manuscript known to exist until the modern period when Nihad Sami Banarlı discovered a single manuscript that followed an *Iskendername* written in the same hand that dated to 806/1403. This has been accepted as Ahmedî's work although not without contention. Franz Babinger noted that the literary quality was higher than that of the *Iskendername*. Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 71.

²³ Kemal Silay, *Ahmedî's History of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Boston: The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University, 1992), viii.

²⁴ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety* 1997. Several of the *Tezkires* have been published. These include; Sehi Bey, *Heşt Behişt*, Günay Kut, ed. (Istanbul: Tercüman, 1980); Mustafa Isen, *Latifi Tedhkiresi*, (Istanbul: Akçağ Yayinlari, 2000).

The *Heşt Behişt* by Sehi was among the earliest of the Ottoman *Tezkires*, completed in 945/1538-9.²⁵ The Chagatai version *Majalis al-nafa'is* by Mir Ali Shir Nawaiy (1441-1501) served as its model.²⁶ The earlier discussion in chapter two shed light on the relationship between the court role of poets and the development of the image of kingship. Similarly, the *Tezkires* show the circles in which Ottoman poets moved and their individual trying and experience. Sawyer's work on Ahmedi is both significant and informative to an understanding of the Alexander Romance in the sixteenth century. It incorporates sources such as the *Tezkires* to shed light on Ahmedi's education, career and patronage.

Sawyer intended her dissertation to be a continuation of Ünver's work.²⁷ She suggested the popularity of Ahmedi's *Iskendername* was something of a puzzle; it received popularity abroad but rather quickly became something of an anachronism within the Ottoman Empire fairly soon after it was written.²⁸ Bjorkman (1964) dates Ahmedi's decline in popularity to the sixteenth century whereas Köprülü points to the fifteenth century.²⁹ Although Sawyer's study is comprehensive, it is also myopic; she fails to see the Ahmedi's *Iskendername* as part of a

²⁵ The *Heşt Behişt* (1558) set a model for later Ottoman *Tezkires*. The work provided biographical synopses of men and women from the political and religious circles either directly preceding or contemporary to Sehi Bey (ca. 1470-1548). Poetry production was the unifying factor for those individuals. In his critical edition of the *Heşt Behişt*, Günay Kut referenced fourteen extant manuscripts of the work. The structure of the work is divided into eight chapters or *tabakas*. The first *tabaka* provides a biography of the Sultan Süleyman I, the second *tabaka* contains the sultans and princes who wrote poetry from the start of the Ottoman Dynasty until Süleyman I, the third *tabaka* covers between 26 – 28 of the Grand Viziers, viziers, nisancis (keepers of the royal seal) and beys who wrote divans or *mesnavis*. The fourth *tabaka* includes 33 poets of the 'ulema (from Mevlan Shahi to Kivami). The sixth *tabaka* provides the largest number of poets – between fifty to sixty. These poets were either still living or had recently died. Many of them were in Sehi's social circle. The seventh *tabaka* represented thirty-seven to thirty-eight new comers to literary production – including two female poets. The final *tabaka* includes poets who have recently made a name for themselves and ranges from forty-three to forty-nine poets. See Sehi Beg, *Heşt Behişt, Sehi Beg Tezkiresi/Heşt Behişt, The Tezkire of Sehi Beg*, ed. Günay Kut, Doğu Dilleri ve Edebiyatlarının Kaynakları 5, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1978), 7-37.

²⁶ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 57; Sehi Bey, *Heşt Behişt*, (Istanbul: Tercüman, 1980), 6.

²⁷ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, iii.

²⁸ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 45; Walther Bjorkmann, "Die Altosmanische Literatur", *Philologicae Turcicae Fundamenta* v. 2, ed. Fartev Naili Fratav, (Wiesbade: Steiner, 1964).

²⁹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 46; Bjorkmann, "Die Altosmanische Literatur", 417.

multilingual genre of literature that circulated in and around the Mediterranean, Middle East and east coast of Africa (Ethiopia). Certainly, she highlights aspects of Ahmedi's rendering that are unique. Yet, there is no reason that one should expect otherwise. Variations in the narrative of the *Iskendername* existed.

***Tezkire* Disputes**

The *Tezkires* raise several points of contention on the figure of Ahmedi. First, they dispute the name of the author, recording the name as Tac ul-Din Ibrahim Ahmedi and as Tac ul-Din Ahmed bin Ibrahim bin Hizir.³⁰ Second is the identity of the Mir Süleyman to whom several versions of the *Iskendername* were dedicated.³¹ Two candidates stand out as possible patrons: Emir Süleyman of Germiyan or Emir Süleyman son of Bayezid I. Third, the biographical sources disagree on the location of the poet's birth. Latiff, 'Ali, and N. Sami Banarli have argued for the town of Sivas.³² Tasköpürzade and Aşık Celebi have suggested Germiyan.³³ Usun Çarsılı has made a case for Sivaşlı a town near Uşak. Finally, a nineteenth century scholar, Reşad argued for Amasya.³⁴

Ahmedi's Youth and Education

Despite the prolific production and dissemination of the *Iskendername* and his other works, many of the details of his life remain elusive. The exact date of Ahmedi's birth is unknown but

³⁰ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 57; Kortantamer, *Leben und Weltbild*, 85-87.

³¹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 57.

³² Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 57.

³³ Sawyer, *Alexander, History and Piety*, 57.

³⁴ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 57. Taşpöprüzade's *Tezkire, Shaqa'iq al mu'māniya*, was completed in 1558 provides 522 biographies of 'ulema, sheikhs and men of letters. Aşık Çelebi's *Maşa'ır al-Su'ara* was completed in 1566. See note 7 in Sawyer, *Alexander, History and Piety*, 76.

the year H 734/ 1333-34 C. E. has been suggested. Despite disputes on other aspects of his life, the sources agree that Ahmedi received his education in Cairo.³⁵ Five of the *Tezkires* corroborate Ahmedi's young adulthood in Egypt, under the tutelage of Akmal ad-Din. Akmal al-din may have been Akmal al-din al Babarti (d. 786/1384), a judicial scholar in the Hanafi School and the author of the *Sharh al-Hidaya*. In addition, five biographical sources group Ahmedi's name with two others: a physician named Haci Paşa and Mula Shems al-Din Fenari.³⁶ The *Tezkires* of Haci Paşa mention a fourth member of the Cairo-based group, Badr al-Din Sinavi (d. 823-824/1420). Badr ad-Din was renowned as head of a social and religious rebellion against the Ottomans, and a scholar and sheikh.³⁷

Yet, this period in Ahmedi's life points to a blind spot in the historical understanding of fourteenth-century Anatolia. There is little scholarship on the relationship between Anatolia and Egypt as a cultural and intellectual center for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Moreover, at the end of the fifteenth century the *beylik* of Karaman was on good political terms with Mamluk Egypt.³⁸ The biographic information suggests a shift from Mamluk Egypt to Persia for training of Ahmedi's career. Finally, artistic production in Mamluk Cairo has received more attention than the intellectual production.³⁹

³⁵ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 58.

³⁶ Haci Pasha was born either in Konya or in Aydin at an unknown date. The *Tezkires* say he was educated in Cairo and pursued medicine because of a serious illness he sustained in pursuit of his studies of "higher knowledge". ('Ulum 'aliya) Haci Pasha rose to the position of the head of the Mansuriya Qala'un hospital in Cairo. He died in 819-20/1417. Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 59.

³⁷ While in Cairo, Badr al-din Sinavi may have pursued medicine in addition to logic, philosophy, and theology. Born in Sinavi, about 80 miles from Kütahya where his father had been a *qadi*, his early education took place in Kütahya. Later, Badr al-Din Sinavi accompanied his father to Cairo and became a tutor for the first Circassian Mamluk sultan Barquq, who acceded in 1382. Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 60.

³⁸ Prior to his appeal to Mamluk Egypt for support and against his brother Bayezid II Cem Sultan fled to Karaman, the province which he ruled for several years. While Mamluk Egypt did not support his claims to the throne through military means he was well received by the Mamluks before he set off for Rhodes and the protection of the Knight of St. John.

³⁹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 59.

Return to Anatolia and Problems of Patronage

Following his return from Egypt, Ahmedi received patronage from several of the reigning sovereigns. During the reign of Bayezid I (1389 - 1403), Ahmedi returned to Anatolia and entered the patronage of Süleyman of Germiyan. He remained there until after his patron's death in 1388. He was an old man when he switched alliances to the Ottoman court.⁴⁰ Yet, it remains unclear whether he served in the court of Bayezid I. Kortantamer (1973) tried to clarify the pattern of patronage by connecting the verses of Ahmedi's work to the two patrons based on their composition.⁴¹ He argued that the calmer and more mystical verses in tone belong to Süleyman of Germiyan. Those verses created under Emir Süleyman referred to earlier Ottoman rulers such as Orhan, Murad I and Bayezid I. These Ottoman verses represent wine-drinking, carousing, and forced joviality in which Ahmedi expressed no positive interest before joining Emir Süleyman's court. Kortantamer suggested these indulgences were attempts to suppress anxiety for an uncertain future.⁴²

Yet, Kortantamer connects this uncertain future to the Ottoman line and argues it is exclusive to their experience. Kortantamer asserts Ahmedi never came into direct contact with Bayezid I.⁴³ He submits Ahmedi's *divan* as evidence. While Ahmedi's *divan* praises Ahmedi's other patrons it completely omits Bayezid I.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the historical record provides no evidence the two men ever met. References to Bayezid I's deeds in the *Dasitun* are sparse. Ahmedi is silent on Bayezid's victory at Nicopolis and his extensive siege of Constantinople. Likewise, Ahmedi is silent on the activities of Emir Süleyman in the decade before Bayezid I's death. In 795-96/1393

⁴⁰ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 62.

⁴¹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 62. Ernst Kortantamer, *Leben und Weltbild des Altomanischen*, 122-3.

⁴² Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 62.

⁴³ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 64; Kortantamer, *Leben und Weltbild*, 112-13.

⁴⁴ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 64.

Emir Süleyman engaged in a campaign against Bulgaria and held a leadership position in Kastamonu and Nicopolis and became *vali* governor of Sivas.

Equally important is determining the patron for whom Ahmedi dedicated his *Iskendername*. The date of the first *Iskendername* (792/1389) is problematic, representing an awkward time for either of Emir Süleyman or Süleyman of Germiyan acting as patron for Ahmedi.⁴⁵ Süleyman Shah of Germiyan died in 1388-9. In 793/1390, Emir Süleyman was thirteen years old. But Banarlı argues Ahmedi wrote the *Iskendername* for Süleyman of Germiyan. After Süleyman of Germiyan's death, Banarlı contends Ahmedi switched alliances to the court of Bayezid I until his capture and death in 1403.⁴⁶ Therefore, Banarlı argued that Bayezid I offered encouragement to Ahmedi to complete his *Iskendername*.⁴⁷

Contemporaries of Ahmedi

Through the intellectual circles in which he took part in while in Egypt, Ahmedi may have had connection with other contemporaries who had ties to the rulers of Germiyan, the Ottomans and the Timurids. Two literary figures tied to Süleyman's court in Germiyan may account for the preference for Persian literary styles. Shehoğlu Mustafa (740 - 4/134) was a prominent figure at Süleyman of Germiyan's court and the author of the *Khorshidname*.⁴⁸ Furthermore, several

⁴⁵ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 63.

⁴⁶ Ahmedi may have cultivated a connection to Timur and the Timurids. Both Casik Çelebi and Hasan Çelebi recount that Ahmedi caught Timur's attention by dedicating a *qaside* to the conqueror. In addition, Tasköpürzade relates an anecdote about Ahmedi meeting Timur in a bathhouse. Timur challenged Ahmedi, asking what it was worth. Ahmedi answered 80 akçes. Timur replied that such a small sum was the value of a bath towel. Ahmedi agreed. In response, and in appreciation for Ahmedi's wit, Timur gave Ahmedi a generous reward. Köprülü, Bjorkmann, and Kortantamer criticized this anecdote, questioning the long-standing association between Ahmedi and Timur. As a result, the divan preserves only the slightest trace of this relationship. As a result, such a tale may either show a confusion with another Ahmedi, Ahmedi-i Da'i or echo a similar tale told by Nasreddin Hoca. Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 64-6; Kortantamer, *Leben und Weltbild*, 127-128. This story was adopted from a Persian narrative although the author claims Arabic origins. Caroline Goodwin Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 68.

⁴⁷ See also: Nihad Sami Banarlı, *Ahmedi ve Dasitan-i Tevarih-i Muluk-i Ali-i Osman*, (Paris: Klincksiek, 1936), 54.

⁴⁸ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 68.

sources in the *Tezkires* link Ahmedi to poet Sehi, born in Kütahya in Gemiyan and died circa 834/1430-31. Both the *Tezkires* of Sehi and Latifi said Sehi studied in Iran. This time is manifested best in his composition of *Husrev u Sirîn*. Murad II commissioned this *mesnavi*, which Ahmedi based on Nizami's version.⁴⁹ Moreover, the *Tezkires* corroborate this connection. Latifi's *Tezkire* for Sehi states he studied with Ahmedi. As a result, Ahmedi may have been at least one or two generations older. Kortantamer disputes Sehi's *Tezkire* recounting a competition between Ahmedi and Mevlana Sheyhi. Ahmedi's divan shows no trace of such a rivalry.⁵⁰ Kortantamer suggests another conflation, this time between Sehi and another poet Shehoğlu with whom Ahmedi expressed open rivalry.⁵¹

The Ottoman *Iskendername* Tradition

Here the story of Alexander is so to speak but the framework within which the author sought to enclose an epitome of all the science, whether sacred or secular, of his time. Ahmedi's poem is not, like many Turkish romances, a translation from the Persian. It has little beyond the name and the general subject in common with Nezami's celebrated poems. The story as given by Ahmedi follows generally on the lines of the history of Alexander as this is detailed in the *Shah-Name* of Firdausi, But the Turkish poet frequently modifies, sometimes quite alters, the incidents of the romance, and very often changes their order. The numerous digressions, scientific and didactic, are entirely his own.

-E.J. Gibb's Description of the Ottoman *Iskendername*⁵²

Whereas Persian *Alexandriana* comprised the *Shahname* and the *Iskendernames* of the *khamse* authors, the Ottoman *Alexandriana* represented a broader literary and historical

⁴⁹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 68.

⁵⁰ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 68.

⁵¹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 68-69.

⁵² Elias John Gibb, *The History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. 1 (London: Luzac, 1900), 266; 268-9; Dimitris Kastritsis, *The Trabzon Manuscript*, 105.

spectrum. The story of Ottoman textual *Alexandriana* begins with the thirteenth century *Oghuzname*. This narrative tells the story of Alexander's journey to the lands of darkness and his search for the water of life. The *Iskendername* of Ahmedi (1407) and the *Wall of Alexander* by the Chagatai poet Nava'i brought Alexander's tale to Turkish readers.⁵³ In addition, several documents within the Süleymaniye Library discuss the issues and events of Alexander's life. The most common of these is a collection of documents that reproduces letters between Alexander and Aristotle. Such letters have an analogue in the earlier recension of the manuscript. They resonated with Late Antique audiences familiar with epistolary novels or histories. These separate representations of Ottoman textual *Alexandriana* resonate with another theme inherent in Ahmedi's telling of the Alexander Romance. Besides drawing upon narrative threads from the Greek Alexander Romances, Ahmedi relays the philosophical aspects Alexander's education and adventures. This emphasis on philosophy is well-represented in the Arabic tradition of Alexander but emerges in the Persian tradition. As discussed in chapter 2, Nezami divided his *Iskendername* into two parts the *Sarafname* and the *Iqbalname*. The *Sarafname* focused on Alexander's campaigns and adventures while the *Iqbalname* emphasizes the philosophical aspects of Alexander's reign. Here, the work narrates themes, such as Alexander's discussion with the Brahmans. Closely associated with the educational function of the *Iskendername* is a tradition of epistolary dialectic between Alexander and Aristotle and Alexander and his mother. In addition, during his campaigns, Alexander corresponded with the Argaeid court in Pella. The Romances re-invent such exchanges as letters between a student and teacher and a son and his mother.

Similarly, Ahmedi devoted several of his chapters to exchanges between Iskender and Persian and Arab philosophers. Underlying such dialectic is an attempt to show how ethical and

⁵³ Stoneman, *Alexander the Great*, 39.

philosophical issues answer the questions: How should a king rule? Which qualities should he have? What are the ethical issues surrounding the royal office of kingship? Implicit in these exchanges lies another question. How should a prince be educated? Which subjects, philosophers and authors are suitable for the education of princes? Ahmedi included such philosophical matters alongside exemplary models of kingship and set them against the backdrop of the Alexander Romances. He created a powerful narrative combination, which circulated at a time of dynastic crisis in the early fifteenth century. Later in the fifteenth century, Mehmet II and his court promoted a trend of self-identification with and emulation of Alexander the Great. In this mid-century context, Alexander is the model of a world conqueror. Yet, he provides no model for Mediterranean conquest. As a result, the mid-century Ottoman goals of conquest focused on the Mediterranean and did not overlap with Alexander's eastern conquest model. Chapter four will address this fifteenth-century appropriation of Alexander as model conqueror at more length.

The Venice Manuscript

This image shows The Exalted Alexander being enthroned. Pipes and drums and Kettle drums are being sounded, and the entire world is being made to submit to him.

This image shows The Exalted Alexander gathering around himself all of his subjects (re'aya), who swear the (Islamic) oath of allegiance (baya).

-Ottoman marginalia from the Hellenic Studies Institute Greek Manuscript No. 5.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Ottoman marginalia/captions from The Venice Manuscript, Hellenic Institute No. 5. See Dimitris Kastritsis, "The Trebizond Alexander Romance (Venice Hellenic Institute Codex Gr. 5) the Ottoman Fate of a Fourteenth Century Illustrated Manuscript," *Journal of Turkish Studies*, 26, (2011): 120.

Before moving into the Ottoman *Iskendername* tradition, a manuscript from the fourteenth-century Greek Alexander Romances deserves some discussion. The Venice Manuscript (Hellenic Studies Institute Greek Manuscript No. 5) provides an important example of how the Ottoman and Byzantine Greek tradition engaged with each other.⁵⁵ This manuscript provides one of the best Byzantine examples of an Alexander Romance.⁵⁶ It contains 250 well preserved illustrations⁵⁷ that gave visual representations for almost every episode of the text.⁵⁸ The several captions in Greek and Ottoman Turkish that accompany these illustrations are equal importance.⁵⁹ So, a document such as this provides insight into Ottoman engagement with Greek recensions of the Alexander narratives. Furthermore, the Ottoman captions provide insight into how a fifteenth-century Ottoman audience received and interpreted events in the Alexander narrative.⁶⁰

The manuscript was produced in Trabzon under the patronage of the Komneni Emperor Alexis III (1349-1390).⁶¹ It established Alexander the Great as a model for how the Byzantine ruler should rule. The Greek epideictic texts, chronicles, and histories highlight similarities between the Byzantine rulers and Alexander the Great.⁶² Alexander's narrative must have been

⁵⁵ This manuscript is rather famous among Late-Byzantine scholars. It provides an extensive version of the Alexander Romance based on a melding of the β and ε- recensions of the manuscript. Nicolette Trahoulia, *The Venice Alexander Romance Hellenic Institute Codex GR. No. 5: A Study of Alexander the Great as an imperial Paradigm*, (PhD Diss, Columbia, 1997), 105. For a discussion of the manuscript's relation to the broader traditions see Nicolette Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 72-95.

⁵⁶ The Venice Alexander manuscript consists of 13 folios and measures 320mm by 240 mm. Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 5.

⁵⁷ Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 5.

⁵⁸ The manuscript may have fallen directly into the hands of Sultan Mehmed's court as a spoil of war. As a result, the commentary may have been part of Sultan Mehmed's broader interest in Alexander, ancient literature and the Homeric epics. Dimitris Kastritsis, *The Trebizond Alexander Manuscript*, 107-108; 145.

⁵⁹ For a discussion of the Ottoman marginalia see: Dimitris Kastritsis, "The Trebizond Alexander Romance, 103-131. See also Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 64.

⁶⁰ Kastritsis, *The Trebizond Alexander Manuscript*, 111.

⁶¹ Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 6; 53-54.

⁶² Trahoulia, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 9-10; 158. For a more thorough discussion of Alexander's image throughout the Byzantine period see Nicolette Trahoulia, "Chapter 2, Alexander the Great as an Imperial paradigm in Byzantium," in, *The Venice "Alexander Romance"*, 9-52.

particularly appealing to the Trapezuntine emperors; it highlighted a model of eastern conquest and dealt with “Eastern problems”.⁶³ The Alexander Romances established Alexander as a model for how a fourteenth century Byzantine Emperor should rule. Similarly, the Venice Manuscript is a highly presentable example of an Alexander Romance that survived the capture of the Trabzon (1461). After falling into Ottoman hands an Ottoman reader commented on this manuscript often elaborating on the previous Greek comments and contextualizing them for an Ottoman audience.

In addition to guiding modern scholars on Ottoman textual engagement with their Byzantine tradition, the Ottoman captions in the Venice manuscript provide insight into an Ottoman intention to identify the Sultan with Alexander the Great. This Ottoman model of conquest differed from the Byzantine model focusing on western conquest instead of eastern conquest. The city of Rome was the heart of Christendom and represented a second apple (*kizil elma*) to be plucked and added to the imperial basket.⁶⁴

Ottoman Historiography and Ahmedi's *Iskendername*

Ahmedi's *Iskendername* represented one of the earliest attempts at Ottoman historiography. It blended the narrative tradition of kingship in the *Shahname* with the rich literature of the

⁶³ Trahoulia, *The Venice “Alexander Romance”*, 71.

⁶⁴ Kastritsis, *The Trebizond Alexander Manuscript*, 121. The “first apple” of course would be the *orbs mundi* that was held by the statue of Justinian in the *Augusteion* in Constantinople; See Kafesçioğlu, *Istanbul/Konstantonapolis*, 60. This statue of Justinian also played a role in the education of Mehmed II and a drawing of the statue now in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has been attributed to Cyriacus of Ancona. Raby argues that the attribution of this document to Cyriacus of Ancona is important in placing the antiquarian in the political circle of Mehmed II but does not necessarily mean he made the drawing after the capture of the city in 1453. The statue was repaired in 1427 and 1437/8. As such Cyriacus could have made the drawing *in situ* after the scaffolding was removed. The document, itself is found in a codex that belonged to Mehmed II. Babinger argued that the Codex was part of the Corvinian library, however, Raby rejected Babinger's assertion of a Corvinian provenance based on an inscription. The inscriptions use the term “Imperial Saray” a term not in common use before the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Written in the same hand is an accompanying inscription which reads: “One of the gifts of his imperial majesty, the Padişah of the Ottoman State, Abdülhamid Khan, to the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in the year 1294.” (1877 CE), Raby, “Cyriac of Ancona,” 243.

Alexander Romances. How should one read such a rich work that fuses both Persian historiographic tradition and romanticized narrative? Sawyer (1997) provided one such suggestion. The figure of Alexander offers a tantalizing model for aspiring political rulers and conquerors. And yet, Sawyer undercut Byzantium's role as a cultural model for the Ottomans in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This position raises the question of the extent to which Byzantine culture was available and accessible to the participants in the Ottoman state in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

As with Nezami's *Iskendername*, Ahmedi's *Iskendername* offered a point of convergence between the cultural history of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century and Ahmedi's life.⁶⁵ It also may be the case with Nezami's *khamse*. The *Iskendername* was Ahmedi's masterpiece, set as a separate literary work that concluded with an Ottoman dynastic history. Ahmedi's *Iskendername* was dedicated to several sovereigns ranging from the Süleyman of Germiyan, to Bayezid I, and his son Emir Süleyman reflecting the chaotic political climate in which it was written - the late fourteenth/early fifteenth century.⁶⁶ Ahmedi's *Iskendername* differed from Nezami's in the complexity of patronage surrounding the work. There have been as many as five possible patrons suggested. Some of the manuscripts provide a dedication to *Shah-i Jihan* (World Sovereign). Modern scholarship has contested the patronage for certain manuscripts of Ahmedi's work. József Thúry (1903) suggested Emir Süleyman.⁶⁷ Banarlı (1938) suggested the patron was

⁶⁵ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 71.

⁶⁶ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 70.

⁶⁷ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 72. Sawyer does not provide a citation for József Thúry. However, Kortantamer cited: József Thúry, On Dördüncü ʿasır sonlarını qadar Türk dili yadigarları, MTM II, 4, 81-133. [Turkish translation of Rağib Hulūṣī]. The citation for the original Hungarian article is: József Thúry, *Török nyelvemlékek a XIV. század végéig*. Értékezések a nyelv- és széptudományok köréből (18. 7). (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, Budapest), 1903.

In Istanbul Üniversitesi MS 921, at beyt 6613, Emir Süleyman is explicitly designated as the recipient. Sawyer notes that this verse comes at the end of the Mevlid section and therefore is probably part of the latest redaction in 810 H/1407 C.E.

Bayezid I.⁶⁸ It may have been prepared for Süleyman of Germiyan and then presented to Emir Süleyman. Several of the numerous manuscripts ironically open with a dedication to the Şah-i Cihan (King of the world/universe). Sawyer suggested that an absence of identity for the *Shah-i Jihan* is significant. Ahmedi emphasized in the beginning a failure to find anyone worthy of his creation.⁶⁹

Ahmedi's *Iskendername* is the earliest versified Alexander Romance in Ottoman Court literature. It is a world history the last chapter of which details the careers of the lives of the Ottoman sultans in 334 couplets down to Emir Süleyman.⁷⁰

An Illustrated Ottoman *Iskendername* (Biblioteque Nationale MS 309)

The oldest extant manuscript of Ahmedi's *Iskendername* is in Paris at the Biblioteque Nationale (MS 309). The object is in poor condition. Only three of its twenty illustrations are contemporaneous with the text and are painted onto the paper. The illustrations are damaged and the stylistic features are difficult to discern. Sawyer describes them as crude, and lacking any skill. The other seventeen images are cut out from other manuscripts and applied with glue.⁷¹

Art historians have divided the illustrations into two categories — datable to the eighth/fifteenth century.⁷² Esen Atil describes the first style as that of Ilkhanid painting, associated with the Persian *Shahnames*.⁷³ But she is unclear whether she is referring to

⁶⁸ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 72; Banarlı, *Ahmedi*, 56-60. See Kortantamer, 21-24, 112-117.

Kortantamer disagreed with Banarlı arguing Bayezid I could have been his patron. He submitted as evidence the number of poems dedicated to Sultans in Ahmedi's divan: 36 for Emir Süleyman, 7 for Mehmed I Çelebi, and one for Murad Çelebi (the future Murad II). Kortantamer, *Leben und Weltbild*, 113.

⁶⁹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 73; See also Ahmedi, *Iskendername*, Beyts 294-294; and 302)

⁷⁰ Kemal Silay, ix. The fifteenth century poet Ahmed-i Ridvan based his *Iskendername* on Ahmedi's work. Ridvan's chapter entitled the *Nusretnam-i Osman* shows thematic and structural resemblances to Ahmedi's *Tevarih-i Muluk-i al-i Osman* but is written in 465 couplets.

⁷¹ Sawyer, *Alexander, History and Piety*, 98.

⁷² Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 99.

⁷³ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 99; Esen Atil, "Ottoman Miniature Painting under Sultan Mehmed II," *Ars Orientalis*, 9, 1973,

Ferdowsi's version or another *Shahname*.⁷⁴ Atil describes the second group as having a red background characteristic of the Inju dynasty of Shiraz.⁷⁵

Readership of the Ottoman *Iskendername*

The *Iskendername* survives in several manuscripts suggesting that a readership of the Ottoman *Iskendername* was widespread in the fifteenth century.⁷⁶ The next chapter will address more fully the Sultanic stake in the Alexander Romance narrative. Yet interest in the manuscript certainly went beyond the sultan's personal use.⁷⁷ During the reign of Mehmed, the personal cultural and intellectual interests of Mehmed II centered on military history, ancient history, ancient literature, geography and ancient philosophy.⁷⁸ The reign of Mehmed II has received more scholarly attention. It may not differ from previous patterns of Sultanic intellectual interest that have been less studied. The production of Ahmedi's *Iskendername* continued through the sixteenth century. Ismail Ünver's facsimile publication (1982) provides a listing of the major extant copies of Ahmedi's work.⁷⁹ Ahmedi's work however does not stand for the complete representation of *Alexandriana* that was circulating through fifteenth and sixteenth century Ottoman audiences. Holdings in the Süleymaniye Library show an interest in producing works that drew on broader themes associated with Alexander and the Alexander narrative. These

⁷⁴ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 99.

⁷⁵ Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 99. However, Sawyer notes that Banarlı (unpublished manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale) disagreed arguing they are "of Turco-Persian origin" most likely from an Iranian epic of the late thirteenth century. See Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 99; 111.

⁷⁶ Kastritsis, *The Trebizond Manuscript*, 105.

⁷⁷ Kastritsis, *The Trebizond Manuscript*, 105.

⁷⁸ For a discussion of Mehmed II's intellectual interests see Julian Raby, "East and West: In Mehmed the Conqueror's Library", *Bulletin de Bibliophile* 3, (1987): 297-321.

⁷⁹ İsmail Ünver, *Ahmedi, İskender-Name İceleme-Tipkibasım*, (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1983).

works include the epistolary works and treatises on Aristotle and Alexander and a Persian Treatise on the story of Gog and Magog by Silstrevi Zaim Ali.⁸⁰

Ottoman Kingship

Meisami (1993) raised the issue of historical imagination in creating pre-Islamic dynastic origins in the Persian historiographic context as a means of dynastic legitimization.⁸¹ The Samanids claimed to revive Iranian kingship, by tracing their origins back through Khosroe II to Faridun, Jamshid and the first man and king. The Buyids sought to show their legitimacy by extending their origins back to Bahram V (Gur). Likewise, the Samanids turned to General Bahram Chubin and the Ghaznavids to a daughter of Yazdigird III, the last Sasanian king.⁸²

In his rendering of the *Iskendername*, Ahmedi accomplished a similar task by linking the Ottomans to Alexander the Great. The second chapter addressed Alexander's own dynastic association with Achaemenids that fused the Macedonian (Argaeid) dynasty with the Persian (Achaemenid). Ahmedi's association in effect transcends the links asserted by the previous tenth and eleventh century dynasties. The link asserted by Ahmedi is not genealogical but ideological. It draws on the currents of inter-dynastic *translatio imperii* that extended Ottoman dynastic legitimacy to the distant past. This process resonated with the needs of Ahmedi's patron, Emir Süleyman.

As a result, succession represented a liminal period of potential political and economic crisis. The year following the death of Alexander (323 BCE) represented some of the most complicated

⁸⁰ See Appendix B for an index. For the Persian Treatise on Gog and Magog see Hacı Beşir Ağa 00656-051 in the Süleymaniye Library.

⁸¹ Meisami, "The Past in the Service of the Present," 250-251.

⁸² Julie Scott Meisami, *Persian Historiography to the end of the Twelfth Century*, (Edinburgh: University Press, 1999), 250.

series of events in the royal succession. At its heart, this crisis of succession was dominated by the chaotic struggle to determine a rightful successor between Alexander IV (Alexander III and Roxane's child) and Phillip III Arrhidaeus.⁸³ Those closest to Alexander, his companions (*heteroi*) fell to one side of the succession debate or the other resulting in the Wars of the Diadochi.⁸⁴

Analogously, the early events of the fifteenth century represented a catastrophic period for the Ottoman state project; issues of succession divided the Ottoman dynasty and threatened to fracture Rumelia and Anatolia. As participants in the larger Anatolian geo-political context the Ottomans must certainly have been aware of the difficulties that an unsuccessful succession could present. The Byzantine civil war of the mid-fourteenth century had weakened the house of the Paleologoi benefiting the Ottomans.

Equally important, the last quarter of the fifteenth century proved a longer lasting threat to the Ottoman state project. During the period between the deaths of Mehmed II in 1481 and Cem Sultan in 1495, the legitimacy of Bayezid II remained somewhat tenuous. Cem became a political bartering chip for Mediterranean and European powers hoping to affect the trajectory of Ottoman politics in the 1480s and 1490s.

Leslie Peirce (1993) has addressed the harem's role in the Ottoman succession.⁸⁵ Indeed, issues of a divided family preceded the early fifteenth century but heightened in the joint succession issues of the early and mid-fifteenth centuries. The narrative of Alexander the Great

⁸³ Phillip III Arrhidaeus (359 B.C.E. – 317 B.C.E.) was the son of Phillip II of Macedon and Phillinna of Larissa and therefore Alexander the Great's half-brother.

⁸⁴ Diodorus Siculus', *Βιβλιοθηκη Ιστορικα (Historic Library)* (Book 17) and Quintus Curtius Rufus's, *Historiae Alexandri Magni* (Book 10) provided extensive accounts of the events following Alexander the Great's death. Arrian's *Anabasis* ended with the death of Alexander in 323 B.C.E. However, he did cover the events in a separate work, *Τα μετ' Αλέξανδρον (The History of the Diadochi or The Affairs after Alexander)*. This work survives only in fragments and in a summarized entry in Photius' ninth century work *Βιβλιοθηκη (The Library)*

⁸⁵ Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

— whether mythic or historical provided an opportunity to show the issues most germane to an aspiring world conqueror. These issues included the expansion of territory, establishing rulership in conquered territory, the role of good counsel, and the establishment of a successful plan for *translatio imperii* between dynasties. (See Chapter 4 for the discussion on Internal-dynastic *Translatio Imperii*.)

The Sultanic Image

The preservation of Sultanic image in a positive light may have been a concern for the Ottoman Sultans in the latter decades of the fifteenth century under Bayezid II; the political uncertainty of a contender to the Ottoman Sultanate consumed the first years of Bayezid II's reign. Mehmed II's younger son Cem remained at large for the first fourteen years of Bayezid II's reign.⁸⁶ Cem Sultan became a political bargaining chip that circulated through the courts of the Mediterranean and central Europe.⁸⁷ These princes hoped that Cem might replace Bayezid II

⁸⁶ At the time of Mehmed II's death (1481), Bayezid II was prince in the administrative center of Amasya and Cem sultan was prince governor of the Ottoman province of Karaman. During the latter years of Mehmed II's reign, Amasya had become a refuge for those who opposed Mehmed II. Karamani Mehmed Pasha had sent word to both Bayezid and Cem following Mehmed II's death after Mehmed's corpse had been smuggled into Constantinople with a cargo of scented candles to ward off the smell. Despite efforts to keep his death secret, word of Mehmed's death had spread to Constantinople. The Janissaries supported Bayezid as the next sultan. They murdered Karamani Mehmed Pasha when he tried to prevent the janissaries returning to Istanbul. Mehmed II had educated himself in the Byzantine and Classical style, whereas Bayezid II favored the company of Islamic science and philosophy, poets and mystics who had roots in eastern traditions. Cem and Bayezid II met in battle at Yenişehir and Bayezid was victorious. While Bayezid had support in Constantinople, Cem had strong support in Anatolia. Following his defeat, Cem and his entourage, which included his mother, Çiçek Hatun, fled to Mamluk Egypt where they were warmly greeted by Sultan Qa'it Bey. Cem then made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Upon his return, he was approached by Kasim, a Karamanid Prince who was the brother of the Aq Qoyunlu ruler, Uzun Hasan's, protégé, Piri Mehmed. In 1482, Cem returned to Anatolia to meet Kasim and his army in Adana. They besieged Konya but were driven back by Abdullah, Bayezid II's oldest son and Gedik Ahmed Paşa. Cem and Kasim then marched toward Ankara but changed course upon hearing of Bayezid II's approach from Istanbul. An envoy from Bayezid offered Cem a sum of gold and the opportunity to retire to Jerusalem but Cem refused. Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300 – 1923*, (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 81-84.

⁸⁷ Cem's position as a Mediterranean/European bargaining chip began with his trip to Rhodes in 1482. In July of 1482, Cem set sail from the Mediterranean port of Korikos (Corycos) for Rhodes where he had been granted safe passage by the Knights Hospitaliers of St. John. He remained there for a month and then left for France. The day after Cem left Rhodes ambassadors were dispatched to rally support for a crusade against the vulnerable Sultan Bayezid II. Since the Knights of St. John found no allies, they opted to renew their treaty with the Ottoman Empire. The treaty between the Knights of St. John and Bayezid II resembled an earlier agreement signed with Mehmed II.

as sultan.⁸⁸ Bayezid II lacked Mehmed II's zeal for conquest.⁸⁹ Thus, Mehmed II's vision of conquering Rome and creating an Ottoman Mediterranean vanished despite an Ottoman presence at Otranto at the time of Mehmed II's death.⁹⁰ Cem's bid for the Sultanate became moot when he died in 1495.⁹¹ The *Nakaşhane* under Bayezid II's rule instituted a centralizing apparatus for production of Ottoman texts. Equally important, a unified narrative accompanied this state apparatus and sanitized earlier unsavory aspects of the earlier Ottoman sultans. Heath Lowry notes that despite his pattern of consolidation; Bayezid I never received the title of Ghazi.⁹² Mehmed II in the mid-fifteenth century was still dealing with many of the same affairs in Anatolia and Rumelia that plagued Bayezid I's reign. Mehmed II promoted a self-image as a conqueror and his Ottoman biographer Tursun Bey referred to him as the father of conquest.⁹³

⁸⁸ Cem presented an important figurehead for a Christian crusade to reconquer Constantinople. Thus, Western and central Mediterranean rulers had a stake in Cem's claim to the Ottoman sultanate. Cem's threat to Bayezid's position is supported by Bayezid's use of spies to tail Cem across the Mediterranean and Europe. Those stakeholders in the Cem affair ranged from the Mamluk Sultan, Charles, Duke of Savoy, the Papacy, to Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary. Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 86-7.

⁸⁹ Mehmed II had educated himself in the Byzantine and Classical style whereas Bayezid II favored the company of Islamic science and philosophy, poets and mystics who had roots in eastern traditions. Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 82.

⁹⁰ An anonymous, perhaps French, contemporary report described the funerary procession of Mehmed II, noting that an effigy of the Sultan rode on top of the Sultans coffin suggesting that even in death of Mehmed II nurtured the image of himself as legitimate heir to the Byzantine capital and empire. Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 82. For more on Mehmed's conception of the Ottoman imperial paradigm, see Chapter 4 *Translatio Imperii: Transitions of Power in the fifteenth Century Ottoman Context*.

⁹¹ Perhaps spurred on by Çiçek Hatun, Cem's mother, the Ottoman-Mamluk war in the 1480s intensified Mamluk interest in Cem. The Mamluk Sultan Qa'it had corresponded with King Charles VIII through an agent of Lorenzo Medici and offered 100,000 ducats for Cem's return. When Cem reached Papal hands in 1489, the pope began to rally a crusade behind Cem. Matthias Corvinus (1458-1490), the King of Hungary had made several attempts to obtain Cem either for himself or on behalf of the Mamluk Sultan. Corvinus' death in 1490, shifted the diplomatic playing field and thus made Cem's position more precarious. Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 86-87. For more on the Cem affair see: Nicolas Vatin, *L'Ordre de Saint Jean de Jérusalem : L'empire Ottoman et la Méditerranée orientale entre les deux sièges de Rhodes, 1480-1452*, (Louvain-Paris: Peeters), 1994; Nicolas Vatin, *Sultan Djem: Un prince ottoman dans l'Europe du XVe siècle d'après deux sources contemporaines : Vaki'at-Sultab Cem, Oeuvres de Guillaume Caoursin*, (Ankara : 1997); Halil Inalcik, A Case Study in Renaissance Diplomacy ; The agreement between Innocent VIII and Bayezid II, on Cem Sultan, *Journal of Turkish Studies* , 3, (1979), 209-230; Victor Ménage, "The Mission of an Ottoman Secret Agent in France in 1486", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, (1965): 112-32.

⁹² Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 24.

⁹³ Tursun Bey, *Tarih-i-Ebül Fatih*, hazırlayan, Mertol Tulum, (Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1977); Tursun Bey, *The History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Hilal Inalcik and Rhoads Murphey, (Minneapolis, Bibliotheca Islamica, 1978).

Timur's invasion aside, Bayezid I's accomplishments stand on equal ground with those of Mehmed II. The construction of *Rumeli Hisari* was an indicator that at least some of Bayezid I's policies were models for Mehmed II.

Why isn't Bayezid I remembered more fondly in Ottoman dynastic memory? Both Katakuzenos and Doukas the Greek historians have a considerable amount to say about Bayezid I in their histories of the early fifteenth century.⁹⁴ Like Alexander, Bayezid I was known for his extensive drinking bouts and outbursts.⁹⁵ The feast both for the early Ottoman Sultans and for the Macedonian kings was a venue for celebration and social release from the rigors of the military campaign and war. Simultaneously, these affairs offered opportunities for political disaster. This aspect of the fifteenth century contexts returns to an earlier theme raised in chapter 2 - *Razm u Bazm*. Abuses of these royal duties were placed within the romanticized narratives to highlight the dangers of having a poor royal character. As a result, such indiscretion reminds the ruler and educates the young prince that the narrative image of later generations was the final determining factor of royal accomplishment. Bayezid I's abuse of such traditions reminded future Ottoman Sultans of the precarious position of the Ottoman Sultanic image regarding posterity.

Feasting in the Byzantine, Persian, and early Ottoman context represented a quintessential aspect of the premodern *shah/padişah*. Like the *Iskendername*, it drew its origins from an ancient conception of middle eastern/Persian kingship. As an aspect of *Bazm* (feasting), the act of eating and by extension drinking represented a royal act. *Razm u Bazm* represented an ideological link between the distant world of Macedonian Greece and early Ottoman Anatolia. It

⁹⁴ Doukas, *The Rise and Fall of the Byzantine State*, trans. Harry Margoulias, (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1975); John VI Kantakouzenos, *Geschichte*, ed. and trans. Georgios Fatouros und Tilman Krischer, (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982).

⁹⁵ Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 29.

would have been familiar to the other models for conquerors that would have been familiar to an eastern Mediterranean audience of the fourteenth century.

Competing Reflections in the Mirror: Mediterranean Responses to Ahmedi's *Dasitan-i*

Âl-i Muluk-i Osman

The fifteenth century offers abundant opportunities for re-conceptualizing Mediterranean identity. First, it opens immediately before the manuscript workshops (Nakaşhane) in the Topkapı palace of Mehmed's son Bayezid II crystallized Ottoman dynastic narratives (ironically overlapping with the intra-dynastic tussle between him and Prince Cem Sultan). Second, Prince Cem's own extensive travel, poetic production, and role as bargaining chip in the Central European bid to control the Empire reveals avenues of exchange available in the second half of the century. Third, the body of *de orginibus Turcarum* literature produced in Italy invites study alongside other polemics condemning the (or any) Ottoman sultan. As a corollary, rhetorical volleys between composers of such anti-Turk genres and Florentine philoturcs illuminate another side-story in the Ottoman development of both the state and state-image.⁹⁶ Fourth, while scholars have noted Mehmed's identification with world conquerors Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great, examination of his admiration through the larger lens of Ottoman identity formation, expressed in its Alexander Romance texts, still beckons. Finally, Ahmedi's *Iskendername* as the next phase in the Alexander Romance tradition ends with a dynastic history that links the Ottoman dynasty with the distant past. By closing with a dynastic history Ahmedi ideologically connected the Ottoman with the Argaead. Seen from this perspective, Sasanian models of

⁹⁶ Hankins, "Renaissance Crusader Literature," 130. For earlier studies, see also Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and Renaissance Humanists and Ottoman Turks*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2004). Both Bisaha and Hankins rely on the earlier extensive work of Paolo Preto's *Venezia e Turchi* (Firenze: G.C Sansone Editore, 1975).

kingship were suitable for Ottoman Sultans. Writing in the full tradition of the Alexander Romances Ahmedi closes his *Iskendername* not with a litany of new cities but with a synopsis of the Ottoman sultans. This new phase of textual *Alexandriana* paves the way for a new distinct genre of literature that continues to perpetuate the Ottoman dynastic narrative — the *De Orginibus Turcarum* literature.⁹⁷

Indeed, self-representations of Ottoman identity both flowered and altered during the fifteenth century within the larger context of Islamic political discourse. Ottoman writers expressed the sense of their own being through two main literary images available during this seminal period in which the Ottoman state matured into a Mediterranean power. On the one hand, their texts belong within the long-standing tradition of the Alexander Romances in the Persian, Ottoman and Armenian languages; on the other, they lived equally comfortably within a second tradition of political literature, the “mirrors for princes,” which surged in production in the court of Murad II in the second quarter of the century.

The vigor with which Ottoman authors insisted on defining themselves stemmed from their state's increasing economic and military assertion in the larger Mediterranean scene, in response to which Christian Europe developed its own genres defining the Ottomans. These European literary retorts (and some political machinations) signaled the start of a cultural transition in the region that would become, by the sixteenth century, a full-blown existential crisis for Christendom. Other Mediterranean powers, the Crown of Aragon, the Kingdom of Naples, The Kingdom of Hungary, the Republic of Venice, and the Papacy each held not only a financial and military but also a spiritual stake in the shift of power to the Ottomans.⁹⁸ Ottoman expansion into

⁹⁷ This term was coined James Hankins in his article “Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusading literature in the Age of Mehmed II,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 1995, 111-207.

⁹⁸ The Kingdom of Hungary can be considered a Mediterranean power during much of tenth through nineteenth centuries. Much of this is due to the political relationship between the Croatian and Hungarian Crowns, which

Central Europe fits into a historiography “of the Mediterranean” that admits cultural exchange and textual transmission through Matthias Corvinus’ (1458-1490) dynastic fusion with the humanist court of King Ferrante of Naples--a relationship between the two courts partially preserved in extant texts of the Corvinian library.⁹⁹

Each of these western participants confronted the advancing Ottoman presence in the Mediterranean in a variety of ways, ranging from polemical works steeped in crusader-era denunciations of the “Turk,” to academic attacks on Ottoman history like the *De Originibus Turcarum*, to bids for managing Ottoman dynastic succession by controlling the heir of Mehmed

became linked after Ladislas I (1077-1095) successfully defeated the Cumans and conquered Croatia in 1091 CE. Thus, The Kingdom of Hungary gained a littoral presence on the Adriatic Sea. By seizing power during a dynastic struggle in Croatia, Ladislas I advanced his claim to the Croatian Crown through his sister’s marriage to the late Croatian King Zvonimir. Further connections between the Croatian and Hungarian crowns developed during the reign of Coloman (1095-1116) Ladislas I’s successor, Coloman, was crowned King of Croatia and Dalmatia in Biograd na moru (Biograd on the Sea) in 1102. Coloman’s sovereignty over Croatia was supported by the “Pacta Conventa.” See Robert Stallaerts and Jeanine Laurens, “Koloman, King,” in *Historical Dictionary of the Republic Croatia*, (Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1995), 131. In the fifteenth century, Ladislas of Naples was supported by Croatian nobles and enthroned as King of Hungary but murdered at court. He was crowned King of Zadar on August 3, 1403. See Robert Stallaerts and Jeanine Laurens, “Ladislas of Naples, King,” in *Historical Dictionary of the Republic Croatia*, (Lanham and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1995), 137. See also John V. A. Fine, *The Early Medieval Balkans, A Critical History From the late Sixth Century to the Twelfth Century*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 283-88; John V. A. Fine, *The Late Medieval Balkans, A Critical History From the late twelfth Century to the Ottoman Conquest*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). The Croatian and Hungarian historiographic narratives unite Croatia and Hungary as a type of personal union under the Hungarian Crown. Thus, on one level, Hungary can be considered a Mediterranean power by the nature of its littoral border with the Adriatic and by extension the Mediterranean. The province of Lika-Krbava remained the key province for Hungary’s presence on the Adriatic Sea until the nineteenth century. This argument raises the question of the “Mediterranean-ness” of a given polity. Both Fernand Braudel (1966) and Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell (2000) argue for “Mediterranean-ness” beyond littoral Mediterranean. See Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean World in the Age of Phillip II*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1972), 123; 133-169; Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*, (Oxford; Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 278-287. So, in Braudelian terms the Kingdom of Hungary is both “of the Mediterranean” and “in the Mediterranean”. from the eleventh until the nineteenth century. However, such links between the Croatian and Hungarian crowns provided one grounds of support but others do exist along climatological grounds, see G. Koppany and J. Unger, “The Tendencies of the Mediterranean Climate in Hungary”, *Acta Climatologica*, Tom 27, (Universitatis Szegediensis, 1993), 27-31. Marianna Birnbaum has explored documentary and cultural connections between the two countries in Mariana Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World: Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century*, (Los Angeles: UCLA Slavica Studies, 1986). This position of Hungary’s role as a Mediterranean power must be approached with care to separate it from nineteenth and early twentieth century Hungarian irredentist discourse which promoted the concept of *Nagy Magyarország* (Greater Hungary) and lamented the geopolitical reduction of its borders, that resulted from the *Treaty of Trianon* (1920).

⁹⁹ Marcus Tanner, *The Raven King: Matthias Corvinus and the Fate of his Lost Library*, (New York; London: Yale University Press, 2008).

II, Cem Sultan. Not surprisingly, such responses contrast vividly with--and served to sharpen--the Ottomans' self-image as it would crystallize by the early decades of the sixteenth century.

Writings produced during the reign of Mehmed II, whose sultanate achieved both diplomatic and cultural exchange with Italy and significant internal centralization, represent a key transformation in the Ottoman state's vision of itself. This centralization extended the established political-ideological dialogue on the Circle of Justice flourishing throughout the Muslim Middle East--a project that highlighted tensions between dynastic self-image and the response to it by other Mediterranean powers. The Empire's parallel military and literary claims to a rightful place in the Mediterranean, and their rebuffs by Central European and Mediterranean rivals, underlie the process of Ottoman cultural and political self-definition in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

De Originibus Turcarum Literature

Between about 1450 and the end of the sixteenth century a separate literary genre describing the ethnographic origins of the Ottomans proliferated as well. Yet an opposing school of Italian Renaissance thought produced these works: the so-called "philoturcs" who tried to integrate the Ottomans into a western paradigm of cultural tradition. The resulting *De originibus Turcarum* literature thrived well into the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁰ Fusing the terms *Teucris* with *Turchi* and *Troiani*, the genre suggested an ethnic link between Ottomans and Trojans. Other humanists contested this claim to such an elevated ethnic origin, and propounded instead the Ottomans' descent from a common German Turkic ancestor among the Macedonians, who had defeated the

¹⁰⁰ James Hankins. "Renaissance Crusaders: Humanist Crusader Literature in the Age of Mehmed II," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49, *Symposium on Byzantium and the Italians 13th-15th Century*, 136.

Greeks and enjoyed a Saxon ancestry through Alexander the Great.¹⁰¹ A Scythian origin for the Turks was also proposed--a scenario used in diplomatic overtures between the court of Matthias Corvinus and Mehmed II.

A Sixteenth Century example (Houghton Library MS type 145)

The Houghton Library at Harvard University holds a recently published Venetian manuscript exemplifying *De orginibus Turcarum* literature (MS type 145).¹⁰² Published in its entirety in *Muqarnas*, the anonymous illuminated manuscript was probably created in Venice just prior to Süleyman I's third campaign against the Habsburgs in Hungary and Austria in 1532.¹⁰³ Relative peace marked relations between Ottoman Constantinople and Venice from 1503 to 1537, and the text flatters by suggesting a semi-divine origin for the dynasty as descended from Apollo and Cassandra, daughter of Priam and Hecuba in ancient Troy. The manuscript begins by praising the Ottoman Empire above all others and "Divine [and] Most Invincible" Süleyman as the greatest of a continually rising house, proclaiming him "Absolute King of the Hungarians," whose undoubted eventual hegemony elicits universal joy. The text goes on to highlight victories of Sultan Murat II over the Kingdom of Hungary before addressing the reign of "triumphant" Mehmed II. Finally, the Manuscript praises the Ottoman state as a "World Monarchy [is] awaited by all nations and people with the utmost felicity."¹⁰⁴

Despite its fulsome style the narrative on Mehmed II captures the dynamic nature of the second half of the fifteenth century, noting the importance of Otranto as stepping-stone to Rome

¹⁰¹ James Hankins, *Renaissance Crusaders*, 140.

¹⁰² Ana Pulido-Rull, "A Pronouncement of Alliance: An Anonymous Illuminated Venetian Manuscript for Sultan Süleyman," in *Muqarnas*, Vol. 29, 2012, 101-150.

¹⁰³ James Hankins, *Renaissance Crusaders*, 101.

¹⁰⁴ Ana Pulido Rull, "An Anonymous illuminated Venetian Manuscript for Sultan Süleyman," 139.

and expressing the fantasy of an Ottoman-unified Mediterranean to supersede the failed ecclesiastical unity touted by Christians in the first half of the century. The piece assumes the truth of rumors of Mehmed's death by poisoning, and details the resulting struggle between Cem and Bayezid, Cem's travels to Rhodes and France, and his ultimate death in Rome. It is not surprising that no mention is made of his intent to visit the court of Matthias Corvinus; it would have been inappropriate to mention the fact since the author is praising Süleyman's Hungarian victories. The work extols not only Süleyman's military successes in Hungary but also the successes of the Ottoman Dynasty there, displaying a Eurocentrism prophetic of Babinger's emphasis on the Danube front.¹⁰⁵ But Babinger's polarized reading missed opportunities to make cultural connections to a larger Mediterranean.

Pulido-Rull (2012) suggested that this illustrated manuscript may have accompanied a ceremonial crown sent to Süleyman and described at length by Gülrü Necipoğlu and Otto Kurtz. Throughout the manuscript each member of the Ottoman dynasty is depicted wearing this crown,¹⁰⁶ underscoring the importance of using both material and cultural sources in tandem to unravel the complexities of Ottoman identity formation in the fifteenth-century Mediterranean. This manuscript offers rich opportunities for research in the field, particularly when juxtaposed with an earlier print and manuscript version widely circulated in Italy.

¹⁰⁵ The text also suggests that Mehmed II died of poisoning, a point presented as fact in *Mehmed the Conqueror*, though Neşri is silent on the matter and Kritovoulos's panegyric of Mehmed ends around 1467. Kritovoulos of Imbros, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, Charles Riggs, trans., (Princeton: University Press, 1954). Whether true or not, its mention in the panegyric manuscript demonstrates that it was believed, at least in sixteenth-century Venice, that Mehmed II was murdered and that raising such a potentially tragic detail about Süleyman's great-grandfather would not insult the Sultan. There is circumstantial parallel in this narrative; The Alexander Romances also argue that Alexander the Great was poisoned. For more on the Romance narrative see Chapter 1. For a discussion of circumstantial parallels see Chapter 5 of this Dissertation. See also A. B. Bosworth, "The Poisoning Rumors" in *The Landmark Arrian*, ed. James Romm, (New York: Random House, 2010), 407-10.

¹⁰⁶ Ana Pulido Rull, "An Anonymous illuminated Venetian Manuscript for Sultan Süleyman," *Muqarnas*, 29, (2102): 108-9.

De Familia Otthomanorum

Nikolaos Sekoundinos' *De familia Otthomanorum* provided an example of Renaissance *De Orginibus Turcarum literature*. Sekoundinos' career was tied closely to the rising papal candidate and outspoken opponent of Ottoman expansion Ennius Sylvius Piccolomini (the future Pope Pius II). He attended the Council of Florence/Ferrara (1438-1439) as a Greek and Latin translator and was later appointed Papal legate by Pope Eugenius IV. Dispatched to Genoa and Greece, he was present on the Venetian-held island of Negroponte when the Ottomans captured Constantinople. Accompanying the Venetian envoy Bartolomeo Marcello to Constantinople in the summer of 1453, he provided a rare non-native first-person account of the court of Mehmed II. Following a two-month stay in the city Marcello sent Sekoundinos back to Venice, from whence Sekoundinos traveled to Rome and Naples to present his impression of the recent events in the eastern Mediterranean, *de familia Otthomanorum*.¹⁰⁷

An encomium written by Sekoundinos attested to his authorship for Piccolomini's benefit of the widely circulated, profoundly influential description of Mehmed and his court, preserved in nine manuscripts and translated and published by Marios Philippides in 2007. The work vividly describes the conquest of the city and appends biographical summaries of each member of the Ottoman dynasty from Osman to Süleyman. Unlike the Venetian manuscript mentioned above, *De Familia Otthomanorum* also includes biographies for Musa the son of Bayezid I and Celebi, a son of Bayezid-- perhaps Süleyman or Mehmed Çelebi.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Marios Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror and the fall of the Byzantine Levant to the Ottoman Turks: Some Western Views and Testimonies*, Marios Philippides, ed. and trans., (Phoenix: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2007), 7-9.

¹⁰⁸ The entry elaborates on Mehmed Celebi's success over Sigismund, King of Hungary and Croatia (1387-1437), Holy Roman Emperor (1433-1437), King of Germany (1411-1437), and King of Bohemia (1419-1437) and the capture of John of Burgundy at the Battle of Nicopolis (1396), a victory usually attributed to Bayezid I.

Sekoundinos' treatment of Mehmed II was surprisingly neutral considering his graphic descriptions of the capture of the city. Indeed, he painted Mehmed as a dynastic head of an eastern Mediterranean empire set on expansion in the eastern Mediterranean. Sekoundinos suggests that following Mehmed's defeat at Nicopolis of Hunyadi, Mehmed II unleashed his pashas on Croatia, Carniola and Styria. But Sekoundinos' more predictably polemical summary for Bayezid II contradicts contemporary narratives of the last two decades of the fifteenth century as comparatively peaceful, and attributes the capture of Otranto to Bayezid II when it clearly fell under Mehmed's policy of a unified Mediterranean. Finally, the text completely omits any hint of the dynastic struggle between Bayezid II and Prince Cem that formed the backdrop for Ottoman identity formation in the 1480s and 1490s.

The Venetian manuscript and that of Sekoundinos offer widely conflicting representations of Ottoman identity in the fifteenth-century Mediterranean, even discounting the panegyric intent of the first and the polemic nature of the second. Written during a mostly peaceful period, the Venetian manuscript recognizes a period of intra-dynastic tension following the death of Mehmed II that is completely ignored by Sekoundinos. This discrepancy underscores an opportunity within Ottoman scholarship to read the Sekoundinos text as a dynastically-sponsored projection of Mehmed II as the Alexander-inspired conqueror, while the Venetian text depicts Bayezid II as a peace-promoting sovereign focused on centralization and intra-dynastic struggle. These and other works generate fruitfully divergent readings across linguistic barriers, and allow sources such as Ahmedi's *Iskendername*, which includes similar dynastic biographical summaries, to place the Empire in the larger context of Persian models of kingship and the genre of the Alexander Romances.¹⁰⁹ Such close, diversity-appreciative readings provide a more

¹⁰⁹ Ahmedi, *Tevārīh-i Mülūk-i āl-i Osmān ġazv-i īṣān bā-küffār*, ed. Kemal Silay, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004).

nuanced approach to the fifteenth century, which lets scholars reevaluate, and possibly correct, previous Ottoman historiography such as Babinger's.

Conclusion

This chapter began with a look at the context of the late-fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. This period established a context that provided for extremely fluid dynastic and economic relationships that often reinstated, if only temporarily the Mediterranean unity of late antiquity. Rising out of the fluidity of this Anatolian context, the Ottoman Dynasty caught its first taste of the broader Mediterranean world with the capture of Gelibolu in 1354 CE. From that point on, the Ottomans inherited the Byzantine balancing act of ruling both Anatolia and Rumelia. Political and territorial gains in the fourteenth century under Murad I and the policy of consolidation under Bayezid I came to a screeching halt with the capture of Bayezid I by Timur in 1402. By all accounts, Bayezid's career and his whole-hearted embrace of *razm u bazm* and his conquest of the Anatolian *beyliks* made him a strong candidate to stand among the exemplary kings of the *Shahname* and Ahmedi's *Iskendername*. But his capture following the Battle of Ankara (1402) had an opposite effect. Plunging the Ottoman dynasty into a crisis of succession that echoed Alexander's the Great's own Wars of the *Diadochi* at the end of the fourth century BCE, the Ottoman Civil War served as the backdrop for Ahmedi's later career and patronage.

The Late Byzantine Venice manuscript produced under the Komneni ruler in Trabzon showed how fourteenth century Byzantine rulers identified with and promoted the image of Alexander the Great for their own political glorification. To be sure, Ahmedi's intent behind his *Iskendername* had a similar motivation. This well-read work called upon the literary models of the Alexander Romance tradition, the *Shahname*, and the Persian *khamse* authors of the twelfth

and thirteenth centuries – Nezami and Amir Khusrow. In his contribution to the Alexander Romance tradition, Ahmedi created a separate work that was not part of a *khamse* cycle. Furthermore, whereas earlier Alexander Romances closed with a litany of the cities Alexander established, the Ottoman *Iskendername* closed with a litany of the Ottoman rulers that comprised the Ottoman dynasty: The *Dasitan-i Tavarih-i Muluk-i Al-i Osman* was the first Ottoman dynastic history. This conclusion to Ahmedi's masterpiece set the Ottoman Dynasty as the natural conclusion to a long line of kings that had preceded the Ottoman dynasty. It was evidentiary exhibit A in the case for Ottoman dynastic legitimation. At the beginning of the fifteenth century successful dynastic succession (*translatio imperii*) was as needed as it had been in the years following Alexander's death. Ahmedi's work and dynastic history, which concludes before this civil war is resolved offers a reminder of the Ottoman dynastic success in the *long durée* narrative of Ottoman *padişahi* and Persian *shahi*. Finally, if perhaps only by coincidence, the *Dasitan-i tavarih-i muluk-i Al-i Osman* itself played a part in a larger literary genre that created a Mediterranean cultural unity for the *De Orginibus Turcarum* and *De Familia Osmanorum* works. Like the *Dasitan*, these works narrated the early years of the Ottoman Dynasty. Like the *Dasitan* they recounted the lives and successes of the early Ottoman Sultans. But unlike the *Dasitan* their goal was not dynastic legitimization but an attempt to understand a potential conqueror. To be sure, from the second half of the fifteenth century through the sixteenth century the Ottoman presence in the Mediterranean was a palpable threat to western Mediterranean and European powers (Rome itself had been the "apple" of Mehmed's eye until his death in 1481).

The issue of dynastic succession and legitimization punctuated at the beginning of the fifteenth century with the Ottoman Civil War and revisited at the end of the fifteenth century

with the death of Mehmed II remained a historical theme through the early Ottoman centuries. *Translatio imperii* (transfer of power) stands at the center of this process. The next chapter will continue the discussion of the mid-fifteenth century as a transitional period. It will continue the discussion of Mehmed II and his appropriation of the Alexandrine image, Finally, it will turn full attention to the issue of *translatio imperii* as the theme that resonated with both the fourth century BCE Alexandrine narratives and the fifteenth-century C.E. Ottoman narrative.

Chapter 4 - *Translatio Imperii*: Transitions of Power in the Fifteenth Century Ottoman context

In his account of the capture of Constantinople, Stefan Zweig provided a romanticized narrative of Mehmed II's accession before the conquest of Constantinople.¹ Zweig painted a picture of the Ottoman besiegers as barbarous hords, recalling the Vandal sack of Rome in the fifth century CE.² At stake in Zweig's account is not the eternal city of Roman antiquity but the holy city of Constantinople. This "second Rome" stood at the center of Orthodox, Eastern Christianity, and as an urban bastion of the Eastern Roman Empire for over 1,100 years. The process that shifted power from "old Rome" to "new" – *translatio imperii* – likewise played an instrumental role in the fifteenth century transition from Byzantine to Ottoman Constantinople. Equally important, Zweig's account illustrated a Christian Orientalist bias. It whitewashed the complexities of the Mediterranean economic and political geography and ignored the dilapidated status of the Byzantine Constantinople by the

¹ "On February 5, 1451, a secret messenger comes to Asia Minor and brings the oldest son of the Sultan Murat, the twenty-one-year-old Muhammad, the news that his father has died. Without communicating so much as a word to his ministers, his advisors, the prince, who is as sly as he is energetic, throws himself onto the best of his horses. Without stopping at all, he drives on the magnificent thoroughbred the hundred and twenty miles to the Bosphorus and immediately crosses at Gallipoli on the European shore. Only there does he reveal his father's death to his most loyal men in order to be able to strike down any other claim to the throne at once, he gathers a select troop together and leads them to Adrianople, where he is actually recognized as the ruler of the Ottoman Empire without opposition... The news that in the place of the more considerate Murad, this young, passionate, and glory-seeking Muhammed has become the Sultan of Turkey fills Byzantium with horror. From a hundred spies, they know that this ambitious man has sworn to bring the former capital of the world into his possession and that in spite of his youth he spends days and nights with strategic deliberation regarding this, his life's plan. But at the same time, all accounts unanimously report the new Padishah's extraordinary military and diplomatic abilities. Mehmed is simultaneously pious and cruel, passionate and treacherous, an educated, art-loving man who reads Caesar and the biographies of the Romans in Latin and at the same time a barbarian who sheds blood like water... His first move, however – They know this will be Byzantium, the last remaining jewel in the imperial crown of Constantine and Justinian." Stephan Zweig, "The Conquest of Byzantium, May 29, 1453," in *Decisive Moments in History: Twelve Historical Miniatures*, (Studies in Austrian Literature, Culture, and Thought Translation Series), (Riverside: Ariadne, 2007), 35.

² For exactly a thousand years after Rome was so memorably plundered by the Vandals, the plundering of Byzantium begins. Dreadfully, true to his oaths, Mohammad, the victor keeps his word. After the initial massacre, he indiscriminately hands over houses and palaces, churches and monasteries, men, women and children to his warriors as plunder. And like demons from hell the thousands of men rush through the streets to get ahead of each other. Zweig, "The Conquest of Byzantium," 57.

mid-fifteenth century. Yet, even in distorting these historical events, the description was poignant and memorable. Zweig's narrative provided a larger-than-life account of Mehmed and the conquest of Constantinople, underscoring a remarkable shift in power that occurred on May 29, 1453.³

The previous chapter looked at the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as a context for Ahmedi's *Iskendername*. It showed how modern scholarship has used the *tezkires* (biographical dictionaries) as sources to recreate the social circles in which Ahmedi traveled. These networks benefited from a connectivity that extended beyond Anatolia to include prominent Eastern Mediterranean urban networks in Cairo. In the context of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, these social circles linked to the often shifting political and cultural circles and alliances of the eastern Mediterranean. Thus, Ahmedi's *Iskendername* relied on both an exposure to the Egyptian and Persian tradition of learning. Ahmedi's exposure to circles of learning in Cairo and Persian literary traditions in the court of Germiyan echoed a theme imbedded within the *longue durée* of the Alexander tradition. Like the dual models of kingship discussed in Chapter two, (Egyptian and Persian) Ahmedi fused Egyptian (Mamluk) and Persian cultural traditions into his *Iskendername*. Furthermore, Ahmedi brought these two models together in the conclusion to the *Iskendername*, the *Dasitan* — an early Ottoman dynastic history. This history

³ The conquest of Constantinople has a rich modern historiography. While a full list of sources discussing this event is beyond the scope of this chapter, a few key sources deserve mention. Sir Stephen Runciman's *The Fall of Constantinople*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1965), followed the account of Kritovoulos of Imbros. Franz Babinger's *Mehmed the Conqueror and his Time*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) (4th printing) offered a problematic, yet thorough narrative of the second half of the fifteenth century. More recently, Marios Philippides and Walter Hanak, *The Siege and Fall of Constantinople: Historiography, Topography and Military Studies*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2011) provided a rich contribution to many of the cultural and logistical dynamics in the city's transition to an Ottoman imperial capital. Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision and Construction of the Imperial Capital*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) provides a detailed and rich discussion of the use and appropriation of urban space in the years following the capture of the city.

began a culturally unifying Mediterranean project that recorded the lives of the early Ottoman sultans through the *De Originibus Turcarum* literature.

The fifteenth century encapsulated many moments of *translatio imperii*. Equally important, these moments resonated with themes in the Alexander Romance. *Translatio imperii* meshed with the cultural and political history of the Ancient, Mediterranean, Ottoman and Persian contexts. The *topos* of *translatio imperii* is present in both literary and historical narratives. Within these contexts and genres, there are further nuances to *translatio imperii* that can help in cultural readings not just of the fifteenth century, but also offer an analytical model that can be applied to other liminal historical contexts where transition is a central theme. Finally, this discussion of *translatio imperii* will set the stage for the next chapter, which approaches the Alexandrine and Ottoman narratives from the perspective of circumstantial parallelisms. These circumstantial parallelisms enhanced the appeal of the Alexander Romance tradition for fifteenth and sixteenth century Ottoman audiences.

This chapter addresses the liminality of the fifteenth century in the Eastern Mediterranean — a period punctuated by the monumental passage from the Byzantine to the Ottoman Empires. The Ottoman state established an imperial paradigm quite different from its Byzantine predecessor. In-depth study of the fifteenth century provides a rewarding insight into a new stage in the development of this imperial paradigm and how it relates to the theme of *translatio imperii* in textual *Alexandriana* and Ottoman historical narratives. *Translatio imperii* is fused to the idea of the imperial paradigm and thus changes may occur within it and to it. The transition in imperial paradigm generated a vigorous, yet varied, response across the Mediterranean.⁴

⁴ For more on the responses generated throughout the Mediterranean, See Ana Echevarria, *Fortress of Faith; The Attitude towards Muslims in the Fifteenth Century*, (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 1999). Echevarria provides insight into the western Mediterranean response to Muslim communities both in the Iberian Peninsula and in response to the capture of Constantinople. Agostino Pertusi, *Testi inediti e poco noti sulla Caduta di Constantinopoli*, (Bologna:

The central event of *translatio imperii* in the fifteenth century is the conquest of Constantinople. On many levels, it signified a cultural and economic realignment and transference within the eastern Mediterranean that competed with and even upstaged the shift in political and religious paradigms.⁵ The conquest of Constantinople brought the Balkans and Anatolia, and the Aegean and Black Sea region under the control of one Empire.⁶ Furthermore, through the latter half of fifteenth century, economic interests in the eastern Mediterranean realigned to meet the growing needs of a repopulated and reinvigorated Ottoman capital of Constantinople.⁷ Equally important, fifteenth-century identities were mercurial. Modern labels, such as, Byzantine and Ottoman, Christian and Muslim, Latin and Greek dichotomized the dynamic reality of the fifteenth century eastern Mediterranean.⁸ Such traditional readings of eastern and western Mediterranean and European and Oriental created false polarities along an east-west axis of division in the larger context of the Mediterranean. Byzantine political alliances and socio-cultural identities were fluid and often included alliances across the religious

Patron Editore, 1983); Agostino Pertusi, *La Caduta di Constantinopoli, Testi a cura di Antonio Pertusi*, 2 vols. (Roma: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, 1976) has collected numerous primary sources documenting the middle Mediterranean response, including the response by Pope Pius II (1458-1464). For responses beyond the Mediterranean littoral, there are two Armenian laments in response to the fall of the city. Abraham Argiriatsi's *Vogh i vera Arman Konstandnoubolis* [Lament on the Fall of Constantinople] and Arakel Baghishetsi's *Vogh i Mayrakaghakin Stampolu* [Elegy on the City of Constantinople], Agop Jack Hacikyan; Gabriel Basmajain, Edward Franchuk, Nourhan Ouzounian, *The Heritage of Armenian Literature*, (Detroit: Wayne State Press, 2002), 19.

⁵ Molly Green, "The Early Modern Mediterranean," in *A Companion to the Mediterranean Sea*, Peregrine Horden and Shiro Kinoshita, eds, (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), Green suggests three zones of activity in the Eastern Mediterranean following the capture of the city. One zone that included Istanbul, the Eastern Balkans, and the Black Sea, (After 1517, this zone extended to Egypt and was protected by official convoy until the seventeenth century.) A second zone directed goods from Egypt to Salonika (Thessaloniki), and a third zone along a north-south axis included the Black Sea. Green, "Early Modern Mediterranean", 94-96.

⁶ Dominique Valeran, "The Medieval Mediterranean," in *A Companion to Mediterranean History*, eds Peregrine Horden and Shiro Kinoshita, , (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 77.

⁷ Molly Green, "The Early Modern Mediterranean", in *A Companion to the Mediterranean Sea*, Peregrine Horden and Shiro Kinoshita, eds, (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 94.

⁸ Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State*, (Berkeley: University Press, 1995), 140. For a late Byzantine perspective, see also Nevra Necipoğlu, "From Recovery to Subjugation: The Last fifty years of Byzantine Rule in Constantinople (1403-1453)," in *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins: Politics and Society in the Late Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 184-232.

divide.⁹ This false dichotomy imposed a rigid exclusivity that did not exist.¹⁰ For example, the act of *ghaza* (raiding) encapsulated one such example of inclusivity that could include Muslim and Christian, alike.¹¹ Marriage provided another. At the highest social levels, marriage became a bonding institution between the magnates of Anatolia and the Balkans.¹² The marriage of Orhan I to the daughter of John VI Kantakuzenos is one example. Conversion also provided another mechanism for sharing identity. Families such as the Mihailoğlus and the Evenooğlus, began as Byzantine Greek families who later invested in the Ottoman system.¹³ Whereas the narratives of Ahmedi's *Iskendername* addressed an early fifteenth century audience threatened by the termination of Ottoman rule, mid-century readers associated its themes of *translatio imperii* with a milestone in Ottoman conquest -- the capture of Constantinople. The event marked the Ottoman ascent into its new role as the inheritors to the Byzanto-Roman legacy and as a world empire.

Translatio Imperii: Moments of Transition¹⁴

⁹ Necipoğlu, *Byzantium between the Ottomans and the Latins*, 3-4. The attempted, coordinated rebellion by Andronicus and Savcii Çelebi against the Byzantine John V and Murad I offered an intriguing example of how alliances could form at the highest levels. George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, (London: Blackwell, 1993), 542.

¹⁰ For a comparative perspective on the complex dynamics that operated in Christian and Muslim social contexts of the fourteenth-century western Mediterranean, see David Nirenberg's monograph on religious communities and religious violence in the Kingdom of Aragon. David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, Updated edition, (Princeton: University Press, 1996). See also, Ana Echevarria, *Knights of the Frontier: The Moorish Guards of the Kings of Castile, 1410-1467*, (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

¹¹ Linda Darling "Contested Territory: Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Context," *Studia Islamica*, 91, (2000): 135- 137; Heath Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 50-52; 132.

¹² Leslie Pierce: *The Imperial Harem Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 29. For Byzantine use of marriage as a diplomatic policy see Edward Luttwak, "Dynastic Marriages" in *The Grand Strategy of Byzantium*, 137-144.; Donald Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 76-78.

¹³ Heath Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 142-43;

¹⁴ In the Roman Imperial context, the term *translatio imperii* addresses the transfer of power that occurred during the fourth century CE. As the Western Roman Empire fragmented, it gave way to the wealthier Eastern Roman empire. This re-dedication of Constantinople as a holy city in 330 C.E. marked an important milestone in this *translatio imperii*. The re-dedication of the city as new imperial capital was a significant event. It was one step in a gradual realignment through which the political and economic consolidation in the Eastern provinces occurred. This fourth-century *translatio imperii* transferred political power from the Western to the Eastern Mediterranean. Yet, this shift was multidirectional. The sixth century shattered the illusive east-west divide as Justinian I tried to reassert

The Alexander Romances and early fifteenth century Ottoman historical narratives offer two models for *translatio imperii* that might have been mutually beneficial for both Hellenistic and Late Medieval audiences, alike. This *topos* of *translatio imperii* refers to the transmission of political, even military, power from Greece to Rome, then to France, and finally England, Germany, and Italy. This term, and the closely related *translatio studii*, originated with the ancient Romans during their own attempts to theorize and explain their complex relationship to the Greeks.¹⁵ An underlying metaphor of genealogy (and perhaps pedigree) is implicit in these *topoi*. Power and knowledge are transferred from a previous “parent” source to a new “child” source. However, *translatio imperii* and *translatio studii*, like genealogy, becomes a new fractured metaphor.¹⁶ Any attempts to link the past to the present or to create a false similitude between past and present creates a “tension” that affects the transfer of the object of knowledge or power so the object is dispersed through its translation.¹⁷

Absent in this description of *translatio imperii* is any attempt to describe the process in the context of the Eastern Mediterranean. While more recent scholarship has applied *translatio imperii* to east-west cultural contact,¹⁸ these earlier scholarly assessments, however, have only

imperium in the western Mediterranean. His pyrrhic victory established a military presence in Northern Africa and Northern Italy. The exarchates of Ravenna and Carthage returned western Roman territory to the Byzantine emperor yet by 750 CE Arab conquest and the Lombard invasion revised many of the Byzantine territorial borders. The *translatio imperii* dialectic varied and continued with church primacy from the ninth through the fifteenth centuries. This discussion shadowed the present one resonating with intellectual audiences of the fifteenth century who were still struggling to untangle the complex issue of ecclesiastical unity.

¹⁵ Katherine McCloone, *Translatio Imperii and Translatio Studii in the Medieval Romance*, (UCLA, PhD Diss, 2012), 26.

¹⁶ McCloone, *Translatio Imperii and Translatio Studii*, 10. McCloone notes: “Within the dynamics of *translatio studii* and *translatio imperii*, the attempts to link the past to the present, or create a false similitude between past and present, creates a “tension” that “affects the transfer of the object of knowledge or power, so the object is dispersed in the course of its translation.” This “inherent tension” affects the use of genealogy as a metaphor of *translatio*, and “because [the] continuity of genealogy is maintained by metaphor, genealogy is undone whenever *translatio* is mobilized.” McCloone, *Translatio Imperii and Translatio Studii*, 21.

¹⁷ McCloone, *Translatio Imperii and Translatio Studii*, 10; Zrinka Stahuljak, *Bloodless Genealogies, of the French Middle Ages, Translatio, Kinship and Metaphor*, (Gainesville, University of Florida Press, 2005), 175.

¹⁸ McCloone, *Translatio Imperii and Translatio Studii*, 8; Sharon Kinoshita, *Medieval Boundaries*: (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania University Press, 2006); Geraldine Heng, *Empire of Magic: Medieval Romance and the politics of Cultural Fantasy*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

myopically focused on the European West with little consideration for how classical ideas and power were transmitted in an eastern Mediterranean context. Whereas the Central and Western Mediterranean cultures can draw on a rich literature of classical reception, such a model is not applicable for the eastern Mediterranean, where Greek sources endured a long history extending to antiquity.¹⁹ Furthermore, earlier interventions in understanding the metaphor of *translatio imperii* have assumed a singular metaphor. There has been no attention to the contexts in which *translatio* can occur. Using the fifteenth century Ottoman context and Alexandrine narrative, this discussion presents an analytical framework for a more nuanced understanding of *translatio imperii*. The emphasis on *translatio imperii* does not discount the simultaneous and indeed active process of *translatio studii* occurring in the fifteenth century, much of which Mehmed II himself supported. Thus, this framework for *translatio imperii* offers a means of understanding the relevance of the Alexandrine narrative to fifteenth-century Ottoman and eastern audiences, alike.

The following section further develops the question of *translatio imperii* as used in the Byzantine and Ottoman contexts. It shows how *translatio imperii* may be applied to the distant past of the Alexandrine context and how these themes might have resonated with the Ottoman audiences of the early and mid-fifteenth centuries.

A Model of *Translatio Imperii*

The following model of *translatio imperii* can be divided by the context in which the shift of power occurs: irrespective of the imperial paradigm, within the context of a single imperial paradigm or across imperial paradigms. Both *Alexandriana* and the Ottoman context invite the possibility of both contexts. In the fourth century BCE context, *translatio imperii* moved within

¹⁹ For a recent scholarly discussion of Mediterranean literature, see Sharon Kinoshita, "Mediterranean Literature," *A Companion to the Mediterranean*, eds, Nicolas Purcell and Sharon Konoshita, (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 314-329.

the context of either the Macedonian or the Persian Empires or between the two. Similarly, the fifteenth century allowed for transfers of power between the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, transition between imperial paradigms – *trans-imperial dynastic imperii* indicates a major transfer of power in which the successor empire could assume or reject the legacy of the previous empire. *Translatio imperii* within the context of a single imperial paradigm is characterized by the ruling dynasty. Shifts within in a single dynastic paradigm represent the simple process of royal or Sultanic succession. Shifts between dynastic paradigms denote the transfer of power from one ruling family to another.

Geographic *Translatio Imperii*

The first context for *translatio imperii* entails a shift in the geographic locus of power. It is closely associated with a central theme in the Alexander Romances – the founding of cities. The transfer of Roman political power in the third century CE, when the political center of the Roman Empire shifted from west to east, — from Rome to Constantinople – best exemplifies this variant of *geographic translatio imperii* within an Imperial paradigm. *Geographic translatio imperii* between imperial paradigms often entails the appropriation of culture and political ideology. These appropriations can resonate on several levels: political ideology, ceremony, use of urban space and material culture. Equally important, *translatio imperii*, creates a liminal period that offered the potential for interruptions in the transfer. The shift of power in the fourth century CE, from Rome to Constantinople, was a move to the more lucrative eastern Mediterranean sphere. It began a deliberate program to create an urban space and to move material culture to create a new nexus of imperial power that rivaled and imitated Rome.²⁰

²⁰ Judith Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising Life of a Medieval Empire*, (Princeton: University Press, 2007), 6-7.

The Alexander narratives offer both negative and positive examples of *translatio imperii*. Alexander's founding of cities provided a step transferring his own administrative power within his newly conquered territory. The founding of Alexandria established an enduring cultural capital in the eastern Mediterranean. Yet, Alexander rejected the notion of a geographic *translatio imperii vis á vis* the Achaemenid capital, Persepolis, which he burned to the ground.

This context of *translatio imperii* resonated with the Ottoman agenda of the fifteenth century. Constantinople offered a tantalizing prize for Ottoman rule. First, it offered a young conqueror already entranced by the Greek/Macedonian antiquity an opportunity to tap into the Romano-Byzantine legacy. Second, Constantinople offered a favorable geographic position to control access through the straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The change of Ottoman capitals, from Edirne to Constantinople offers an example of geographic *translatio imperii* within a single imperial paradigm. Thus, the geographic *translatio imperii* from Edirne to Constantinople propelled the Ottoman dynasty to a new height. By shifting power to Constantinople and assuming the title *Kaiser-i Rum*. (Caesar of Rome), Mehmed II fused the Ottoman and Roman political ideology. In doing so, he focused his ambition on political consolidation with the end goal of the conquest/liberation of Rome. Thirdly, by re-founding the city Mehmed II imitated Alexander. He participated in one of the fundamental deeds of conquest: the foundation of a city. Constantinople became an early modern Ottoman response to Alexander's founding of Alexandria in distant antiquity. In achieving this act, Mehmed II propelled himself to new levels of Ottoman dynastic achievement and set himself on equal ground with the models of kingship from distant antiquity.

This sub-type of *translatio imperii* offers insight into understanding shifts in either an existing imperial paradigm or the resting of geographic space to suit the needs of its new rulers.

Geographic *translatio imperii* connection to an urban space offers insight into the continuity and change effecting that space before and after the *translatio imperii* occurred.

***Translatio Imperii* within imperial paradigms**

Intra-dynastic translatio imperii

The second context is that in which *translatio imperii* perhaps has the broadest application. To be sure *intra-dynastic translatio imperii* resonated strongly within the Byzantine and Ottoman imperial paradigms. In this context, the focus is on the transfer of power between generations of rulers. Much as geographic *translatio imperii* is closely intertwined with urban space, *intra-dynastic translatio imperii* is closely intertwined with the dynastic genealogy. It represents the success or failure of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii*. Succession in both the Byzantine and Ottoman contexts signified a liminal period in the power of the state. Byzantine political history is filled with interventions in this transition of power. Ottoman narratives abound in which, despite the death of the sultan as an act of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii*, public notification is delayed averting military unrest or civil war. The Ottoman context presented an additional problem; living rivals and heirs contested the transference of the political power. Until the end of the sixteenth century, the Ottomans developed an internal balancing mechanism in the practice of fratricide that in most cases eliminated any rival claimants to the throne. To illustrate this point, *intra-dynastic translatio imperii* failed after two contexts in the fifteenth century: The Battle of Ankara (1403) and the death of Mehmed II (1481). Both events characterized a dangerous liminal period in the Ottoman dynastic succession that operated not only on the level of Anatolia and the Balkans but on the pan-Mediterranean level. Seen in this light, writers of historical narratives might have been keen to look to past periods when the dynastic succession was pivotal

to the continued existence of the empire such as the Wars of the Diadochi in the late fourth and early third centuries BCE.

One should avoid the temptation to conflate this context of *translatio imperii* with succession. *Intra-dynastic translatio imperii* offers an opportunity to read across historical and literary narratives to better understand how past societies engaged with their own real and imagined histories. Furthermore, intra-dynastic *translatio imperii* promises a broad range of application across historical narratives. It suggests a metaphor for connecting geographically and chronologically distant dynastic paradigms.

Inter-Dynastic Translatio Imperii

A third context of *translatio imperii* characterizes the shift in power between two dynastic families often signaling the end of one dynastic rule and points to the beginning of another. This dynastic transition could have significant implications for the existing imperial paradigm. It is not necessarily the case that the previous dynasty's narrative must end; some dynasties have narratives fictional or factual that continue beyond their period of rule. Of equal importance, other dynasties gained new leases on life as they were appropriated into the historical imaginations of subsequent narratives. The Sasanian Empire stands out as a prime example of one such dynasty that is the focus of later fabricated dynastic historical imaginations. The fate of Yazdegird III – the last of Sasanian King – offered an opportunity for a legend of dynastic survival through a daughter who was progenitor of the Ghaznavid dynasty. Similarly, the Safarids claimed descent from Khusrow II and the Buyids from Bahram V.²¹ (See Chapter 2.)

²¹ Julie Scott Meisami, "The Past in the Service of the Present: Two Views of Persian Medieval History," *Cultural Processes in Muslim and Arab Societies: Medieval and Early Modern Periods*. 14 No. 20 (1983): 247-275.

For the Ottoman period, *inter-dynastic translatio imperii* has the least relevance to the Ottoman paradigm; dynastic rule remained constant. Although stripped of their linguistic and religious baggage, and the accretions of nationalism, the Paleologoi and Osmanoğlus both vied for control of the eastern Mediterranean in the fifteenth century. With the conquest of Constantinople, power and rule transferred to the Ottomans. Mehmed II was personally receptive to promoting a self-image that appreciated the previous dynasty's legacy. Several of the court functionaries in Mehmed II's court either held positions in the Byzantine bureaucracy or were part of the Paleologos family.²² Moreover the threat of an *inter-dynastic translatio imperii* remained a possibility. Power families, such as the Çandarlıs in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and the Köprülüs in the seventeenth century, kept open the possibility that dynasty shift at the head of the Ottoman imperial paradigm could happen. *Inter-dynastic translatio imperii* offers a means to read transfers of power between dynastic contexts. It operates on a more localized scale the geographic *translatio imperii* offering an opportunity to view *translatio imperii* as a microcosm. For periods beyond the fifteenth century, this perspective reading of *translatio imperii* could shed light on continuity between dynastic families and bureaucratic structures.

Translatio Imperii between Imperial Paradigms

Trans-Imperial *Translatio Imperii*

In this context, the transfer of power shift occurs between imperial paradigms – one imperial paradigm supersedes another. Such a transfer in power can have a profound implication for the regions. As with other contexts for *translatio imperii*, *trans-imperial translatio imperii* is perhaps

²² For more on the role of the Paleologoi in the court of Mehmed II, see Theoharis Stravides, *The Sultan of Viziers: The Life and Times of Mahmud Pasha Angelović (1453-1474)*, (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

most closely associated with conquest. In the Alexander narrative Alexander's Macedonian Empire replaces Darius' Achaemenid Empire and is in succession replaced by the three Hellenistic empires. In the fifteenth century context, the Byzantine-Roman Empire is replaced by the Ottoman Empire. This context of *translatio imperii* raises many of the same questions as *geographic translatio imperii* appropriation, legacy, and continuity. *Trans-imperial translatio imperii* is embedded in the narrative of conquest and assimilation. It appropriates a past legacy and manufactures an imagined link between the two empires in question. Mehmed II's conquest of the city of Constantinople offered a treasure trove of Byzantine material culture that was subsumed into the new Ottoman vision of the city. In this manner, the process of *translatio imperii* is inter-dynastic and trans-imperial. The shift of power moved from one dynasty or empire to another. Alexander's capture of Persepolis and witness to the death of Darius III both offer examples of this context in which *translatio imperii* can occur.

Outside of the context of the *Alexandriana* and Ottoman narratives this context for inter-dynastic *translatio imperii* provides opportunity for application across literary and historical narratives in the Pre-Modern Middle East, Mediterranean and Europe, alike. The Arabic conquests of the seventh century and the transition from Umayyad to Abbasid rule offer one such opportunity.

Ebu'l Fatih: The Father of Conquest

The discussion turns now to the mid-fifteenth century reign of Mehmed II. Mehmed II, like Bayezid I and Alexander the Great, gained a reputation for his impressive military career and policies of political consolidation.²³ Equally important, Mehmed II played a pivotal role in

²³ Mehmed II's policy of consolidation was quite successful. His military campaigns brought under Ottoman rule several Anatolian (Karaman) and Rumelian (European) territories (Serbia, and Wallachia), which had previously

shaping the Ottoman imperial paradigm of the mid-fifteenth century. Mehmed II captured the city of Constantinople. As a result, he consolidated the Ottoman Empire and laid the groundwork for a broader Ottoman Mediterranean project. Mehmed II's vision of the Ottoman imperial paradigm deliberately appropriated Alexander as a model of a world conqueror. The intellectual environment of his princely education and his own intellectual interests play an instrumental role in understanding Mehmed's Ottoman imperial paradigm. Finally, understanding Mehmed II's imperial paradigm must be stripped of the mid-twentieth century baggage imposed on it by his mid-century biographer, Franz Babinger. Babinger's Mehmed colored both Mehmed II's image but also -- more importantly -- has distorted the understanding of the Ottoman role in the eastern Mediterranean in the fifteenth century. Thus, any attempt to understand the Ottoman imperial paradigm and its role in *translatio imperii* must consider Babinger's role in shaping the modern conception of the Ottoman fifteenth century.

Historical Sources

Seen from a twentieth-century perspective, Mehmed II's reign continued several geopolitical issues that plagued his father Murad II and his predecessors.²⁴ Furthermore, Mehmed's program of consolidation imitated that of his great-grandfather Bayezid I in scale and geographical scope.²⁵ Thus, these issues would have been recognizable to a late Byzantine Emperor. They speak to a Byzantine-Ottoman continuity within the context of *trans-imperial*

been problematic for his predecessors to maintain under Ottoman rule. For example, in Rumelia and Europe, Mehmed II extended campaigns against the Braković family and the Albanians under Sekander Beg (1443-1468). In Wallachia, he directed a campaign against Vlad Țepeș Dracul (1448; 1456-62; 1476-77) and brought the region under Ottoman rule. Finally, he threatened the champion of the Western Mediterranean, the papacy and Europe -- the Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus. (1458-1490). In the 1460s, Mehmed invaded and laid claim to the Greek territory of the Morea - the traditional seat of power for the Paleologan family. In 1461, Mehmed II captured Athens. Finally, in Asia Minor Mehmed II realized and solidified Ottoman rule over several of the *beyliks* such as Karaman and the Aq Qoyunlu in eastern Asia Minor.

²⁴ Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 3-7; George Ostrogorsky, *The History of the Byzantine State*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993),

²⁵ Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 25-33.

translatio imperii. They provide points of similarity between the Byzantine and Ottoman imperial paradigms. For example, both Byzantine and Ottoman rulers had to balance the European and Asian sides of the straits: *Rumelikon* (Rumelia) and *Anatolikon* (Anatolia).²⁶ This observation may seem superficial but it is important.

Mehmed II's Education and Intellectual interests

Mehmed II was born in 1432 in Edirne to Sultan Murad II and his wife Huma Hatun.²⁷ As a child, Mehmed was said to have been difficult, often resistant to attending his lessons.²⁸ In his adolescence, Mehmed II was an intelligent, curious, adept and somewhat wayward child who was eager to reap all he could from the education regimen befitting a young Ottoman crown prince.²⁹ Besides his formal education, Mehmed II gained hands-on experience through his administrative duties in Amasya. As was practice for Ottoman princes, Murad II sent the young Mehmed to Amasya to learn the process of governing and for his education when he was eleven. As with many early Ottoman sultans, Mehmed's early life, his term in the city of Amasya served

²⁶ George Ostrogorsky, *The History of the Byzantine State*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

²⁷ Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople*, 55; Pierce, *Imperial Harem*, 40; 52.

²⁸ Raby, *A Sultan of Paradox*: "Mehmed II as the Patron of the Arts", *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 5(1), (1981): 3.

²⁹ Raby, *Sultan of Paradox*, 2; As a child, Mehmed seems to have been interested in drawing. Several such drawings have been preserved in sketchbooks now maintained in the Topkapi Museum. Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox", 3. The description of Mehmed II by the Venetian, Languschi-Dofin reads as follows: "First, I will spend of the quality and nature of the Ottoman Mehmed, as he has been described by Don Jacomo Langusco, the Venetian, in his demonstration that he and all descendants will be formidable to the Christian world. Lord Mehmed, the Grand Turk is a young man (twenty-six years old), of nice complexion, with a rather large body, and of average stature. He is well trained in weapons; his presence causes more terror than respect; he seldom laughs, is quite prudent, is endowed with magnificent generosity, is stubborn in his undertakings, is most audacious in his projects, and aspires to equal glory of Alexander of Macedon. Daily he has the histories of Rome and of other nations read to him by a companion of his Cyriacus of Ancona, and by another Italian. He makes them read to him [Diogenes] Laertius, Herodotus, Livy, Quintus Curtius, the chronicles of the Popes, of the Emperors of the king of France and of the Lombards. He uses three languages: Turkish, Greek, and Slavic. With diligence, he has learned about the geography of Italy, the points where Anchises with Aeneas and Antenor landed, where the seat of the and that of the emperor are, the number of kingdoms in Europe, which he has played on a map the notes reams and provinces. Most of all he loves to study world geography and the science of warfare: he burns with desire to be lord and researches everything cautiously. Such is the man and such is a nature and we as Christians have to deal with him." Philippides, *Mehmed II the Conqueror*, 12.

two purposes: his education and experience in administration and rule.³⁰ His brief first reign was an ordeal in which he had to negotiate the divisions and machinations of Murad II's court.³¹

Much of what is known about Mehmed II from contemporary sources comes from a series of mid and late-fifteenth century sources in Greek and Ottoman.³² The Greek works of Doukas and Kritovoulos were narrated in the years before and after the capture of Constantinople.³³ They offer good source material for Mehmed's early campaigns and the wars with Venice. Ottoman sources, such as Neşri and Tursun Bey, also give an Ottoman narrative perspective.³⁴ Franz Babinger, Mehmed's mid-twentieth century biographer, distorted much of Mehmed II's imprint on the early Ottoman historical narrative.³⁵ (see below)

At the age of twelve, Mehmed held the reins of power when his father abdicated the throne to him in 1444. Lasting only a short period, Mehmed II's first reign was extremely turbulent but may have been of considerable value for Mehmed in shaping his conception of how he should rule when he ultimately became sultan in 1451. Mehmed II became sultan again in 1451 when his father died. He immediately set his sights on the capture of Constantinople as the new

³⁰ For more on the Princely households see: Pierce, *Imperial Harem*, 45-47. The princely courts at Amasya, Manissa, Trabzon, Edirne and Konya were models of the imperial court. They contained both an inner and outer household and were managed with the same titles one might find at the court of Topkapi. If the prince won the throne his staff would form the core of the imperial staff in Istanbul. Pierce, *Imperial Harem*, 46.

³¹ These divisions are perhaps best exemplified by the issue of peace or war with the Byzantine Empire. Chandarli Halil supported peace with Constantinople, whereas Zaganos Pasha led the camp in favor of war. See Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople*, 58.

³² There are sources in other languages. For example, the Venetian Nicolo Barbaro recorded his eyewitness account; there is also a wide variety of material in Latin and Italian, see Agostino Pertusi, *La Caduta di Costantinopoli*, Milano: Fondazione di L. Valla, 1999; vol 1-2; Agostino Pertusi, *Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo: significato e ruolo storico delle profezie sulla caduta di Costantinopoli in Oriente e in Occidente*, (Roma: Istituto Storico di Enrico Morino, 1988).

³³ Doukas, *The Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks*, trans. Harry Margoulias, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975); Kritovoulos, *The Life of Mehmed*, tran. Charles Riggs, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954). See also George Sphrantzes, *Chronicon*, E Bekker, (Bonn: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, 1838); and Laonikos Chalkokondylas, *De Origine ac Rebus Gestis Turcorum*, E. Bekker, ed. (Bonn: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, 1838).

³⁴ Tursun Bey, *Tarih-i Ebu'l Fatih*, ed. Mertol Tulum; (Istanbul: Fetih Cemiyeti, 1977); Tursun Bey, *The History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Hilal Inalcik and Rhoads Murphey, (Minneapolis, Bibliotheca Islamica, 1978); Nesri, *Cihanuma*, ed. Necdet Ozturk, (Istanbul: Bilge, Kultur, Sanat, 2013).

³⁵ Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953; 1954).

Ottoman capital. To achieve this feat, he followed in the footsteps of his great-grandfather Bayezid I, by constructing a larger fortress — *Bogaz Kesin;/Rumeli Hisari* — on the European shore of the Bosphorus to mirror Bayezid I's smaller *Anadolu Hisari*.³⁶

In terms of his formal education, Mehmed II was said to have had two tutors — one in Latin and one in Greek.³⁷ Cyriacus of Ancona, a mostly self-educated antiquarian who traveled the eastern Mediterranean is listed as one of Mehmed II Latin tutors.³⁸ As part of his Latin education, Mehmed had exposure to the Latin authors Laertius, Livy, Quintus Curtius, and the chronicles of the Popes, emperors, the kings of France and the Lombards.³⁹ As part of his Greek education he was exposed to the work of Homer, Herodotus, Plutarch, Arrian, and Ptolemy.⁴⁰

³⁶ Runciman, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, 65-67.

³⁷ Two sources corroborate Mehmed's two Latin tutors: Cyriacus of Ancona and another, anonymous tutor, thus corroborating that Mehmed II was indeed exposed to the Latin classics, particularly Quintus Curtius Rufus. See Chapter 1. The first is Jacobo Languischi, a papal scribe who provided an eye-witness account: "Un compagno d' Chiriaco d'Ancona et un altro italiano". Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona", 242. The second, Nicolas Sekoundinos, a Greek from Negroponte, who was also in the papal service as a translator at the Council of Florence/Ferrara (1438-39). (See Chapter 1 *De Familia Ottomanorum*). Sekoundinos noted that Mehmed had "duos medicos quorum alter latine alter grece est eridutus" Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona", 244.

³⁸ Julian Raby, *Cyriacus of Ancona and Mehmed II*, 242. Cyriacus of Ancona was a Renaissance humanist, who traveled through Greece and Asia Minor. He kept records of the sites of Antiquity, He was largely self-taught but enthusiastic for classical culture. Raby maintained that the question is not if Cyriacus of Ancona was Mehmed's tutor but the duration and extent of this relationship with Mehmed. Raby argued that the relationship began before the conquest of Constantinople and continued at least until sometime after its fall. His first piece of evidence for continued tutelage after the fall is a letter to Mehmed II, dated March 11, 1454 by Francesco Fileifo requesting the release of his mother Manfredina Doria where he referenced Cyriacus. The second piece of evidence is a drawing of the statue of Justinian I, once located in the Augusteum that contains Cyriacus' name, presumably as a signature. Julian Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona and Mehmed II", 243. See also, Cyril Mango, "The Columns of Justinian and his Successors," *Studies on Constantinople*, (Brookfield, Variorum, 1993), X, 1-20; "Justinian's Equestrian Statue," (Published as Letter to the editor, *The Art Bulletin*, XLI, New York, 1959)" in *Studies on Constantinople*, (Brookfield, Variorum, 1993), XI, 1-16. Philippides (2007) notes that Cyriacus of Ancona could not have been present in Constantinople after the conquest since he died in Cremona in 1452, which is documented in the Trotti Manuscript 373, fol. 41 of the Ambrosian Library in Milan. The confusion originates in a misreading of the Languschi-Dolfin manuscript. The manuscript abbreviation *d* was incorrectly read as *detto*, whereas the actual reading was shown to be *di*. Julian Raby. Marios Philippides, *Mehmed II Conqueror and the Fall of the Franco-Byzantine Levant to the Ottoman Turks: Some Western Views and Interpretations*, (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2007), 12; see also notes 10 and 11.

³⁹ Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona and Mehmed II," 242.

⁴⁰ Julian Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox: Mehmed the Conqueror as a patron of the arts", 4; Raby (1982) noted that there was a production of a copy of Homer's Illiad, produced just after Mehmed's visit to Troy in 1462. During this visit Kritovoulos reports that Mehmed II stood on the plain of Illium, "shaking his head a little. He then asked to see the tombs of Ajax and Achilles, who were fortunate enough to have had Homer as their eulogist. Raby, *A Sultan of Paradox*, 6.

Mehmed II's exposure to these texts is important; he would have been familiar with narratives of Alexander mainly through Quintus Curtius Rufus and Plutarch.

Mehmed II also took an interest in geography. He had the leading expert on the first century C.E. geographer Ptolemy prepare a wall-map of the world from the maps in Ptolemy's *Geography*. Amourtizes and one of his sons were commissioned to translate the work into Arabic.⁴¹

Mehmed the Collector: The Connoisseur of Greek Antiquity

The Material Culture of Constantinople

Julian Raby (1981) has pointed out that in the years following the conquest of Constantinople Mehmed II made several efforts to preserve the material culture of Byzantium.⁴² Mehmed II oversaw the removal of several pieces of *spolia* and material remains from sites across the city and to the palace ground in the years after the conquest.

Following the conquest of Constantinople, Mehmed II made several attempts to collect material remains found within the walls of the city. For example, Mehmed II ordered a large collection of Byzantine statuary, almost all the porphyry sarcophagi from the Church of the Apostles and the "miraculous" marble toad of Leo VI "The Wise" moved within the Topkapi Palace grounds.⁴³ Mehmed II also promoted the collection of sacred marbles and relics that reflected Constantinople in its twin guise of New Jerusalem and new Rome.⁴⁴

Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium

To the Supreme Emperor, King of Kings, Mehmed the fortunate,
the victor, the winner of trophies, the

⁴¹ Raby "A Sultan of Paradox," 6' Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople*, 187.

⁴² Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox," 6.

⁴³ Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox," 6.

⁴⁴ Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox," 6.

triumphant, the invincible, Lord of land and sea, by the will of
God, Kritovoulos the Islander, servant
of thy servants.⁴⁵

Mehmed was also known to have been an avid collector of manuscripts. One such manuscript was a copy of Arrian's *Anabasis*. This manuscript was a companion manuscript to Kritovoulos', *The Life of Mehmed*. Kritovoulos promoted Mehmed as the new Alexander. A copy of the Iliad appears shortly after Mehmed's trip to Troy in 1462.⁴⁶ Kritovoulos wrote that upon visiting Troy. Mehmed II stood on the plain and "shaking his head a little" he then asked to see the tombs of Ajax and Achilles, heroes of antiquity who had Homer as their eulogist.⁴⁷ Mehmed is said to have referred to himself as a Trojan come to revenge the East for all the injustice it had received from the West. Pope Pius II was said to have gone to great pains to refute this claim that the turchi were the descendants of the Teurci.⁴⁸

The extent to which Mehmed II went in his production of Greek texts and pursuit of Greek learning is still unclear. The Greek panegyrist of Mehmed II, Kritovoulos of Imbros tells us that Mehmed II pursued knowledge and exposure to the Greek and Latin classics. We are told that he had two tutors — one in Greek, and one in Latin who read to him from the "classical authors": Homer, Plutarch, Plato and Livy.⁴⁹ Moreover, Mehmed II had exposure to some of the most educated and productive scholars of the fifteenth century. His Greek tutor was Amourtizes, who had participated in the Council of Ferrara/Florence (1437/38). Mehmed often engaged in discussions with Genaddios whom he named patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Kritovoulos' dedication to Mehmed II, Kritovoulos of Imbros, *Life of Mehmed*, ed. Charles Riggs, (Princeton, University Press, 1954), 3.

⁴⁶ Julian Raby, "*Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium*" 21.

⁴⁷ Kritovoulos, *Life of Mehmed*, 181.

⁴⁸ Raby, *A Sultan of Paradox*, 6; Raby, "Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium," 21; Runcimen, *The Fall of Constantinople*, 167-8; See also Marios Philippides and Walter Hanak, "Troy and Constantinople," in *The Siege and Fall of Constantinople: Historiography, Topography and Military Studies*, 193-296.

⁴⁹ Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox," 4.

⁵⁰ Runciman, *The Fall of Constantinople*, 154-158; Raby, "A Sultan of Paradox," 4. Raby, "Mehmed II's Greek Scriptorium," 25. See Also, Julian Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona and the Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II," *Journal of the*

Kritovoulos tells us that Mehmed II identified with and cherished the lives of Plutarch — then only available in Greek. Mehmed identified most with Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Gnaeus Pompey.⁵¹ Plutarch set up Alexander and Julius Caesar as parallels.⁵² If one takes Kritovoulos at face value and these two figures were models for the young ruler, it raises some questions. Which qualities were these two figures modeling for Mehmed II? What aspects of the character of Caesar, and Alexander and Pompey might have resonated with Mehmed II? How do they shape our understandings of the fifteenth century Ottoman imperial paradigm? And finally, to what extent did the Ottomans under Mehmed II assume Byzantine political ideology and the broader corpus of texts from the classical world.⁵³

Arrian's *Anabasis*

Mehmed undertook a policy of collection and even stewardship of Greek manuscripts following the conquest of the city. It is difficult to decide the extent to which Mehmed collected Greek manuscripts, but his Greek scriptorium was a source for production into the 1470s. One of the most important single manuscripts to come from the Greek scriptorium was Kritovoulos' *Life*

Warbug and Courtauld Institutes, Vol. 43, 1980, 242-246. Cyriacus of Ancona was one of the luminaries of the Italian renaissance and a tutor of Mehmed II. Although largely self-taught Cyriacus instilled an interest in antiquity in Mehmed at an early age. Raby, "Cyriacus of Ancona," 242.

⁵¹ Kritovoulos of Imbros, *The Life of Mehmed*, 14.

⁵² Comparisons of the two occur often and one finds them linked to Greek learning of the fifteenth century. It may have resulted from Plutarch. Such familiarity may not have resulted from direct readership but from indirect exposure to the text. Diodorus Siculus and Arrian might have been available to a fifteenth century audience familiar with Greek. In the western context, only the Vulgate sources were available. A detailed investigation of the broader readership of these authors is beyond the scope of this discussion but may be helpful in future investigations of Ottoman engagement with ancient sources and their role in shaping the Ottoman imperial paradigm.

⁵³ This is a particularly poignant theme in the early modern historiography of the Ottoman State and is at the core of the debate between Herbert Gibbons and M. Fuat Köprülü. For more see: Lowry, *The Nature of the Early Ottoman State*, 5-6. Herbert Adams Gibbons, *The Foundation of the Ottoman Empire*, (Oxford: University Press, 1916); M. Fuat Köprülü, "Anadolu'da İslamiyet: Türk İstilasından Sonra Anadolu Tarih-i Dinsine Bir Nazar ve Bu Tarihin Menba'lari," *Dar ul-Fanun Edebiyat mucmua'si* 2 (1922), 281-311; 385-420; and 457-486). See also M. Fuat Köprülü, *Islam in Anatolia after the Turkish Invasion*, trans. and ed. G. Leiser, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993).

of *Mehmed*. As Raby notes, the artists of this work produced and bound it to be part of a matched set with Arrian's *Ανάβασις Αλεγάλνδρου* (The Ascent of Alexander).⁵⁴

Arrian's *Anabasis* (1.1.1-1.11.2) recorded Alexander's campaigns north of Macedonia, his military and political dealings with the Greek city states, and his continuation of his father's aspirations to launch a revenge campaign against Achaemenid dominated Asia Minor. Mehmed II similarly shared several circumstantial parallels that resonated with Alexander's early career; he too had to continue many of the policies of his own father Murad II. Mehmed II faced on several occasions a religiously unified Christian Europe, which alternated between attempts to convert him (Pope Pius II) and to launch a full-scale crusade to regain Constantinople.

Were these two works intended as a matched set for Mehmed II? If so, then what was the political stake in creating an imperial gift that linked Mehmed and the Ottoman Dynasty with Alexander and the Argaeads? As noted above, Mehmed II's political and military policies following the conquest followed a pattern of consolidation, both in Anatolia and in Rumelia. In this way, they resembled the consolidation policy of Bayezid I fifty years prior, when Ahmedi wrote his *Iskendername*. Mehmed II's plan for consolidation differed from Bayezid I in one key aspect. While a participant in the broader geo-politics of the Aegean (eastern Mediterranean), Bayezid I never aspired to extend Ottoman rule to the Mediterranean. Simply put, The Ottoman imperial paradigm had changed from one that ruled Anatolia and the Balkans to one that encompassed the Mediterranean. This new Ottoman "Mediterraneanized" imperial paradigm resonated with an idea of Mediterranean unity which evoked the political unity of the Roman Empire. Thus, the Mediterranean aspect of Alexander's campaigns and Mehmed's vision for a new imperial paradigm create an intriguing circumstantial parallel. As mentioned earlier, after

⁵⁴ Raby, "Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium," 18.

his extensive campaign to the East, Alexander had to return west to Babylon. In the months before his death, Diodorus Siculus stated that Alexander had begun plans to re-focus his efforts toward the Mediterranean with Carthage as his primary target.⁵⁵

The *Nakaşhane*

The *Nakaşhane* was the principal site for luxury manuscript production founded by Mehmed II after the conquest of Constantinople.⁵⁶ The *Nakaşhane* (scriptorium) revitalized the Ottoman court manuscript production in a way that far exceeded the earlier Greek scriptorium of Mehmed II. A central topic of production for court scriptoria were narrative histories which provided narratives for the lives and deeds of Ottoman sultans. These works collectively known as *Shehnames* set to narrative the birth, adventures, battles, deeds, accession and death of the Monarch. In this way, these works mirrored the narrative structure of Alexander Romances. They served as models for how a king should conduct his military campaigns, interact with his armies and treat his vanquished enemies. The *Süleymanname* detailed the conquests of the Balkans and the capture of Hungarian territories under Suleyman I. In similar fashion the *Bayan-i Menazil* detailed the eastern campaigns of Suleyman into Safavid Persia.⁵⁷ These *Shehnames*,

⁵⁵ In 323 BCE Alexander sent Krateras to the Mediterranean (Levantine) coast with orders to oversee constructing the Mediterranean fleet. See Arrian, *Anabasis*, 7.1.2; James Romm, ed, *The Landmark Arrian*, 273; FN 7.1.2 d-e. Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander* 10:17-8; John Yardley, ed., *The History of Alexander*, 239. Alexander's plans for Mediterranean expansion were never realized as he died in 323 BCE. In this respect, they provided a poor model for Mediterranean conquest in the fifteenth century. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheka Historica*, (18.4.1)

⁵⁶ Zeynep Atbas, "Illustrated Manuscripts and Miniature Paintings," in the *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, Gabor Agoston and Bruce Masters, eds, (New York: Infobase, 2009), 265-273. Mehmed took interest in emulating Persian manuscript production in part to emulate the court cultures where luxury manuscript production was an important part of royal patronage but also to promote himself as a world conqueror. Atbas (2009) notes that Mehmed produced a mid-fifteenth century *Iskendernama* in the manuscript workshop in Edirne and cites this manuscript among a few others as evidence of a similar workshop in the previous Ottoman capital. See also, Julian Raby and Zeren Tanindi, *Turkish Bookbinding in the Fifteenth Century*, (London: Paul Holberton, 2006).

⁵⁷ Matrakci Nasuhu'l Silahi, *Bayan-i Manazil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn i Sultan Suleyman Han*, (Ankara: Turk Dil Kurumu, 2014).

like the *Iskendername* of Ahmedi, provided an Ottoman imperial paradigm by which the Ottoman sultans could describe and account there the territory under their rule. These works established and revised the Ottoman imperial paradigm. This representation and imprint of the imperial paradigm occurred both in textual and visual media. Both the *Bayan-i Menazil* and the *Süleymanname* contain images of the cities and landscapes of the territories which fell under Ottoman rule. Large cities such as Baghdad and Isfahan have visual renderings in the *Bayan-i Menazil*. Other sixteenth century works such as *Kitab-Bahriye*, an Ottoman portolan atlas, provided a reinforced Ottoman Mediterranean paradigm with a cartographic seal that showed in graphic detail and textual narrative the extent of the Ottoman *imperium*.

As a political figure, Mehmed II stands out as an intriguing figure in the fields of Ottoman, Byzantine and Mediterranean history. His similarities to Alexander the Great were both self-promoted and perpetuated by his court. His policies of conquest and long years of military campaigning dominate his political career. In this way, his career reflects Alexander the Great. Moreover, Mehmed's career as a world conquer shared the geographic space of the early years of Alexander's military campaigns. Equally important, like Alexander the Great, Mehmed II planned to conquer the Mediterranean. Like Alexander, these plans never came to fruition. Whereas Alexander set his sights far to the east incorporating the lands of Achaemenid Persia and India, Mehmed's eastern campaigns never truly left the confines of Anatolia; instead he looked West toward Rome. Whereas Alexander strove for a revenge campaign to defeat the Achaemenid Empire, Mehmed aimed for a campaign of reunification of the Mediterranean Sea. Seen in this light, the careers of Mehmed II and Alexander III are mirror images of each other. Where Mehmed succeeded -- the conquest and rule of the Balkans, Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean, Alexander only scratched the surface during his early career. Similarly,

Alexander's eastern campaign against Persia does not have a reasonable Ottoman analog until three generations later under Mehmed II's great-grandson Süleyman I against the Safavid Empire.

Fatih and his Modern Biographer: Babinger's Mehmed II

In the 1950s, around the time of the 500th anniversary of the conquest of the city, the German orientalist Franz Babinger published his biography of Mehmed II entitled *Mehmed II and his time*. The work summarized the Sultan's life and military conquests. In its format, it followed the autobiography of Mehmed II written in the fifteenth century. Both accounts follow the military campaigns and conquests of Mehmed II through the 1460s and 1470s. In this format, they resonated well with Arrian's work on Alexander the III. As they present a narrated *res gestae* of the respective rulers, Babinger used the best-known Greek sources such as Doukas, Sphrantzes, and Kritovoulos and documents from the archives in Dobrovnik (Ragusa), Venice and the Vatican.⁵⁸

Babinger's monograph, while substantive and well-received, was hobbled by the paradigms through which he screened the sources--the late-nineteenth-century military and political ideological baggage of German scholarship, intensified by his experiences as an officer on the WWI Ottoman front. Following the 1453 capture of Constantinople, Sultan Mehmed II appropriated much of the material and ceremonial culture of Byzantium. These ideological and

⁵⁸ The Turkish Ottomanist Hilal Inalcik was one of the first to criticize the work in two reviews dated 1960 and 1979. Halil Inalcik, "Mehmed the Conqueror and his time," *Speculum* (1960) 408 – 427; Halil Inalcik, "Mehmed the Conqueror and his Time," *The American Historical Review*, 84(2), (1979): 510-512. In more recent years, Babinger's scholarship has come under fire from scholars such as Ali Anooshahr (1993), who has addressed Babinger's pro-Nazi sentiments. Ali Anooshahr, "Franz Babinger and the Legacy of the "German Counter Revolution in Early Modern Persian Historiography," in *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity*, eds Kameron Scott Aghaie and Afsin Marashi, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 26-47.

artistic borrowings bolstered an already-extensive, consistent pattern in the Islamic view of the ruler as an integral part of a system balancing military might and moral society.

Mehmed II's reinvention of Constantinople as both cultural center and new dynastic capital also functioned as an act of *translatio imperii* (transfer of power) from Byzantine-Roman rule to Ottoman rule. Mehmed II clearly embraced the image of the "world conqueror" by aiming to unite the new Rome with her ancient predecessor and by identifying himself with Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar.⁵⁹

When seen from the perspective of Mediterranean history, Babinger's reading of Mehmed II is even more problematic. It carries with it earlier German Roman historical models that turn away from the fifteenth century Mediterranean and focus on an antiquated imagined Roman Danube frontier. Much of this comes to light in Babinger's accounts of the Ottoman conflicts with the Kingdom of Hungary. Circumstantial parallelism may shape this narrative by creating a parallel narrative between the second century Trajanic period and the fifteenth century Ottoman period but this observation is preliminary and requires further investigations. Babinger's monograph overlooked an important fifteenth-century reality. The Kingdom of Hungary had a vested stake in the Mediterranean. To be sure, in the thirteenth century the Kingdom of Hungary was a littoral Mediterranean power possessing such cities as Zara along the Croatian coast. While these littoral possessions were lost by the fifteenth century, the Kingdom of Hungary still had strong political and intellectual ties to the Mediterranean. Mathias Corvinus (1458-1490)

59 Julian Raby, "Mehmet the Conqueror's Greek Scriptorium," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 37, 1983, 18. Gülrü Necipoğlu, *Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation: Artistic Conversations with Renaissance Italy in Mehmed II's Constantinople*, in *Muqarnas*, 29(1), (2012): 6-9; Kritovoulos wrote: "He immediately overran the whole world in his calculation and resolved to rule it in emulation of Alexander and Pompey and the Caesars and kings and generals of their sort." Gülrü Necipoğlu, "Visual Cosmopolitanism and Creative Translation," 57; Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 14. Gülrü Necipoğlu (2012) notes Nikolaos Sekoundinos' (Italian: Niccolo Sagundino) report that Mehmet II was encouraged by current omens and old prophecies to make himself master of Rome and Italy. Negipoğlu, *Visual Cosmopolitanism and Visual Translation*; 7. Sekoundino's report is in Agustino Pertusi, *Caduta di Costantonapoli: L'echo nell mundo*, (Roma: Fondazione Lorenzo Valla), 126-141.

married Beatrice, the daughter of King Ferdinand I (Ferrante) of Naples (1458-1494). Through this marriage, Corvinus established one of, if not the most impressive libraries in central Europe and was a participant in the ongoing humanist discussions of the mid fifteenth century. Hungary had fallen under the sway of the papacy as crucial in launching an all-out crusade in northern Hungary. Matthias Corvinus' court was linked with the court of the Sforzas in Milan. The Kingdom of Hungary had a far more complex role in the broader Mediterranean than as a trans-Danubian political entity and crusader kingdom that is portrayed in Babinger's Mehmed the Conqueror. The conquest of Wallachia under Mehmed II stressed political relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. This contentious exchange outlasted Mehmed II and resurfaced in the sixteenth century conquest of Hungary under the reign of Süleyman I. Babinger's treatment of the Danube front illustrated an important point: to achieve a deeper understanding of the fifteenth century Ottoman reality one must include a Mediterranean reading of Mehmed's campaigns that eschews binary models such as the Ottoman Empire versus the Kingdom of Hungary.

These campaigns were a part of a larger Mediterranean reality that encapsulated the fifteenth century. To illustrate this point, the period after Mehmed II's death displayed the Mediterranean quality of the fifteenth century Ottoman reality. After Mehmed II died, a rivalry for the throne ensued between Mehmed's two sons – Bayezid II and Cem — ushering in a fourteen year-period from 1481 - 1495 in which the Ottoman Sultanate was disputed. (See the previous chapter.) During this period, the contest for the Ottoman throne took on a Mediterranean-wide scale of intrigue. Cem fled first to the kingdom of Karaman, then to Mamluk Egypt. Following his stay in Egypt he enjoyed a brief stay with the Knights Hospitaliers on Rhodes. Following his time on Rhodes he went to France and to Italy. Charles VI of France captured him and he died in

captivity in January of 1495. During this period of his Mediterranean odyssey Cem presented a tantalizing bargaining chip to Mediterranean powers such as Naples, the Kingdom of Hungary, and the papacy who wanted either to sow dissension in the Ottoman state or gain control of a rival Ottoman ruler to replace the reigning Sultan Bayezid II.⁶⁰

Vision and Reality: Aspirations of Conquest and the Fifteenth Century Ottoman Imperial Paradigm

The Greek historian Kritovoulos wrote that Mehmed held Alexander the Great, Gnaeus Pompey and Julius Caesar as personal models of leadership. Kritovoulos is less forthcoming on which aspects of these men Mehmed revered and sought to emulate. The figure of Alexander might have presented a tantalizing model for a young ruler who sought to reconsolidate his Imperial territory. The capture of Constantinople offered an opportunity to strengthen and unify the two crucial halves of Ottoman territory — Rumelia and Anatolia. Anatolian emirs vacillated between Ottoman control and independence through the fifteenth century. During the 1460s and 1470s, Mehmed II focused on bringing Karaman under Ottoman control. Thus, both the *Iskendername* and the figure of Alexander offered a proper model for conquest. There were other personal and imperial models that might have been useful in the fifteenth century. Both in the quality of his armies and in the territorial extent of his conquest, Mahmud of Ghazna had offered a very tantalizing contender.⁶¹ Timur presented a mirror image of Alexander; he conquered from

⁶⁰ Gabor Agoston, "Cem Sultan," in *The Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Gabor Agoston and Bruce Masters, (New York: InfoBase Publishing, 2009), 128-130.

⁶¹ Ali Anooshahr, *The Ghazi Kings*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 43-44.

East to West. Similarly, Timur offered a model for administration absent in either Mahmud of Ghazna or Alexander.⁶²

The Ottoman Imperial Paradigm in the Mid-fifteenth Century

Top: Here all the Romans came out to meet him with dances and drums, holding laurel branches in their hands.

Bottom: Here all the kings of the West came out to meet him and appease him with gifts.

Top: This image shows Alexander going on campaign. The Frankish population (*Fireng taifesi*) and head priests (*has kesisleri*) of the Golden Apple (Kizil Elma, i.e. Rome—see above) take laurel leaves in their hands and come out to greet him with honor.

Bottom: This image shows how while Alexander was on campaign, the lords (*beğler*) and sons of lords (*beğzadeler*) of the Golden Apple (Rome) came out to greet him, in giving him gifts.⁶³

Like Alexander, Mehmed II's vision of his imperial power exceeded the territorial extent he could control. His capture of Otranto — written about in Italian historiography — gave circumstantial evidence for an intent to continue up the Italic peninsula to Rome.⁶⁴ Yet, the need

⁶² Alexander's personal accomplishments as an administrator were brief. The crisis of succession following his death could only serve as a negative model to establish a dynasty and promote successful *intra-dynastic imperii*. In contrast, Mehmed II's succession by Ottoman standards was without incident. He had only his infant half-brother Ahmed to contend with whom he had strangled. This policy contrasted to succession issues following the death of Mehmed II which remained a Mediterranean wide affair. Cem contested the rule of Bayezid II appealing first to Karaman then to the Mamluks and Knights of St. John (*Hospitaliers*) on Rhodes and to western Mediterranean powers. This period of Bayezid II's rule holds more opportunities for scholarly intervention. Cem's goal was to link up with the Hungarian King Janós Hunyadi. Pope Pius II had placed on Hunyadi the nickname of "athlete of Christ" to retake the conquered Byzantine lands from Ottoman possession. Yet, it remains unclear to what extent the Christian Mediterranean powers sought to gain Cem as a counter-claimant to the Ottoman sultanate. Bayezid II's response to the longstanding rival claimant to the Ottoman Sultanate is yet unclear. For more on Cem Sultan see: Jacques Lefort, *Documents Grecs Dans Les Archive de Topkapı Sarayı: Contribution à Cem Sultan, Topkapı Sarayı Arşivlerinin Yunanca Belgeleri: Cem Sultan'ın Tarihî Katkı*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1981). John Freely, *Cem Sultan: The Adventures of a Captive Turkish Prince in Renaissance Europe*, (London, Harper Collins, 2004).

⁶³ Kastritses, *The Trebizond Alexander Manuscript*, 121

⁶⁴ For the scholarship in Italian on Otranto, see: Cossimo Fossiano Fonseca, *Otranto, 1480*, 2 vols. (Otranto, 1986); Alesio Bombaci, "Venezia e l'impresa Turca di Otranto," *Rivista Storica Italiana* 66, (2) (1954): 159-203; Cosimo Damiano Fonseca, ed., *Otranto 1480: Atti Convegno Internazionale di Studio Promosso in occasione del Centenario della Caduta di Otranto ad Opera Dei Turchi, Otranto 19-23, Maggio, 1980*, (Otranto: Galatina

to satisfy his armies who had fought during these long years of war troubled Mehmed, as it had Alexander. But, unlike Alexander Mehmed II was in poor health and much older.⁶⁵ Had Mehmed completed his goal and conquered Rome, he might have been well-positioned to impose a political unity on the Mediterranean, unseen since the fifth century. This potential for reasserting the Mediterranean unity is important; it underscored the lasting ideal of a politically unified Mediterranean. The political unity of the Roman Empire was not an ideal that died with late antiquity. *Translatio imperii* was inherent in Mehmed II's dream of conquest/unification. In this circular conception of *translatio imperii*, power came full circle. With the capture of Rome Mehmed II might have captured both the birthplace of Roman rule and the holy city of its stewardship. Mediterranean unity had survived in cultural and economic terms before the fifteenth century and gained a resurgence of importance in the mid-decades of the fifteenth century with the Council of Ferrara/Florence in 1438/39.⁶⁶ This brand of unity might have tied the Eastern Mediterranean together in terms of a unified Christian Catholic faith that might have been unseen since the eleventh century. The Ottoman Empire was a beneficiary of the sixteenth century wars of reformation because, it fractured the European unity of Roman Catholicism. Crusading champion states like the Kingdom of Hungary were defanged by a loss of support of Western European crusading vigor and the Ottoman military apparatus that threatened at their doorstep.

Mehmed's Mediterranean Vision

Congedo Editore, 1986).

⁶⁵ Kritoboulos, *The Life of Mehmed*, 219-222.

⁶⁶ Joseph S. Gill, *The Council of Florence*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1959).

Mehmed II had a plan for Mediterranean conquest. Unlike Alexander the Great, his plan came far closer to realization in his capture of the city of Otranto. Otranto remains understudied among Ottoman scholars. Its most prominent studies are in Italian and somewhat dated. Here, Mehmet imitates his role model Alexander; he dies before he could realize his plans for Mediterranean conquest. But if Mehmed II envisioned Mediterranean conquests, and he was not following Alexander then who was his model? Plutarch provides one possibility through his life of Pompey.⁶⁷ Pompey serves as a better model for Mediterranean Conquest; he was tasked by the senate to clear the waters of the Mediterranean from piracy.⁶⁸ The *Lex Gabinia* granted proconsular imperium over the entire Mediterranean Sea.⁶⁹ Through this unprecedented law,

⁶⁷ In addition to Kritovoulos, the Italian “philo-turcs” also compared him to Pompey Magnus, Alexander, and Julius Caesar and complimented him on his daily reading of Arrian and Plutarch, Kritovoulos, *History of Mehmed*, 13. James Hankins, “Renaissance Crusader Literature: Humanist Crusade Literature in the Age of Mehmed II,” in *The Dumbarton Oaks Papers, Vol. 49, Symposium on Byzantium and the Italians 13th-15th Century*, 143.

⁶⁸ “For the time being, then, the assembly was dissolved; but when the day came for the vote upon the law, Pompey withdrew privately into the country. On hearing, however, that the law [Lex Gabinia] had been passed, he entered the city by night, feeling that he was sure to awaken envy if the people thronged to meet him. But when day came, he appeared in public and offered sacrifice, and at an assembly held for him he managed to get many other things besides those already voted, and almost doubled his armament. For five hundred ships were manned for him, and a hundred and twenty thousand men-at-arms and five thousand horsemen were raised. Twenty-four men who had held command or served as praetors were chosen from the senate by him, and he had two quaestors. And since the prices of provisions immediately fell, the people were moved to say in their joy that the very name of Pompey had put an end to the war. Plutarch, *The Life of Pompey*, 26:1-2, Loeb Classics edition, 181.

However, he divided the waters and the adjacent coasts of the Mediterranean Sea into thirteen districts, and assigned to each a certain number of ships with a commander, and with his forces thus scattered in all quarters he encompassed whole fleets of piratical ships that fell in his way, and straightway hunted them down and brought them into port; others succeeded in dispersing and escaping, and sought their hive, as it were, hurrying from all quarters into Cilicia. Against these Pompey intended to proceed in person with his sixty best ships. He did not, however, sail against them until he had entirely cleared of their pirates the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Libyan Sea, and the sea about Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily, in forty days all told. This was owing to his own tireless energy and the zeal of his lieutenants. Plutarch, *The Life of Pompey*, (26, 3-4), Loeb Classics Edition, 183.

⁶⁹ “This power extended its operations over the whole of our Mediterranean Sea, making it unnavigable and closed to all commerce. This was what most of all inclined the Romans, who were hard put to it to get provisions and expected a great scarcity, to send out Pompey with a commission to take the sea away from the pirates. Gabinius, one of Pompey's intimates, drew up a law which gave him, not an admiralty, but an out-and-out monarchy and irresponsible power over all men. For the law gave him dominion over the sea this side of the Pillars of Hercules, over all the mainland to the distance of four hundred furlongs from the sea. These limits included almost all places in the Roman world, and the greatest nations and most powerful kings were comprised within them. Besides this, he was empowered to choose fifteen legates from the senate for the several principalities, and to take from the public treasuries and the tax-collectors as much money as he wished, and to have two hundred ships, with full power over the number and levying of soldiers and oarsmen.” Plutarch, *The Life of Pompey*, 24:1-3, Loeb Classics Edition, 178-9.

Pompey could extend the imperial power of the late Roman republic beyond the littoral shores of the Mediterranean and set up Roman hegemony in the Mediterranean. This extension of Roman power was important and it represented one manifestation of the politically unified Roman Mediterranean that later became the benchmark for Mediterranean unity.

Reverence for Alexander was complex in the Roman world. As a Macedonian king and successor to the Persian title of *Shahanshah* (King of Kings), Alexander presented an anathematic model during the Roman republic. Plutarch notes that Pompey revered Alexander's campaigns and conquests.⁷⁰ Considering that Pompey's career highlights focused on the Western Mediterranean provinces of Hispanic and the Mediterranean piracy, Pompey revered not the territorial aspects of conquest represented in the Alexander narrative but his capacity as a world conqueror. Seen in this light, Alexander served as two models of state rule. On the one hand, he offered a model of the successful conqueror who pushed the boundaries of the known world. This facet of Alexander offered a model of territorial conquest. Read as 'mirror for princes' literature it shows the readers the territorial extent of the known world and territorial control. It provides ethnographic material on the people living in these areas and showed if only sub-textually how to conquer and rule these people. On the second level, one can read these narratives as biographical synopses that speak at the personal level. Such synopses offered Alexander as a model conqueror highlighting the personal qualities one should have to travel to the ends of the earth. True at least in Plutarch's moralizing style, each person in the biographical essays offered a positive model for readers of the Roman world. Unlike later 'mirrors for

⁷⁰ "His age, at this time, as those insist who compare him in all points to Alexander and force the parallel, was less than thirty-four years, though in fact he was nearly forty. How happy would it have been for him if he had ended his life at this point, up to which he enjoyed the good fortune of Alexander! For succeeding time brought him only success that made him odious, and failure that was irreparable." Plutarch, *The Life of Pompey*, 46.1, Loeb Classics, Edition, 233.

princes' Plutarch offers a model based on Roman Imperial values. This model captured a literate Roman elite but differed from "mirrors for princes" literature in that its audience was not a ruler, *per se*. Plutarch's characterization of the men and their individual accomplishments served as models for success. While simplistic, the popularity of such models of success had a significant influence on nineteenth century historiography. It remained popular in the early modern world. Equally important, after its translation into Latin in the sixteenth century Plutarch's *Lives*, underwent prolific printing and circulation.⁷¹ Yet, the Eastern Mediterranean had continuous access to these works as there were preserved in the original Greek in Byzantium.

An Imperium Otthomanorum

The conquest of Constantinople represented an important ideological shift for the Ottoman state project. On one level, it achieved the century-long goal of raising the banner of Islam over the dilapidated cityscape of Constantinople. It provided the Ottomans with a strategically located central capital from which they could rule both Rumelia and Anatolia. In capturing the city, the Ottomans were about to take ownership of the Romano-Byzantine legacy that had remained a cornerstone in the political ideology of Byzantium. In the years following the conquest of the city, Mehmed II actively promoted *translatio imperii* that sought to link a re-envisioned Ottoman state power with that of the Byzantine past through a policy of consolidation. Thus, the city played an important role. Since the disastrous sack of the city in 1204, and after the siege of the city in 1396-1405 by Bayezid I — Constantinople had become depopulated.⁷² In this manner,

⁷¹ For more on the translation and reception of Plutarch into the vernacular such as French and Spanish see Olyvier Guerrier, "The Renaissance in France, in *A Companion to Plutarch*", Mark Beck, ed., Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 544-548 and Aurelio Perez Jimenez, "The reception of Plutarch in Spain," in *A Companion to Plutarch*", Mark Beck, ed., Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 556-76.

⁷² Necipoğlu, *Between the Latins and the Romans*, 152.

Mehmed II played upon the plurality of the imperial territory to move various groups to the city.⁷³ Other policies such as his approach toward the Orthodox Christian community provided a means of inclusion for the various ethnic groups within the empire.

Conclusion: The Tempo of Conquest

This chapter has provided and an overview of the historical context and historiography of the fifteenth century Ottoman state. It has argued that the fifteenth century as a period of transition resonates strongly with the theme of *translatio imperii*. This *topos* is closely related to the theme of *translatio studii* transference of study (knowledge). Both occurred within the fifteenth century Ottoman context. The discussion of *translatio imperii* raises the question of a changing Ottoman imperial paradigm throughout the fifteenth century. While early parts of the dissertation have focused on the Alexander narrative — historical and romanticized, this chapter sought bring to life the mid-fifteenth century and underscore *translatio imperii* in understanding the century. The themes of *translatio imperii* resonate with the cultural history of the fifteenth-century Ottoman state history.

If fifteenth century *translatio imperii* were a musical composition, it might open the century with Bayezid I's besieging of Constantinople, rise in tempo during the struggle with Timur, crescendo to a fervent pitch during the Ottoman Civil War then reached a *diminuendo* during the 1410s under Mehmed I. In the 1420s and 1430s, the tempo might again pick up pace during the reign of Murad II. It might pick up in tempo during his siege of Constantinople in 1422 and then change in tempo during the end of his first reign when Mehmed II takes control of the state for a brief period and then again decrease in tempo again towards the end of his reign. The 1450s

⁷³ Kafecioglu, *Istanbul/Konstaninopolis*, 17.

might increase in tempo and reach an even higher crescendo than the 1400s with the conquest of Constantinople. The tempo might then even out during Mehmed's reign with the fast pace peaking again with his death in 1481 where the tempo of *translatio imperii* might again reach a third crescendo less intense than both the beginning and mid-century but still audible to the historian's ear.

Finally, this chapter has suggested a variable model of *translatio imperii* that will aid in providing deeper readings of the fifteenth century and incorporating the Alexander Romance in our historical understanding of this period. The fifteenth century encapsulated a greater *translatio imperii* that aspired to envelope the Mediterranean world which operated within its own semi-permeable boundaries since antiquity. New innovations in technology reshaped the Mediterranean world and challenged the epistemological foundations. The Alexander Romances penned in several languages there encapsulated that broader phenomenon. Conquest and discovery went hand in hand in the Alexander Romance tradition -- received as comfortably in the third century CE as they had been in the fifteenth century CE. In the fifth and final chapter, we will investigate how the narratives of these two centuries provide circumstantial parallels between the two periods.

Chapter 5 - The Mirror of the World: Circumstantial parallelism and the Fifteenth Century Ottoman Stake in Textual *Alexandriana*

The throne is over for me and my luck has run out. So, the high heavens revolve; their turning is toward sorrow, and their profit is pain. Look at me before you say, 'I am exalted before all the great company of heroes'. Know that evil and good both come from god and see that you remain grateful to him for as long as you live. My own state shows you the truth of what I say. Look how I, who had such sovereignty and glory and wealth, am now despised by everyone. I who never injured anyone, who had such armor and such armies, such splendid horses, such crowns and thrones, who had such sons and relatives, and so many allies whose hearts bore my brand.¹

Circumstantial parallels between the fourth century BCE and early fifteenth century narratives offer a possible model for understanding the deeper historical imagination of the fifteenth century Ottoman state. The image of Alexander encapsulated a model world-conqueror who resonated with fifteenth century themes of *translatio imperii* (transfer of power). An implication related to *translatio imperii* holds that the sovereign has knowledge of the territory in which he governs and the realms laying beyond those borders. Asserting one's rule with the territory and expanding one's rule beyond the borders of that territory lies at the core of geographic *translatio imperii*. *Translatio imperii* offers one model for investigating similarity between distant periods. Thus, it facilitates deeper readings of a second narrative aspect of the Alexandrine and Ottoman narratives: circumstantial parallelism.

¹ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, ed. Dick Davis, (New York: Penguin, 2004), 468. This passage is taken from the opening of Dara's speech to Iskender and initiates the inter-dynastic and *trans-imperial translatio imperii* between Achaemenid and Argaeid, Persia and Macedon.

When Ahmedi produced his *Iskendername*, he created an ideological and genealogical link between the Ottoman dynasty and the Argaead dynasty of Alexander the Great (Iskender), extending through Sasanian Persian kingship. This link implied a broader connection to the Achaemenid lineage through Alexander III's and Darius III's connection as half-brothers.² The death of Darius III, the last Achaemenid king represented a crucial point in the Alexandrine narratives.³ It transcended the division between myth and reality, history and literature, romance and history. Macedonian kingship replaced Persian kingship. This event represented one example of *inter-dynastic translatio imperii* in the broader corpus of textual *Alexandriana* and Ottoman historical narratives (see previous chapter). The death of the king offered an opportunity to read the narrative event in terms of circumstantial parallelism. Thus, one can read later Ottoman narratives next to the Alexandrine narratives for insight into how past events differed from the deaths of contemporary Ottoman sultans. Such readings clarify how the distant past event was recorded and viewed by a contemporary Ottoman audience.

Thus, *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism have a close relationship, but act as independent aspects of the narrative structure. Thus, circumstantial parallels between the fourth century BCE and early fifteenth century CE narratives offer a possible model for understanding

² Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, ed. Dick Davis, (New York: Penguin, 2004), 454-55.

³ Schimmel, *Two-Colored Brocade*, 113. According to Ferdowsi's *Shahname*, at the time of his death, Dara says to Iskender. "You have achieved fame, but see that you fear the world's Creator, who has made the heavens and the earth and time, and the strong and the weak. Look after my children and my family and my veiled wise women. Ask for my daughter's hand in marriage, and keep her gently and in comfort in the court. Her mother named her Rowshanak and she saw that the world was always a place of happiness and delight for her... It may be that you will have a son with her and that the name of Esfendyar will be renewed in him. That he will preserve the fires of Zoroastrianism and live by the Zend-Avesta, keeping the Feasts of Sadeh and No-Ruz and preserving our fire temples. Such a son will honor Hormozd and the sun and the moon and wash his soul and face in the waters of wisdom; he will renew the ways of Lohrasp and Goshtasp, treating men according to their station whether it be high or low, he will make our faith flourish and his days will be fortunate." Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, ed. Dick Davis, (New York: Penguin, 2004), 448-9. This portion of Dara's death speech encapsulates the moment of *trans-imperial translatio imperii*. Alexander is charged with continuing the Persian imperial paradigm and promoting the state religion, Zoroastrianism. Alexander accepts Dara's charge saying, "O King I accept all that you have said and I shall not stray from your words while I am within the borders of your kingdom. I shall accomplish the good deeds you recommend and your wisdom shall be my guide." Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 469.

the deeper historical imagination of the fifteenth century Ottoman state. The image of Alexander encapsulated a model world-conqueror and resonated with the fifteenth century themes of *translatio imperii*. The implication that the sovereign has access to knowledge of the territory he governs and the realms that lay beyond those borders is linked to *translatio imperii*. Jamshid's cup and Alexander's mirror, two metaphors from Persian and Ottoman literature, offer models for discerning the nuances between the ruler and his territory and his vision of territorial expansion.

Narrative and Historical Imaginations

The relationship between history and historical imagination deserves further consideration. Hayden White (1973) analyzed this relationship for nineteenth century historiographic works.⁴ While White says little about the pre-nineteenth century works, he underscored the importance of narrative structure in the creation of historical imagination. White's work plays an important role in considering the Alexander Romances and their historical narratives. The romanticized narratives drew from the historical narratives. They represented idealized, mythologized versions of these historical narratives and the outer limits to which the historical narratives can extend. They drew on themes of geography and exploration to underscore Alexander's successes. Thus, they left an indelible mark on the ancient, medieval worlds, and early modern worlds of the Mediterranean and Middle East.

Equally important, historical imagination plays a pivotal role in pre-modern historical narratives. *Translatio imperii* offers a focal point for investigating the intersection between historical reality and historical imagination. As noted in the previous chapter, *translatio imperii*

⁴ Hayden White, *Metahistory: Historical Imaginations in Nineteenth Century Europe*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973).

works in several contexts that could be expressed in a typology. And yet, the previous discussion of trans-imperial, inter-dynastic and intra-dynastic and geographic *translatio imperii* have not yet addressed how *translatio imperii* relates to conquest. Circumstantial parallelism offers more insight into this question. Conquered territory must participate in geographic *translatio imperii* in which the sovereignty of the territories transfers to the sovereignty of the new ruler. This period of transition provided a liminal period during which the power of the ruler is in a state of transition. This transitional form or *translatio imperii* represented a second level of circumstantial parallelism. By expanding imperial power, Alexander the Great complicated how a ruler learned about his territory and the new lands which come under his dominion. One can juxtapose Alexander's example with the mid-fifteenth and late fifteenth century under Mehmed II. Expansion reshaped the geographic space over which the sovereign rules.

Circumstantial Parallelisms as Cultural Mirrors in Textual *Alexandriana*

The Ottoman state of the fifteenth century functioned in an Eastern Mediterranean world that was familiar with, or at least had access to, works from Greek Antiquity. Greek and Latin speaking audiences who accessed these resources, might have been familiar with Arrian, Plutarch, Quintus Curtius Rufus and Diodorus Siculus.⁵ The late fourteenth and early fifteenth-century context presented an opportunity for educated inhabitants of Anatolia to access works written in Greek and Latin.⁶ Audiences familiar with these works, Ahmedi and the other Alexander Romances could have recognized circumstantial parallels present at an intertextual level between the two works.

⁵ Raby, "Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium," 15-17.

⁶ Herrin, *Byzantium: The Surprising life of a Medieval Empire*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 304-5.

Thus, circumstantial parallels offer a sort thematic similitude between the two narratives. They like mirrors in a hallway reflect and play off each other. On the intertextual level, these circumstantial parallels can offer insight into the historical narratives, highlighting exaggerations, tropes, distortions and fabrications. The contexts of *translatio imperii*, discussed in the last chapter stand out as one way to highlight these circumstantial narratives. Judgements of these narrative connections based on reliability and factual accuracy must defer to the understanding that pre-modern societies related to historical events differently and therefore, drew from different narrative elements.⁷ Similarities between Alexander the Great and Mehmed II stand out and became the building blocks of a fifteenth-century historical imagination that equated Mehmed II with Alexander the Great. Yet, even though these fifteenth-century similarities differed from twenty-first century readings they were no less valid for the broader process of creating an historical imagination. Different circumstantial parallels may stand out from the perspective of the twenty-first century. While these fifteenth century audiences may not have made such connections explicitly as narrative elements these circumstantial parallels may have resonated at a subliminal and emotional level.

Defining Circumstantial Parallelism

Circumstantial parallels are an inter-textual connection of similarity between aspects, persons, and events of a narrative. These parallels work on the semantic level. They offer an aspect within the narrative that highlights and resonates with aspects in a later narrative. Thus, this resonance deserves further study; it may represent a cultural recall of the earlier event. In

⁷ There was a long-standing position within the scholarship that the Roman authors who were critical of Alexander (cast him in a negative light) were drawing from a hostile tradition. However, the priority of these Hellenistic authors was to serve a philosophical model for theorizing a model of kingship. Sulochana Asirvatham, "Alexander the Philosopher in Greco-Roman, Persian and Arabic Traditions, in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. Richard Stoneman, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Richard Netton, (Eelde, Barkhuis, 2012), 313.

each case, one must determine if this cultural recall is deliberate. Nonetheless, the circumstantial parallelism may express a level of similitude that is operating beneath a conscious level of cultural awareness. Thus, some of these circumstantial parallels may represent the retelling of the earlier narrative alongside narratives of the recent event.

Circumstantial parallels can operate on several levels. The levels that resonate best with the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE are circumstantial parallelism associated with character, geography, event and narrative circumstantial parallelism. These four categories may not be exhaustive but they provide a starting point to establish how the narrative connection between the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE can be explored.

Circumstantial Parallels Linking the Fourth Century BCE and Fifteenth Century CE

The Süleymaniye archives and the policies of Sultan Mehmed II show that the Alexander narratives and textual *Alexandriana* remained important in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁸ Part of this corpus of *Alexandriana* included the earlier works of Persian *khamse* authors who told their own versions of the narrative. Ferdowsi's *Shahname* is included in this Persian tradition which had a rich tradition of production in the Ottoman Empire. This vigorous production through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries suggests that textual *Alexandriana* enticed educated Ottoman circles. Circumstantial parallelism provides one model to understand better how these fifteenth century audiences might have connected to the Alexandrine narrative. It offers a framework of analysis for finding the similarities between the events of the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century. Ottoman audiences, themselves did not speak in terms of

⁸ For a selection of documents currently held in the collections at Süleymaniye that can be classified as textual *Alexandriana* see appendix B.

circumstantial narratives but the similarities of people, events, geographic places, and narrative must have resonated on a deeper level.

Readings of circumstantial parallelism offer a method to unpack the narrative. They offer a balancing act between approaching the actual historical event and the context in which the narrative was written. The aim is to isolate possible parallels in the narrative which might resonate on the levels of audience and writer. It provides a nuance of continuity that can be used to reach for deeper readings of chronologically distant events. It offers another means of analysis that can be used to gain fresh perspectives. In using this tool for historical analysis one must be more mindful of two things. Influence remains a troublesome creature; in reading circumstantial parallels it may be tempting to say that one narrative influenced another. So, cultural readings of these narratives must take a page from intellectual historiography and tread carefully where discussions of influence appear.

Circumstantial Parallelism of Events

A circumstantial parallelism of events describes two events which encapsulate similar circumstances. As such these two events offer a meaningful insight into one or both base events. The parallels of events cannot be universal. The events themselves are not parallel. However, the narrative of one's birth can represent circumstantial parallels of events. This expression of circumstantial parallelism surfaced in the fifteenth century narratives through the theme of death and funerals. Similarly, the death of a sovereign represented an important step in *translatio imperii* and resonated with the third century BCE and the fifteenth -century narratives.⁹ The

⁹ Farrokhi-e Sistanī's funeral elegy for Mahmud of Ghazna provides an excellent example of this. The Qaside begins by retelling Mahmud's successions and accomplishments. The first twelve *bayts* (hemistichs) conjures images of his armies and past military successes. Then in the next four - *bayts*, the *qaside* shifts to a series of questions asking where the great king, who performed acts expressed in the opening of the qaside has gone. Through the next portion, -approximately the next fifteen *bayts* of the qaside -- the narrator tries to understand where the missing king might be. In the next portion, the narrator beckons the king to stand). "Khiz, Shaha!" and reclaim and reassert his *farr*

notion of the sovereign living on after death in the Ottoman context that became a fabricated act to preserve the state best exemplifies this point.¹⁰ The Alexandrine narrative preserved this theme in several accounts that describe the preservation of Alexander's corpse.¹¹ The body of Alexander was supposed to have been absent of decay for several days/weeks following his death. This preservation of the life of the king may be read as an intent to postpone the process of *translatio imperii*. Read in terms of circumstantial parallels it illuminates a common ground between the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE – a desire to avoid internal crisis after a disputable succession. Ottoman narratives maintain several examples where the death of the sovereign is concealed from the army until one of the Ottoman princes can be in good position to accede to the throne. This preservation of the sovereign after his death is similarly evoked in Farukhi-ye Sistani's funeral elegy for Mahmud of Ghazna. In early part of this *qaside*, Farukhi evokes images of the Mahmud of Ghazna as still living and able to send his armies across Central Asia. In his absence, the *qaside* beckons him to rise and once again conquer Central Asia. The death of Ottoman Sultans provides a circumstantial parallel. Analogously, the deaths of several Ottoman sultans during the fifteenth and sixteenth century were concealed to delay the process of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii*. Taken as a metaphor, this may represent an apprehension of the process of *translatio imperii* that emphasizes a tension between a desire for

(royal power) to bring back his past glories as king. The sentiments and images expressed in this *qaside* forecast the later anxieties of the Ottoman imperial paradigm, which sought in several instances to postpone the public acknowledgement of the death of a Sultan. For a full text of the poem see: شماره ۴۲ - در ذکر وفات سلطان محمود و رثاء آن پادشاه گوید, accessed March 21, 2017, <http://ganjoor.net/farrokhi/divanf/ghasidefk/sh42/>.

¹⁰ There are several occasions during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when steps are taken to conceal the death of an Ottoman Sultan from the army until the one of the surviving princes can arrive to accede to the sultanate. After the death of Murad I in Kosovo, the viziers concealed Murad's murder from the army. Mehmed I was kept in his tent and his death was concealed from the army. Mehmed II's corpse was smuggled into Constantinople with a cargo of scented candles. During the sixteenth century, the corpse of Selim II was kept in the palace ice house until his son Mehmed (III) could arrive in Istanbul to accede to the throne.

¹¹ Quintus. Curtius Rufus 10.10.9-13; Q. Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander*, trans. John Yardley, (New York; Penguin, 1984; 2001), 256. See Also, "Appendix O, Alexander's Death: A Medical Analysis," in *The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*, ed. James Romm, 404-406.

continuance of the office of kingship and the death of the reigning sovereign. Thus, the relationship between *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism can be seen in other examples such as in the narrative of Bayezid I's capture by Timur I.

Checkmate: The Capture of Bayezid I Yıldırım

When Bayezid was conducted to the door of the tent. Emir's followers raised their voices acclaiming Temir-khan, and along with the acclamation they referred to Bayezid saying, "Lo, the leader of the Turks has come to you a captive." Timur concentrating on the Chessmen, did not look up at those who were acclaiming him. Then they acclaimed him once again but in a louder voice, and for a second time they announced Bayezid's name. At that moment Temir was defeated in the game of Chess by his son when he made the move called Checkmate, which in Persian is called Sharuh, and in Italian Scaco Zagao, Henceforth Temir called his son Shahruh. Glancing up and holding the guards with Bayezid standing in the middle like a criminal, he inquired, "Is this he who a short while ago insisted on our divorcing our wives unless we opposed him in battle." Bayezid answered, "I am the one, but it is not fitting that you should despise those who have fallen. Since you are also a ruler, you must know that it is your duty to defend the borders of your dominion." Temir, realizing that Bayezid was suffering from heat prostration, (for he had not eaten from morning to dusk and was dehydrated by the extreme summer heat and humidity), ordered Bayezid, who was standing to sit opposite him. Ordering him refreshment and words of consolation, he ordered, three tents to be set up, that is splendid pavilions, saying to him, "Go and rest, Do not be concerned that those things will be done to you that were done to others. I swear to you by God and his prophet that no man will separate your soul from your body except God who joined them." After Bayezid had entered the tents which Temir had provided, Temir issued orders for a trench to be dug around the tents. One thousand heavily armed Persian troops were to keep watch in a ring around the tents. Outside the tents, five thousand lightly armored household troops were to stand guard in rotation day and night.¹²

Doukas' narration of the meeting provided rich imagery associated with kingship. Timur and his son, and successor, Shahrukh were playing chess. Shahrukh won. When Bayezid I was

¹² Doukas, *The Fall of Byzantium*, VI.10.92-95.

brought into his tent, Timur was portrayed as the gracious captor. His treatment of Bayezid I extended hospitality to Bayezid's house arrest by setting him in three tents. Despite Doukas' humane description, Bayezid I's fate was to travel around as a captive in Anatolia until his death in captivity.

This early Ottoman tragedy stood contrasted with Bayezid I's otherwise successful program of consolidation. It started a dynastic crisis among the sons of Bayezid I. These potential successors returned first to their own individual appenages. Over the next eleven years (1402-1413), they fought to re-consolidate Ottoman state power under a single ruler. The mantle of power passed from Bayezid I to his eldest son Emir Süleyman, who after the battle returned to Rumelia and established himself in Edirne.¹³ The events of the Ottoman Civil War (1402-1413) are closely linked with the narrative of late Byzantium. Thus, they illuminate the fluid nature of the early fifteenth century geo-political context of Anatolia and Rumelia.

Timur's merciful treatment of his conquered enemy echoed a theme rich in the Alexander narratives: royal mercy. It resonated with Alexander's own capture of Darius' baggage train following the battle of Gaugamela and his mother Sisygambis.¹⁴ The Greek historian Arrian notes that Alexander treated her as if she were his own mother.¹⁵ Images of Alexander's mercy (royal mercy) extended beyond the capture of Darius's loved one to the person of the *Shahanshah* himself. These images showed the moment of the death of Darius in the arms of Alexander.¹⁶ Narrative threads within the Persian and Ottoman renderings of the *Iskendername* showed *translatio imperii* from the Macedonian-Greek to the Macedonian-Persian. Thus, the

¹³ For more on the events following Bayezid death, see: Dimitris Kastritsis, *Sons of Bayezid* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

¹⁴ Arrian, *Anabasis*, 2.12.3-7, Romm, ed., *The Landmark Arrian*, 77. Q. Curtius Rufus (3.11.24-26); Yardley, ed.; *The History of Alexander*, 44.

¹⁵ Q. Curtius Rufus (5.2.20-22); Yardley, ed., *The History of Alexander*, 97.

¹⁶ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 469.

historical imagination in Persian-Ottoman narrative linked Alexander to Persian kinship through marriage and through blood as the half-brother of Darius III.

Imperial footstools and Checkmated Kings: The Roman Emperor Valerian and Bayezid I

Yet, examples of circumstantial parallelism are not just limited to the Ottoman and Alexandrine narratives. The capture of the Roman Emperor Valerian in 260 CE stands out as an example of how circumstantial narrative parallels might insert themselves into later narratives. By peeling away the layers of these narrative structures, one may catch glimpses into the readership and themes that resonate with the later fifteenth century period.

This example of circumstantial parallelisms can be found in a third century CE Sasanian rock carving at *Naqsh-e Rostam*. The image depicts the Emperor Valerian (253 - 260 CE) kneeling in submission (and performing an act like *proskinesis*) to the *Shahahshah* Shapur I (240-270).¹⁷ Shapur I's explosive military campaign in the 260s CE reignited the Eastern border of the Roman Empire.¹⁸ The image is significant as it showed the utter submission of a Roman Emperor who laid claim to be the ruler of the broader Mediterranean world. Preserving this image in the stone at Naqsh-i Rostam memorialized the shameful capture and usurpation of Imperial Roman power by Sasanian Persia. Byzantine historians preserved the capture of Valerian, both in textual and material culture that resonated with the narration of events in the early fifteenth century. The Roman Emperor (*Imperator Romanorum*) was reduced to an

¹⁷ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, 469. For more see Georgina Hermann, *The Sasanian Rock Reliefs at Naqsh-i Rostam: Naqsh-i Rostam 6, together with an account of the representation of Kerdir, Description and Commentary*, (Berlin: Reimer, 1989). See also: "Naqsh-i Rostam," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology of the Near East*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Dorothy Shepard, "Sassanian Art" in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; (online) 2008). See also: Herbertus Von Gall, "Naqsh-I Rostam", *The Encyclopedia Iranica*, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/naqs-e-rostam> (accessed 3.21.2017).

¹⁸ See the, "The Sasanids, the Byzantines, The Lakhmids and Yemen," *The History of al-Tabari*, Volume 5, trans. and ed. C.E. Bosworth, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), 27 – 39.

insignificant footstool worthy only of gazing up at the *Shahanshah's* mounted position and at the soles of his shoes.¹⁹ It provided a circumstantial parallel of events that might have been recognizable to audiences familiar with the earlier Greek histories. In this circumstantial parallel Valerian stands out as a parallel to Bayezid I as a captured, defeated, and checkmated sovereign.

Circumstantial Parallelism of Character

Character circumstantial parallelism involves the narrative representation of historical characters that have similar functions in the narrative. The outcomes of the narrative of these characters represents a parallel course that is significant to understanding either one or both historical contexts. The character's role in the narrative can likewise provide parallelism. Roles and titles such as King, Emperor, King of Kings and Caesar of Caesars, provided superficial components of a circumstantial parallelism but must be supported by deeper aspects of the narratives. Kingship itself might not constitute a strong circumstantial parallelism but two kings who died on campaign attempting to conquer Persia would have circumstantially parallel narratives.

The Sons of Bayezid and the Diadochi

The early fifteenth century context just after Ahmedi produced his *Iskendername* bore circumstantial parallels to the Alexandrine context. In both cases the period after the death of the

¹⁹ The political context is echoed in a period of broader political turmoil commonly of the third century CE. During this period reigns were often brief and ended violently. This political context set the backdrop for rapid successive processes of *translatio imperii*. The preservation of these transitions of *translatio imperii* are circumstantial for later audiences in subsequent periods when they offer to negotiate periods of political crisis. Zosimus provides one textual narrative of the events following Valerian's capture at Edessa.

"... In the meantime, Valerianus (Valerian) became so effeminate and indolent, that he despaired of ever recovering from the present ill state of affairs, and would have concluded the war by a present of money; had not Sapor sent back the ambassadors who were sent to him with that proposal, without their errand, desiring the emperor to come and speak with him in person concerning the affairs he wished to adjust; To which he most imprudently consented, and going without consideration to Sapor with a small retinue, to treat for a peace, was presently laid hold of by the enemy, and so ended his days in the capacity of a slave among the Persians, to the disgrace of the Roman name in all future times."

sovereign begins a period of dynastic struggle. *Translatio imperii* fragmented. It represented a crisis of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii*. Such a context seems to also be a strong candidate for the circumstantial parallelisms between characters. The circumstantial parallelism highlights a person within the narrative. The parallels between the Roman Emperor Valerian and Bayezid I could share characteristics of both circumstantial parallelism of events (the capture of a sovereign) and of character (the checkmated king). If read in terms of circumstantial parallelism of character, the figure of Bayezid I can be read as an analog to Alexander the Great, himself. Bayezid I's capture, much like Alexander's death, started a period of political chaos. In both cases, there appeared to be a clear successor: Perdikkas in the case of Alexander and Emir Süleyman in the case of Bayezid I. And yet, in both cases, these successors lost out to other rivals. Not surprising, the struggles for the line of succession centered on the divisions of Anatolia and Rumelia. This circumstantial parallel is important when considering that Ahmedi's final years of patronage occurred in this context.

The parallel continues after the interruption of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii*. In the Alexandrine narrative, Antipater, Krateros, Lysimachus and Antigonos represented the European factions and Ptolemy, Seleucus, Antigonos I Monophtalmous and Eumenes represented the Asian factions.²⁰ The fifteenth century Ottoman parallel places the eldest brother Emir Suleiman in Edirne, Mehmed favored by Timur in Amasya and Isa in Bursa. Mustafa remained a captive of Timur until his release when he entered the service of Mehmed as he defeated Süleyman and ruled Thrace. This comparison shows only a cursory sketch of the complexity of these two

²⁰ For primary sources after the death of Alexander See Diodorus Siculus 18.1-75. Bradford Well, *Biblioteka Historica*, Loeb Classic Edition, Vol. 9, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 14-215., See also Quintus Curtius Rufus (10.5.10-37; 10.6-10); Yardley, ed., *The History of Alexander*, 246-257. For secondary sources see; A. B. Bosworth, "Alexander the Great Part II Greece and the Conquered Territories," in *Cambridge Ancient History*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); (online) (2008): 846-875.

historical narratives. Who governed each territory is unclear. It complicated the position of the ruler since they should have a clearer perception of the geo-political terrain. This circumstantial parallel made the Alexandrine period a potential mirror into which an Ottoman sovereign could gain insight during a crisis in dynastic succession.²¹ This does raise the important question of whether histories of the Diadochi period were circulating in Ottoman political circles. The most likely sources to have been available would have been Diodorus Siculus and Quintus Curtius Rufus, neither of which were translated into Ottoman Persian or Arabic. However, those familiar with Greek would have been familiar with these works and therefore could have circulated these narratives within Ottoman circles.

Dynastic struggles between the Ottoman princes were not limited to two struggles among the sons of Bayezid I and between Cem and Bayezid II. These intra-dynastic struggles were part of the succession process into the sixteenth century and were shaped by geography.²² While none of these intra-dynastic conflicts reached the scale of the two at either end of the fifteenth century, they were a regular part of the accession process.²³ Thus, dynastic narratives centered on

²¹ The circulation of such narratives could have certainly been possible during the mid-fifteenth century in the court of Mehmed II. The presence of several Byzantine laureates such as Amouritzes and Genaddios, in his court is well attested. It would also seem that Mehmed had direct access to Quintus Curtius Rufus through his tutors. Yet, it is unclear if such access was common among the earlier sultans and while unlikely it is not out of the realm of possibility that the earlier princes were tutored in Latin.

²² A sultan's death signaled a literal race to the capital, therefore a prince's assignment to a princely city played an important part in his successful accession and survival upon the death of his father.

²³ Intra-dynastic struggles for the Ottoman sultanate were regular occurrences in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Neshri's history preserves some of the Bursa chronicles that are absent in the other Ottoman sources. The Bursa Chronicles preserve a story that after Ertuğrul's death there was contention in the community over whether Osman or Dündar, a relative of Osman, should become chief. Dündar conceded the chieftaincy to Osman, who was preferred by Osman's own family. See Rudi Lindner, *Nomads and Ottomans in Medieval Anatolia*, (New York; London: Routledge, 1997), 23. Imber suggests that Orhan came to power during the lifetime of his father, and his only brother Ali Pasha renounced all claim to the throne. Orhan's son Murad I came to power after a civil war. Murad I secured his reign by the late 1360s. (Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 10-11) Ahmedî writes, "His brothers became enemies to him. The affairs of all of them were ended at his hands. They were all destroyed by his sword." (Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 85). Bayezid I strangled his younger brother Yakub following the death of Murad I at the Battle of Kosovo-Polje (1289). Imber (2009) Mehmed I's succession was followed by the Ottoman Civil war. Murad II's reign began with a civil war against his uncle Mustafa. Mustafa defeated Murad's army and claimed himself as sultan in Edirne. Murad II's reign was later focused on asserting his claim as the Ottoman sultan against his younger

dynastic struggle following the death of a reigning sovereign could have been received as models for kingship and dynastic succession. As honorary ‘mirrors for princes’ these narrative examples would have offered potential road maps for how to succeed in a contest for the throne following the death of a sultan.

Geographic Circumstantial Parallelism

In geographic parallelism, the parallels encompass a shared geographic space. The geographic region offers a unit of analysis for how one can analyze the two individual historical contexts. Geographic circumstantial parallelism in historical narratives provides a subtle underlying context that shapes and molds the regional narrative of the event. Thus, this unifying factor is fused to the narrative. Geographic circumstantial parallelisms offer a means for using the geography of the region to highlight parallel narrative aspects of two historic events.

In the context of the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE, geographic circumstantial parallels highlight Anatolia, Rumelia, and the Eastern Mediterranean. Anatolia functioned as a contested territory among the Diadochi and sons of Bayezid I. The Balkans remained an important geographic context for the early careers of Alexander and Mehmed II. In the broader Mediterranean context, one can draw circumstantial parallels between the Hellenistic kingdoms and Mamluk Egypt and in the sixteenth century Safavid Persia. Here it may be important to underscore that the *Iskendername* had an extensive circulation history, extending beyond the fifteenth century. Geographic circumstantial parallels resonated with the sixteenth century contexts; Selim I conquered Egypt, Syria and Mecca and thus could have acted as a

brother Küçük Mustafa. Imber, *Ottoman Empire*, 84-87. See also Pál Fodor, “Ahmedi’s *Dasitan* as a Source of Early Ottoman History,” *Acta Orientalia* (Budapest), 1984, 41-54.

circumstantial parallel to Alexander the Great, in his own right.²⁴ Süleyman's eastern and European campaigns, captured in the *Bayan-i Menazil* and the *Süleymanname*, offer their own opportunities for circumstantial parallelism with the Alexandrine narratives.

Narrative Circumstantial Parallelism

Narrative circumstantial parallelisms are points during which the narrative follows similar tracks. The events of the narrative involve similar circumstances and may have similar outcomes. Narrative circumstantial parallelism offers a broader means of analysis beyond just character, event and geography (place). Whereas these three types can work as individual pieces within a narrative, the key defining aspect of narrative circumstantial parallelism is that the broader narrative shows parallel aspects. By working at the broader level of the overall narrative one can attempt to work at the level of fictional accounts and non-fictional accounts. Narrative circumstantial parallelism can work within a genre (history or literature) and between genres — history and literature.

Circumstantial Parallelism with the Historical and Literary Genres

Circumstantial parallelism can provide a means to isolate events in the narrative that resonate with each other and create links between the distinct historical periods. In terms of this discussion, circumstantial parallelism that exists within historical narratives or within historical and literary texts are most important. It may be helpful to glimpse how the field of narratology has dealt with narratives in the past. Russian formalism has made considerable contributions in

²⁴ For more on the reign of Selim I see H. Erdem Cipa, *The Centrality of the Periphery, The Rise to Power of Selim I, 1487 – 1512*, (PhD Diss. Harvard University, 2007); H. Erdem Cipa, *The Making of Selim: Succession, Legitimacy and Memory in the Early Ottoman World*, (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2017).

this area. Formalists such as Vladimir Propp (1968) have shown how fairy tales show certain shared narrative themes.²⁵ This method has been used to analyze the narrative structure of fairy tales. The Alexander Romances taken apart from the historical narratives contain these similar archetypal narrative themes. When one applies S. Thompson's *Motifs of Folk literature: A Classification of narrative elements in folklores ballads myths, fables medieval romances exempla fabliaux jest books and local legends* to the Alexander Romances several motives are represented.²⁶ Such consideration may be important when one considers other forms of *Alexandriana* derived from folklore (see Chapter 1).

Historical Circumstantial Parallelism

Macedonia as a case study for historical circumstantial parallelism

The Ottoman conquest of Macedonia during the fifteenth century offers a potential case study for circumstantial parallelism. Beginning in the second half of the fourteenth century the Ottoman state began a series of military campaigns that brought the Balkans under Ottoman rule. This historical context provides something of a photo negative of the circumstantial parallelism. The ruling families of Serbia and Albania, the Branković(i) and the Kastriotës, resisted the impending Ottoman conquest of the region. As a target of conquest, Serbia and the larger Balkan regions, including Macedonia, might seem to be a theme that could play a part in the Ottoman historical imagination. In this role, the Ottomans might assume the role of the Achaemenid

²⁵ Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968). The question of its applicability beyond the folktale remains a debate in the scholarship. See Svatava Prkova-Jakoson, "Introduction to the second edition" in Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folk Tale*, xiv.

²⁶ See S. Thompson. Motif-index of folk-literature: a classification of narrative elements in folktales, ballads, myths, fables, medieval romances, exempla, fabliaux, jest-books, and local legends, <http://www.ruthenia.ru/folklore/thompson/> (accessed 3.21.2017)

Persians or any one of the other Greek city states bent on revenge against Argaeid Rule. Instead here, the circumstantial parallelism is found in the Albanian historical imagination, not in the Ottoman. George Kastriotes was an Albanian noble trained in the Ottoman court at Edirne. He was considered a successful and gifted general and during the years of Ottoman campaigns in Albania provided a solid military resistance against the intended Ottoman conquest. Kastriotes' efforts to stop the Ottoman advance provided him with bragging rights enough to claim the nickname Skanderbeğ (İskender Bey) in honor of Alexander the Great. This appropriated historical parallelism provided a cultural link between the Kastriotes family and the Argaeid. The fabrication of this link occurred while Kritovoulos and Mehmed II were reinforcing a historical imagination between the Ottomans and the Argaeid begun by Ahmedî. The Albanian experiment with Alexander stopped with Skanderbeğ. Yet, no similar counter-narrative ever arose in the territory of Macedonia. To date there does not appear to have been any Ottoman rhetoric surrounding Alexander *vis a vis* Macedonia or the Balkans. Yet, this topic deserves further scholarly investigation.²⁷

Literary Circumstantial Parallelism

From historical narrative, the discussion turns to narrative circumstantial parallelism in literature. How can literary narrative parallels shape the historical narratives? To what extent

²⁷ The theme of Alexander the Great plays an important role in the so called Macedonian Question which became particularly germane during the 1990s. Here, the Alexander narrative plays a particularly important role in the formation of the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia in the 1990s. (FYROM). For The role of a Macedonian identity within the Ottoman Empire in the late-Ottoman Empire has been studied in detail by İpek Yosmaoğlu. See İpek Yosmaoğlu, *Blood Ties: Religion, Violence, and the Politics of Nationhood in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878- 1908*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); See also Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire, Ottoman Nomads, Migrants and Refugees*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009); Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective*, (Cambridge; New York; Cambridge University Press, 2008). On the Macedonian Question, See Dimitris Livanios, *The Macedonian Question: Britain and the Southern Balkans, 1939-1949*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); James Pettifer, ed., *The New Macedonian Question*, (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2001); Victor Roudometof ed., *The Macedonian Question: Culture Historiography, Politics*, (Boulder: Eastern European Monographs, 2000).

should they be valued and counted next to their historical counterparts? Literary circumstantial parallels can provide metaphors illuminating the mentalité of a period. They can provide insight into how something was perceived in the historical context in which given literary works were written. The cup of Jamshid and the mirror of Alexander provide one such way in which literary circumstantial parallels can work.

Cups and Mirrors: Perceptions of the Known World

The mythic Persian King Jamshid possessed a cup from which he could view any place on earth or in the seven heavens. Jamshid represented a model for Persian kingship from the Pre-Achaemenid legend.²⁸ According to the myth, he was the fourth and greatest king of the world and ruled in a Golden age. Jamshid stood beside Sasanian archetypical kings: Bahram Gor (Bahram V), Khosroe I Anurshiruwān, and Khosroe II Parvīz -- literary-historical figures of the fifth and sixth century.²⁹ The magical cup provided Jamshid with the power to extend the royal gaze beyond his immediate presence and to distant lands. Analogously, Alexander had a mirror that accomplished much the same task. Jamshid's cup was said to have held the elixir of life and have the power to view anywhere in the seven heavens of the universe.³⁰ In the Alexander Romances, *Iskender* possessed a mirror that allowed him to see anywhere in the world. The inherent power of these objects provided a knowledge of space and territory.³¹ They enhanced the ruler's respective abilities to understand the world around him and advance his royal goals of rule and conquest. Having one of these objects provided the sovereign means to see anywhere in

²⁸ Ferdowsi, *The Shahname*, Prods Oktor Skjaervo, "Jamshid: i. Myth of Jamshid", *Encyclopedia Iranica* (online), accessed March 21, 2017, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jamsid>.

²⁹ Prods Oktor Skjaervo, "Jamshid: i. Myth of Jamshid", *Encyclopedia Iranica* (online), accessed March 21, 2017, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jamsid>.

³⁰ Prods Oktor Skjaervo, "Jamshid: i. Myth of Jamshid", *Encyclopedia Iranica* (online), accessed March 21, 2017, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/jamsid>.

³¹ Schimmel, *Two Colored Brocade*, 115-6.

his realm. Sight and knowledge offer the sovereign an exclusive power to know what is happening in his lands or in the lands of his enemy.

The extraordinary abilities of these objects present a tantalizing metaphor for understanding the expectations of a world conqueror and a ruler. Their inherent powers offered the ability to extend the royal gaze and by extension royal power anywhere in the world - beyond walls, borders and fortresses - in fact anywhere in the known universe. These metaphors underscore the importance of a successful sovereign's knowledge of the territory inside and outside of his borders. This proscriptive nature of such a metaphor emphasizes the difference between king and conqueror. The ruler/king's focus is internal; he aims to administer lands within his sovereign territory. But, the external focus of the conqueror is to understand realms - actual and fantastic that lie beyond the frontiers and assimilate them into his imperial paradigm.

Such a metaphorical connection would have resonated both with the fourth century figure of Alexander the great and the fifteenth and sixteenth century Ottoman state. The complex dynamics characterized by the fifteenth and sixteenth century resonated with a changing spatial conception of the Mediterranean world. New markets and opportunities for real world exploration occurred at a rapid rate. These clairvoyant properties of metaphorical objects offer a tantalizing power for a sovereign. It provided a useful social boon: insight for unraveling plots, rooting out enemies and gazing upon objects of beauty and power suited for a king. It was a military benefit: the ruler could immediately know the location of allied and enemy troops, supplies and ambushes. It provided benefits for the conquest as he could view lands beyond his own sovereign territory to gain insight of what lay beyond.

Circumstantial Parallelism between Genres

The romanticized narratives of Alexander the Great offer opportunities to explore the length of the shadow that Alexander cast on the Ancient, Medieval and early Modern worlds. As shown earlier, Jamshid's Cup and Alexander's Mirror use metaphor to illustrate the important characteristics that a world conqueror should have. These metaphors offer raw resources for the historical imagination that equate George Kastriotes and Mehmed II to Alexander the Great. These metaphors show the myths and legends associated with Alexander. They emphasize the broader spectrum of *Alexandriana*, representing one aspect of the cultural memory of Alexander. Thus, they stay an important part of Alexandriana as folk traditions given written form.

The historical narratives gave a soberer picture than the dream-like reality of the Romance narratives didn't offer. Gallons of scholarly ink have been poured out to find the reliability of the historical sources on Alexander the Great. Arrian won out.³² His detailed step by step account of Alexander's military campaigns is a masterpiece. Thus, Kritovoulos of Imbros had his *Life of Mehmed* bound as a companion volume to the *Anabasis*.³³ He fused Mehmed II's imperial paradigm for the Ottoman Dynasty with Alexander the Great's imperial paradigm of the Argaeid's.

Cihan and Cihangir: The World and the One who conquers it.

Why is it that the *Iskendername* was produced consistently during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? Certainly, as a document of dynastic legitimization the *Iskendername* would have been appealing to an early fifteenth century audience living amidst intra dynastic rivalry and civil war. Mehmed II's personal and attributed identification with Alexander provides reason for continued interest in the mid-fifteenth century. Throughout Mehmed's reign, the rhetoric of

³² Elizabeth Baynham, "Appendix A: Arrian's Sources and Reliability," in *The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*, 325-332.

³³ Raby, *Mehmed's Greek Scriptorium*, 6.

world conquest is an important theme; Mehmed II at the time of his death was setting his sights on the conquest of Rome. Following his death, during the reign of his son Bayezid II the rhetoric of conquest had abated. A period of prolonged peace between the Ottoman Empire and Venice characterized Bayezid II's reign. But, by the time of his son Selim I the Ottoman state project once again turned to expansion.

Production of the *Iskendername* is through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.³⁴ Selim I is said to have greatly admired him. This should not be surprising; Alexander would have served as an appropriate model for Selim I's campaigns. After Alexander's conquest of Persian Anatolia, he continued into Syria where he led a prolonged successful siege against the city of Tyre and then conquered Syria and Egypt. Süleyman I had reason to identify with Alexander. He launched two continued successful campaigns both in the East and the West, somewhat reminiscent of Alexander's early campaigns on the Danube. In the 1520s, Süleyman's invasion of the Kingdom of Hungary and capture of Buda redefined the Ottoman Danube frontier.³⁵ Yet, more importantly, his eastern campaign against the Safavid dynasty provided fertile ground for connections to Alexander. Both emulate his conquest of Persia and connect the campaign with an act of conquest that redefined the Ottoman world.³⁶

The theme of world conquest remains an important theme in the Alexander Romances, including the *Iskendername*. Implicit in world conquest is a geographic component. The Ancient

³⁴ Ismail Ünver, ed. "*Iskendername*", in Ahmedî, *Iskender-name*, (Ankara: Türk Dill Kurumu, 1983), 24-27.

³⁵ See Sinan Cavuş, *Süleymanname: Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş Estergon ve Istol-Belgrad*, (Istanbul 1983); David Geza and Pal Fodor, eds, *Hungarian-Ottoman Military and Diplomatic Relations in the Age of Süleyman the Magnificent*, (Budapest: Lorend Eötvös University Press, 1994); Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead, eds, *Süleyman the Magnificent and his Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World*, (London: Longman, 1995). For monographs dealing with Süleyman the Magnificent, see: Antony Bridge, *Süleyman the Magnificent: Scourge of Heaven*, (New York: F. Watts, 1983); Roger Merriman, *Süleyman the Magnificent, 1520-1566*, (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1966). For Mohacs See Gabor Agoston, "Battle of Mohacs", in *the Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, 388-389.

³⁶ Nasuhîis Silahlı *Matrakçı Bayan-e Menazil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn –i Sultan Süleyman Han*, (Ankara: Türk Dil Kurumu, 1976).

and medieval world conqueror must exceed known boundaries of the world. He must extend the boundaries of his polity and overcome all natural and human obstacles. Having representation in both the romances and the histories, this theme transcends genre. It achieved fantastic levels of representation in the romances. In the later romances, Alexander transcended the natural boundaries of physics. Alexander ascended into the sky in a hot air balloon.³⁷ He dove to the bottom of the ocean in a diving bell.³⁸ Alexander built a wall to keep out the invading armies of Gog and Magog.³⁹ He sought the aid of al-Hidr to conquer the kingdom of darkness⁴⁰ and he went beyond the borders of Achaemenid Persia to conquer “India”.

The *Iskendername* provided a mirror for how a conqueror should act: he must overcome all obstacles - natural and human - and push the limits of the known world. He becomes a world conqueror in that he defines or redefines the imperial space. He both expanded the boundaries of his world and merged space under a single royal imperial rule. To achieve this goal, the world conqueror must draw on earlier descriptions of the known world. He must draw on earlier knowledge so he may redefine the boundaries of world. Later uses of the Alexander Romances tried to achieve similar purposes. During the British conquest of India, publication of the Alexander Romances became popular.⁴¹ There was a significant difference between the Trans-

³⁷ Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romances*, 123.

³⁸ Stoneman, *The Greek Alexander Romances*, 29. This tale is only found in the λ -recension of the Greek Alexander Romance Manuscript. The Getty Museum has in its collections one piece of associated *Alexandriana* from visual culture, related to the Alexander’s descent in to the depths of the oceans. It is an illuminated fifteenth century manuscript entitled Alexander the Great under Water, from Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany. See The J. Paul Getty Museum, <http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/1997/unknown-maker-alexander-the-great-under-water-german-about-1400-1410/> (Accessed 3/21/2017).

³⁹ Ferdowsi, *Shahname*, ed. D. Davis, 511-512. See also Ünver, ed, *Iskender-name*, 49. Ann Marie Schimmel, A Two-Colored Brocade, 114; Quran Sura 18: 83 – 98). See Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

⁴⁰ Caroline Sawyer (1997) argues that al-Hidr replaces Aristotle as the premier philosopher and teacher of Alexander. Caroline Sawyer, *Alexander, History, and Piety*, 10; 195. Mario Casari, “The King Explorer,” in *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. Richard Stoneman, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Richard Netton, (Eelde, Barkhuis, 2012), 179.

⁴¹ Casari, “The King Explorer,” 177. (See note 8)

Indus of the third century BCE and the India of the eighteenth century. But the racial/cultural conceptions of the period conflated the conquest of the territory with conquest of the people.

Conclusion

This chapter has picked up where the discussion of *translatio imperii* left off. On one level, it has focused on the narrative of textual *Alexandriana* to show how one might approach the romance and historical narratives about Alexander the great. On another level, it has shown how circumstantial parallelism can be used as an analytical construct to unpack the narratives of the Alexander Romances and history. The previous chapter demonstrated a high stakes commitment to textual *Alexandriana* in the mid-fifteenth century. This chapter demonstrated that the commitment to textual *Alexandriana* did not disappear in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Circumstantial parallels offer one way of reading the Ottoman stake narratives. Since circumstantial parallelism can work both within and between genres, it offers an excellent analytical construct for investigating the Ottoman mentalité in constructing its own historical imagination. Examples of circumstantial parallelism in literature offer metaphors such as Iskender's mirror and Jamshid's cup. By unpacking these metaphors, one can find a metaphor for the fifteenth century Ottoman imperial paradigm. Likewise, historical narratives give circumstantial parallelisms related to geography, person, and event. Such circumstantial parallelism offers one possible reading of cultural continuity that may have invigorated the Ottoman interest in textual *Alexandriana*. The Ottoman archives at Süleymaniye Library corroborate an interest in textual *Alexandriana*. Copies of *Iskendernames* by the khamse authors and several texts on Alexander Romance themes show that textual *Alexandriana* helped to form the fifteenth century Ottoman imperial paradigm.

Chapter 6 - Final Conclusions

This discussion began with *Alexandriana* as a category for analysis. It opened broader cultural connections that contextualized the Ottoman participation in the Alexander Romance genre. Indeed, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Ottomans participated in the production of *Alexandriana* as a part of a Mediterranean cultural literary genre. This is underscored in the significant sample of material remaining in the manuscript archives at the Suleymaniye Library. Yet, Ottoman participation went beyond simple re-creation of the Alexander Romance narrative as envisioned by their Persian predecessors. It included works on themes within the romances such as the Wall of Gog and Magog and epistolary exchanges between Aristotle and Alexander.

Participation in the Alexander Romance tradition meant participation in a broader Mediterranean cultural continuity that extended back to the fourth century BCE. *Alexandriana* offers a framework for understanding textual (historical and fantastic), material (archaeological) visual (art historical) and folk (oral) narratives that comprised a “meta-narrative” of Alexander the Great. This meta-narrative reflected varied cultural and linguistic traditions and is useful for understanding pre-modern historical imaginations. The broad linguistic range of the Alexander Romances, encompassing Greek, Latin, Syriac, Middle Persian, Ethiopic, Hebrew, Arabic, French, English, Mongolian, Serbian, and classical Armenian has played an important role in helping to cement Alexander as a universal figure of the world conqueror. Furthermore, it facilitated a broad geographic dissemination that extended from the Iberian Peninsula to East Asia. The discussion of these narratives helps to tease out the textual image of Alexander that begin with those who traveled and fought with him. The early image of Alexander was then recast in the early decades following his death and perpetuated by Ptolemy I who promoted an image of Alexander best preserved in early recensions of the Alexander Romance. This

foundation is important; it showed how the Alexander Romances acted a cultural catalyst within a broader Mediterranean and Middle eastern context.

Much like the Ptolemaic court of antiquity, in the Iranian context, the poet played a significant role in creating the concept of *shahi* beginning in the tenth century CE. Part of this tradition drew from past examples of kingship from Persian legend and history to set examples of how a king should behave and how he should be educated. Yet, the model of *shahi* established by the Persian poets and kings was incongruent with the context of Anatolia in the fifteenth century. Here, the Turkish emirates vied for dominance within the geographic confines of Anatolia. The Byzantine imperial paradigm rooted in fifteen hundred years of tradition and ceremony offered a competing model to *shahi*. The early Ottoman state had a geographic advantage in Bythinia, which was well located with respect to Constantinople, the Black Sea and the major east-west Roman road which passed through Anatolia. Thus, both the Persian and Byzantine imperial traditions were viable options for the early Ottoman state.

The Alexander Romance tradition in its Persian manifestation offered a rich tradition that was rooted in the *Shahname* of the eleventh century and the “khamsaic authors” (Nezami, Amir Khusrow, and Jami) who juxtaposed their renderings of the Alexander Romance with the tales of the deeds of and adventures of past Persian kings. Through the δ -recension and through Syriac lens, the Alexander Romance tradition was re-invented in the Persian *milieu*. The pre-existing Arabic cultural memory of Alexander established him as Dhu’l Qarnayn. It invented him as the seeker of the waters of life and the explorer of the land of darkness. Dhu’l Qarnayn was also the builder of the great wall that held at bay the eastern armies of Gog and Magog. His imagined historical images in the Arabic context saw him as king, conqueror, builder, general and prophet. This imagined historical image competed with the Janus-faced Persian memory of Alexander the

Great, Iskender. Alexander the Great represented to both the model king who was fit to stand next to the great kings of Persian history and legend. In this capacity, Alexander stands as a model whom Persian poets in the courtly context call upon to exemplify Persian *shahi*. Equally important, Alexander stood out as a figure of the distant Achaemenid past. Reconnection to his pre-Islamic context thrived in the tenth and eleventh centuries following the fragmentation of Abbasid power. So, in regions such as Khorusan there surfaced a need to reconnect with that distant past. Furthermore, the distant past became a source for the imagined histories to find a dynastic “origin.” Poets, such as Ferdowsi wove the Alexander narrative into his *Shahname*. The pre-Islamic past became a narrative resource to build dynastic histories for such as the Samanids, who could reinvent and reconnect to the pre-Islamic Persian past and legitimize their dynasty. The court contexts that generated these imagined histories simultaneously created a prescriptive image of *Shahi*. Alexander fit nicely into this model.

The Persian tradition established Alexander the Great as a model world conqueror and thus set a precedent which Ottomans followed by way of Ahmedi’s own rendering of the *Iskendername* at the end of the fourteenth century. In addition, Alexandrine narratives stood in as representative of the distant past. The *khamsaic* authors produced *Iskendernames* that both drew on Persian cultural traditions and the pre-existing Alexander Romance tradition. Running counter to this was a condemning image of Alexander that most likely found its origins in the Zoroastrian elements of Persian society, this image captured Alexander the great as the destroyer of the fire temples of pre-Islamic *Ehranshar* and the sacred Avesta, the holy texts of Zoroastrianism. Yet, despite this dark portrayal of Alexander, it was Alexander as model king that prevailed and was appropriated best through the Iskender of Ferdowsi and Nezami. In this way, Alexander resonated well with both the events of the early fifteenth century and Sultan Mehmed II who

ended Byzantine rule in the eastern Mediterranean and thus reinvented the Ottoman Imperial paradigm.

Thus, Ahmedi's *Iskendername* reflected the politically turbulent context of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century eastern Mediterranean. This context shared certain circumstantial parallels with the political and cultural context of the late fourth and early third centuries BCE. As a writer and poet, he was very much a part of both the Persianate court system that fostered the model for *shahi* and at the same time, he was educated in Mamluk Egypt and thus had access to larger social and cultural networks. After he had finished his *Iskendername*, he presumably entered the service of first Süleyman of Germiyan and then Emir Süleyman, with perhaps a brief interlude under the patronage of Bayezid I. The capture and death of Bayezid I fostered a dynastic crisis within the Ottoman dynasty that fractured Anatolia into Ottoman and non-Ottoman Beyliks. Yet, Ahmedi's history, written and circulated in this chaotic period, created an Alexander Romance that held true to the narrative structure of the Greek and Persian traditions but also ideologically connected the Ottoman dynasty to Alexander the Great. Drawing from Ferdowsi's *Shahname* and Nezami's two part *Iskendername*, Ahmedi created a *longue durée* narrative from the fourth century to the fifteenth century – from antiquity to the early modern.

Ahmedi's final part of the *Iskendername* – *the Dasitan* – is a shift in Alexander romance tradition that set the foundation of the Ottoman dynasty as the natural outcome of the ideological and cultural continuity that extended back to the fourth century BCE through the Alexander romance traditions. The *Dasitan* parallels previous renderings of the Alexander Romance, which instead closed with a litany of the cities that Alexander the Great established to cement his legacy. The effect of this narrative choice is profound. On one level, it draws on the Persian tradition of connecting to the past for the purposes of dynastic legitimization. But at a second

level he re-invents a new phase in textual *Alexandriana*, the *De Familia Ottomanorum* literature that circulated within the central (Italian peninsula) and eastern Mediterranean during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Equally important, are the “Shehnames” such as the *Süleymanname*, the *Selimname* and the *Bayan-e menazil*. They offer examples of an expanded Ottoman *Alexandriana* written in the spirit of Ahmedi’s *Iskendername* that tell of the deeds of Ottoman sultans as examples of world conquerors comparable to Alexander the Great.

The fifteenth century was a liminal period punctuated by the transition from the Byzantine to the Ottoman Empire. The mid-fifteenth century played a fundamental role in forming a new Ottoman imperial paradigm but it also underscored *translatio imperii* as a broader theme that connected the fourth century Alexandrine and the fifteenth century Ottoman narratives. By reading along the lines of *translatio imperii* one can identify moments within the narrative literary or historical account that show crises in which *translatio imperii* is to be avoided, missed opportunities for *translatio imperii*, and both successful failed attempts at translation imperii.

Translatio imperii represents an important *topos* for understanding the cultural and narratological intersections of the fourth century and fifteenth centuries. Previously understood in terms of a single unified context, *translatio imperii* is manifested in several distinct contexts: geographic, inter-dynastic, intra dynastic and trans-imperial. Each of these contexts is shared by both the early Ottoman and Alexandrine narratives. Each offers a cultural theme that can explore the roles that *Alexandriana*, kingship and model world conquerors played in the fifteenth century Ottoman historical imagination.

The capture of Constantinople marked a major point of trans-imperial *translatio imperii* between the Byzantine Empire and the Ottoman Empire. It recalled an earlier key moment of *translatio imperii* under Constantine I in the fourth century that transferred the imperial center

from Rome to Constantinople: Geographic *translatio imperii*. Similarly, both the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires shared in more routine instances of *intra-dynastic translatio imperii* that were smaller in scale. For the Ottoman dynasty, this seemed to highlight an anxiety as the death of sultan is a sensitive theme in the sources due the competitive nature of Ottoman succession. Finally, less familiar to the Ottoman context at first glance, and perhaps more pronounced in the Byzantine and Alexandrine narrative is *inter-dynastic translatio imperii*. Each context of *translatio imperii* has an expression in the Alexandrine narratives and thus is key to understanding the importance between the parallel connection.

The mid-fifteenth century represents a zenith in Ottoman engagement with the Alexander Romance genre. Mehmed II's active emulation of Alexander III facilitated through his panegyrist Kritovoulos of Imbros facilitated the conception of the new Ottoman imperial paradigm that set the Ottoman Empire at the head of reunited Mediterranean Empire. The figure of Mehmed II reinvented an Ottoman imperial paradigm that at least temporarily equated Ottoman rule with Roman rule. Furthermore, Mehmed II's education as an Ottoman prince was important; he took a keen interest in ancient history, military science, and geography. He set his sights on the capture of Constantinople and with that assumed the title of *Kaiser-i Rum*. Mehmed II pursued a policy of dynastic consolidation that rivaled that of his great-grandfather Bayezid I. Ottoman imperial territory incorporated the Balkans, Walachia, Greece, Thrace, and the former Anatolian beyliks. By the end of the fifteenth century its borders stretched from the Kingdom of Hungary in the west to the Mamluk and Safavid Empires in the East. Yet, Mehmed II's imperial paradigm was focused on the Mediterranean. As a conqueror, Mehmed II exceeded the expectations of Kritovoulos. He not only emulated Alexander but he exceeded his capacity as ruler. Alexander also had ambitions of Mediterranean conquest but they were never realized.

Mehmed II's capture of Otranto was the first step toward the conquest of Rome. He never saw it happen. His death, like his great grandfather's some seventy-eight years earlier, fractured the Ottoman dynasty. The disputed succession between Cem and Bayezid II never reached fevered pitch of the opening of an Ottoman Civil War; it was in so many ways much more one sided. Bayezid II was always sultan. Yet, in other ways it differed; the scale was much grander. It spanned the Mediterranean and Europe. Cem was now a bargaining chip that could be played by competing powers. He offered an opportunity for European powers such as the Kingdom of Aragon and the Kingdom of Hungary to contribute a page to the *De Familia Otthomanorum* histories that were circulating.

The existence of such circumstantial parallels highlights possible motivations for the active Ottoman participation in the Alexander Romance tradition. Thus, the Alexander romance represents a mirror that reflected the dynamic context of the fifteenth century and provided a roadmap for how the Ottoman state could emerge as a world empire. Furthermore, circumstantial parallels offer a way to read against the grain of the narrative histories and epic *mesnavis* to show the expectations of a fifteenth century Ottoman Sultan who was very much an agent in a changing Mediterranean world. They underscored the distinction between conqueror and king. They echoed a transition from the late premodern to early modern epistemological anxiety with respect to borders, limits, frontiers and the understanding of the Mediterranean and the Middle Eastern world.

The themes of *translatio imperii* stand alongside several circumstantial parallels that enhance the narratological links between the fourth century BCE and the fifteenth century CE. These circumstantial parallels provide an opportunity to connect aspects of these chronologically distant centuries through circumstantial parallels of person, event and place.

The Alexander historical narratives -- particularly Quintus Curtius Rufus and Diodorus Siculus provided mirrors into the early fifteenth century dynastic chaos in the guise of the Wars of the Diodochi. Seen through the mirrors of circumstantial parallelism and *translatio imperii*. Bayezid I reflected Alexander and the Roman Emperor, Perdiccas reflects Emir Süleyman, the sons of Bayezid reflect the Diodochi, and the Islamic empire of the sixteenth century, the Mamluks and the Safavids, can stare back at the Ptolemies and the Seleucids. This parallelism speaks to cultural continuity that is imbedded in the term *Alexandriana*. Whether deliberately or coincidentally, the Ottomans participated in its production and circulation. So, the mirrors of the world are imbedded not just within the textual *Alexandriana* but also with its other manifestation that further bind these chronologically distant periods.

This dissertation has argued that the fifteenth century provided a significant period of transition for the Ottoman state that reflects in theme and circumstances the geopolitical shifts experienced in the fourth century BCE. The themes of *translatio imperii*, dynastic succession, civil war, and conquest weigh heavily in both historical contexts. The key lies not in a one-to-one comparison of events but understanding the narratives that were produced and circulated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Ahmedi's *Iskendername* is a part of *Nisihatname* literature, but it is also part of a longer Alexander Romance tradition that holds Alexander as a model World conqueror. The mid-fifteenth century Ottoman state adopted the model of Alexander as model for conquest which, at least in the short-term vision of Mehmed II equated with Mediterranean conquest. Alexander in many ways served as a poor model for this; he never conquered the Mediterranean. In this, Plutarch's *Lives of Pompey and Caesar* served as better models and were both available to Mehmed II.

The role of circumstantial parallelism plays a key role in connecting these two or any two

centuries. This narrative approach needs broader testing. New questions come to the foreground. How do circumstantial parallels stand up in Carolingian, Sasanian and Augustan contexts? What is the place of circumstantial parallelism and *translatio imperii* in each of these respective meta-narratives? The advantage of the modern perspective indeed runs the risk of distorting readings of circumstantial parallels but by similarities of events, characters, and geography and narrative one can open new inventive opportunities for reading past historical cultural contexts.

Future interventions in the scholarship will shift focus to the macro and micro levels. Broader perspectives will further test and develop the contexts of *translatio imperii* and circumstantial parallelism. The models presented in this dissertation are starting points to be expanded upon. Narrowing focus on the issues presented in this dissertation will offer more in-depth close readings of the narratives to tease out and document the parallels between Alexandrine and Ottoman narratives. Additionally, a comprehensive database cataloguing in both space and time the production of textual *Alexandriana* will bring into focus the broad scope of this form of the body of material that circulated in the pre-modern and early modern contexts and give a clearer understanding of the Ottoman participation within it. Finally, this discussion has focused on textual *Alexandriana*. Yet, the term offers the opportunity for visual, material and folkloric culture to add multi-disciplinary layers to the discussion of Alexander Romances and the fifteenth century Ottoman state.

Appendix A – Berzunza’s *Alexandriana*

Julio Berzunza created his inventory of *Alexandriana* to better understand the material available on Alexander the Great.¹ The project was privately published in 1939 and presented a remarkable number of sources. While on many levels it is an extremely detailed bibliography, it provided significant insight into the production of textual *Alexandriana* from the fifteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Equally important, it served as a model to create a *leitmotif* to frame this discussion. At stake in this endeavor, is a clearer understanding of how modern cultural historians can better situate Ottoman participation within that context.

Berzunza’s goal in gathering material on Alexander the Great was not only to capture the histories and romances but to gather a broad range of material that included material, visual, and folkloric culture. Thus, Berzunza laid down the guidelines for how *Alexandriana* can broaden the framework of discussion when dealing with Alexander the Great as a world conqueror. Equally relevant, Berzunza’s study stood out as a document in the history of American ancient historical scholarship. It provides insight into the material available within the United in the first third of the twentieth century. Seen as a sort of collection, Berzunza’s catalogue offered a glimpse into an earlier Orientalized conception of *Alexandriana*.

Berzunza’s inventory can also be read as a document in the history of American classical and antique scholarship. Berzunza wrote his inventory based the library holdings at the University of New Hampshire and those materials he could find in the northeast United States. Yet, how different would his inventory have been if had focused on Princeton, Harvard or University of Michigan, University of Chicago? Steven Dyson (1998) has looked in depth at the history of

¹ Julio Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification of Books, Pamphlets, and Pictures concerning Alexander the Great and the Alexander Romances*, (University of New Hampshire: Privately Published, 1939).

classical archaeology in the United States.² Berzunza's catalogue offered a glimpse into how material on Alexander the Great circulated in the early decades of the twentieth century. It by no means represented the entire universe of *Alexandriana*. And yet, given the technological means of the day Berzunza's accomplishment was admirable.

Seen in this light, Berzunza's catalogue offered a collections approach to the material on Alexander. This collections approach offers insight into the broader narrative range that was available on the topic of Alexander the Great. For productions of the ancient sources (Arrian, Quintus Curtius Rufus, Plutarch, and Justin/Trogus), it provided a picture over time of what, was produced, where it was produced and for whom it was produced. So, a catalogue collection such as Berzunza's offers a starting point for building a broader picture of where the Ottoman production of the *Iskendername* fit into the cultural production of *Alexandriana*.

While Berzunza included some "Orientalist" works, such as Nezami and select copies of the Qurans, he completely omitted the other "Khamasaic authors" and Ottoman sources such as Ahmedi. Thus, there is still room in the scholarship to create a composite picture that includes *Alexandriana* as it has presently been redefined and discussed. This composite picture would correctly contextualize Ottoman textual production of *Alexandriana* into the broader more cultural diverse universe of *Alexandriana*. At stake in the re-contextualization is in an understanding of how Alexander the Great was a world conqueror and how material, textual, visual and folkloric culture were circulation in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Central East Asia to promote his narrative legacy.

It is also important to note that Berzunza produced his index prior to George Cary's (1954) *The Medieval Alexander*, which addressed much of the Alexander Romance scholarship until the

² Steven Dyson, *Ancient Marbles to American Shores: Classical Archaeology in the United States*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

mid-twentieth century.³ Berzunza's work stands as incremental step to understanding American scholarship surrounding Alexander the Great. Much of his catalogue is no more than a working bibliography of secondary literature. However, his listing of primary sources helps paint picture of the production of *Alexandriana* as Mediterranean cultural phenomenon.

The Composition of Berzunza's Catalogue

Berzunza's 138-page catalogue contained approximately 565 items. The catalogue itself has very few images. The catalogue is organized by the following categories. A brief introduction in which here describes the project (see chapter 1). The first major category is histories. This section covers over half of the catalogue (approximately 72 pages). It is further divided into histories and other ancient authorities, and ancient historical novelists, "Research studies pertaining to the history of Alexander the Great and to the historical novelists." The second major category features Numismatics – about two pages. It contains nine numismatic catalogues and publications. The third section is devoted to The Alexander Romances. It covers approximately 27 pages and contains three sub-categories: "The Pseudo-Kallisthenes: subsequent translation and recensions"; "Works related to the Pseudo-Callisthenes; and "Research studies pertaining to the Alexander Romance." A fifth section is addresses "Modern Historians and Essayists", which runs about just over ten pages. A sixth section considers "Modern Prose Fiction and Drama" totaling just over three and a half pages. Finally, the sixth section considers iconography which runs about 15 pages.

For understanding the broader picture of the production of textual *Alexandriana*, this summary will focus on the historical to set a future study that will aim to produce a more in

³ George Cary, *The Medieval Alexander*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1956).

depth investigation of how Ottoman Alexandriana fits into the larger universe of the cultural production of Alexandriana within the Mediterranean and Middle East. In terms of the histories, Quintus Curtius Rufus has the highest representation. The oldest work is from the fifteenth century an Italian work dated to 1478.⁴ There are also two additional works from 1495 and 1498.⁵ For the sixteenth century, there are twelve works dated 1507, 1513, 1517, 1518 (x3), 1520, 1533, 1534, 1535, 1543, 1553 and 1559.⁶ There are approximately twenty-nine works listed for the seventeenth century for the years 1602, 1604, 1607, 1611, 1633 (two works), 1639, 1650, 1652, 1653, 1656, 1658, 1663, 1664, 1668, 1670 (two works), 1671, 1672, 1673, 1678, 1684, 1685, 1686, 1691, 1693, 1696 (three works), 1699.⁷ Vigorous production continued into the seventeenth century for approximately thirty-two items produced representing the years 1701, 1704, 1708, 1714, 1715, 1716 (two works), 1718, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1724, 1727, 1730 (two works), 1746, 1749, 1750, 1754, 1757 (two works), 1768 (two works), 1775, 1781, 1782, 1790 (two works), 1794 and 1798.⁸ Finally, during the nineteenth century and additional twenty copies were produced for the years 1801, 1803, 1822, 1825, 1826 (x2), 1829, 1840 (x2), 1843, 1845, 1849 (two works), 1860, 1864, 1867, 1869, 1880, 1886, 1893, 1896 (?).⁹ The works are predominately in Latin but other languages are well represented including German, Spanish, Italian, French, Catalan, and English. This small sample set based on Berzunza's catalogue suggests a vigorous and relatively consistent production of Quintus Curtius Rufus beginning in fifteenth century and continuing into the nineteenth century but further investigation and more details chronological and geographic information is still needed.

⁴ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 36.

⁵ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 11.

⁶ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 11-13; 31; 36-38.

⁷ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 13-20; 32-33; 34-35.

⁸ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 20-26 ; 33-34 ; 39-40.

⁹ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 26-33 ; 37.

Textual Representation for the other vulgate writer, Justin/Trogus, is much more sparse. Berzunza identified works for 1510, 1559, 1606, 1674, 1760, 1841, and 1886 but still shows representation from the sixteenth until the nineteenth centuries.¹⁰ The works were primarily in Latin and English.

For the Greek authors the pictures varies. Berzunza identified only one work from Diodorus Siculus from the year 1699. It is a translation of Diodorus Siculus into English, published in London by Edward Jones A. and J. Churchill at the Black Swan in Pater-Noster Row.¹¹ Arrian was well-represented in the catalogue with works representing the years 1539 (two works), 1704, 1729, 1757, 1802, 1865, 1867, 1883, 1888, 1893.¹² The languages of publication were Greek, French, Latin, and English. The representative sample of Plutarch's from Berzunza's catalogue encapsulates the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries with texts for the following years: 1529, 1683-1686, 1766, 1834 (2 works) and 1889.¹³ The languages of production were Greek, English and Spanish.

Berzunza included other primary sources which he felt were representative of Alexandriana. These include one work of Flavius Josephus published in London in 1683.¹⁴ Two works from Cicero are included – one in Spanish one in Latin. They date from 1818 and 1923, respectively.¹⁵ Strabo's Geography also made an appearance into the catalogue with

Berzunza's interest in *Alexandriana* did venture beyond the classical authors. Recognizing the role of Dhu'l Qarnayn in the Alexander narrative, Berzunza captured two Korans one undated and one 1856.¹⁶ He also made note James Wilberforce Clarke's translation of Nezami.

¹⁰ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 46-48.

¹¹ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 45.

¹² Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 2-6.

¹³ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 7-10.

¹⁴ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 6-7.

¹⁵ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 6.

¹⁶ Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 7.

(see Chapter 2).¹⁷ Dr. William Bacher's (1871), *Nezamis Leben und Werke unter Zweite Teil des Nezamischen Alexander's Buches* provides a secondary source on Nezami.¹⁸

Finally, Berzunza addressed many of the works on the Alexander Romances such as Julius Valerius, E. A. Wallace Budge, and Francis Magoun, however these works have been covered in more detail by Cary (1954) and well as in the first chapter of this present work so discussion will be omitted here.¹⁹

Berzunza's catalogue represented a synchronic moment in the history of scholarship of Alexander the Great in the United States during the early twentieth century. It has also provided a new model for how to read Ottoman participation in the cultural fabric of the production of textual *Alexandriana* in the early modern period. When combined with contemporary GIS and relational databases, cataloguing efforts such as Berzunza's, offer opportunities to gain a clearer picture of the dissemination of Alexander narrative in the early modern world and the degree to which the Ottomans participated in this culturally unifying process within the Mediterranean and beyond.

¹⁷ James Wilberforce Clarke, *Sikandar-name e bara, or the Book of Alexander the Great*, (London: Allen and Company, 1881. See Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 7 for an undated copy of Nezami.

¹⁸ William Bacher, *Nezamis Leben und Werke unter Zweite Teil des Nezamischen Alexander's Buches*. (London: Gottingen: 1871); Berzunza, *A Tentative Classification*, 7.

¹⁹ E. A. Wallis, Budge, *The Lives and Exploits of Alexander the Great*, (Cambridge University Press Warehouse, 1896); E.A. Wallis Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great*, (Cambridge University Press, 1889; 1896); E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Alexander Book in Ethiopia*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1933); Julius Valerius, *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis*, (Venice, 1852); Francis P. Magoun, *The Gestes of King Alexander of Macedon*, (Cambridge: Harvard, 1929).

Appendix B - Summary of Ottoman Textual Alexandriana Currently Housed in the Süleymaniye Library (Sorted by Author)

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
H Husnu Pasa	00889-	-	Tarih-i Iskender al Kebir	1303	1302-3	Arabic
Carullah	01279-009	-	Reselet'ul ma el Iskender min kitab Aristioalis			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-012	-	Risaletu Aristotales ile l'Iskender fi's s-siyaset-i amme			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-013	-	Risaletu'l Iskender ile Aristotales hine feteha Bilade Faris			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-019	-	Risaletu'l Aristotales ile'l Iskender fi Siyaset'l Mudun			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-026	-	Kitabu'l Iskender ila Validetihi fi t-ta'ziye			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-028	-	Risaletu'l Aristotales ile'l Iskender			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-029	-	Rislaet'ul Iskender ila Aristotales			Arabic
Fazil Ahmed Pasa	01608-20	-	Risaletu'l Iskender ila Aristotales Yested'ihl' kitab ileyh[i]			Arabic
I. Ismail Hakki	02230-	-	Tarih-i Iskender-i Kabiir	1303	1886-7	Arabic
Aga Efendi Tanacan	00264-002	Abdullah es-Serkavi	Seyh ala Metbi'l Hukmi'l Imam Ahmed Iskenderi	1304	1886-7	Arabic
Microfilm	01834-006	Abu Kurra, Tahir b. Huseyin	Kitabi Aristotales fi Fezailu'n Nefs		;	Arabic
Microfilm	01834-009	Aristotales	Resaletu Arstotales ile'l Iskender			Arabic
Microfilm	01834-011	Aristotales	Risalatu Aristotales ile'l Iskender fi Siyaseti'l Mudun			Arabic
Microfilm	01834-013	Aristotales	Risalatu Aristotales ile'l Iskender fi Siyaseti'l Mudun			Arabic
Microfilm	01834-021	Aristotales	Risalatul Aritotales ile'l Iskender			Arabic
AYASOFYA	02456-007	Aristotales	MAkale fi sireti Aristotales ve Vasiyyetihi ve Fihristi kutub			Arabic
AYASOFYA	04832-045	Aristotales	Risale fi Kemiyeti kutubi Aristotales va ma yuhtacu Ilayhi fi Tahsil al-Felsefe			Arabic
AYASOFYA	2456-007	Aristotales	Fusul min Kelami Aritotales			Arabic
Microfilm	04372-002	Batlamus	Makable fi sireti Aritotales ve Vasiyetihi ve Fihristi kutub			Arabic
AYASOFYA	03003-	Ebu'l Muzaffer Vecihuddin	Serutu'l Iskender			Arabic
AYASOFYA	03004-	Ebu'l Muzaffer Vecihuddin	Serutu'l Iskender			Arabic

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Fuat Sezgin	01337-	Ed. Fat Sezgin	Cevamu'l- Iskenderaniyyin [Tipkibasim: Sulemaniye Hutuphanes, Fatih 3539			Arabic
Shehid Ali Pasa	02841-004	El Farabi, Muhammed b. Muhammed b. Turhan	Ittifaku re'yeyi'l Hakimeyn Eflatun ve Aristotales			Arabic
Veliyuddin Effendi	03182-	El Hatami Muhammed, b. el Hasan b. el Muzaffer - eau Ali El-Bağda	Risale Mimma YUvafika elfaz Aristotales min Si'irul mtennebb			Arabic
Fatih	05323-021	El hatemi, el hasan b. Nuhammed b. Muzafer	Agradu'l Nutennebbi el muvafika li-Hikemi Aristotales	716	1316-7	Arabic
AYASOFYA	03340-005	Fezaul	Fezailu'l Iskenderiyye ve'l Cihad			Arabic
Microfilm	01834-001	Ibn Huneyn ishak b. Nuneynb. shak el ibadi	Zikr Mavt el Iskender vet-tabiin el Hukema Lehu			Arabic
Fatih	04390-	Ibrahim es-suri	Siretu'l Iskender			Arabic
Laleli	01701-003	Idkavi-Abdullah b. Abdullah	Makmatu'l Iskedneriyye	1157	1744-45	Arabic
Microfilm	01834-014	Iskender	Risale ila Aristotales			Arabic
Microfilm	01834-022	Iskender	Risaletu'l Iskender ila Aristotales			Arabic
Aşır Effendi	00459-003	Jāmī	Risale fi vucud			Arabic
Nuruosmaniye	04994-051	Jāmī	Make fi Nisayihil-hukema li'l Iskender			Arabic
Aga Efendi Tanacan	0264-001	Muhammed b. Ibrahim Ibn Ubbed en Nefezi er Rindi	Serh ala Metbi'l hukmil Imam ahmed Iskenderi	1304	1886-7	Arabic
Bağdatlı Vehbı	02013-002	Muhammed el- Farabi b. Mohammed b. Turhan	El-camu been Re'yeyi'l Hakimeyn Eflatun-e Aristotales		1907	Arabic
AYASOFYA	03440-005	n/a	Fezailu'l Iskenderiyye ve'l Cihad			Arabic
AYASOFYA	04260-	n/a	Muhavere beyne'i Iskender ve Aristotalis	714	1314-15	Arabic
Fatih	05323-016	n/a	Aristotalis ile 'l Iskender			Arabic
Fatih	05323-018	n/a	Resale Aristotalis el-Iskender			Arabic
Carrullah	18086M-015	n/a	Muraselatu'l mulki'l Iskender ve Aristotalis			Arabic
Carullah	01279-011		Rislalet-ül Iskender			Arabic
AYASOFYA	03854-005	Nevai Mir Ali Sir	Iskendername			Cagatay
Ali Nihat Tarlan	00057-	-	Iskendername			Ottoman

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Husrev Pasa	00316-	-	Vasiyetname-i Aritotales			Ottoman
AYASOFYA	01205-	-	Tarih-i Iskender bin Filip			Ottoman
Serif Muheddin Targan	01749-	-	Samli Tevfik ve Iskender Biraderler Nota Fasikulleri			Ottoman
Tirnovali	01858-005	-	Sual-i Iskender ez Hukuma ki asli alem ci bud			Ottoman
Nuruosmaniye	02775-002	-	Tercumet-l reisalte'il Tedbir li Aristotales			Ottoman
Nuruosmaniye	04102-	-	Tercume-i Kyafetname-i Aristotales			Ottoman
Süheyl Ünver Dosya	00418-	A. Süheyl Ünver	Buyuk Iskender			Ottoman
Sami Benli	00625-	Abu Veled b. Resad	Telhisu kitabu Aritotales		1980	Ottoman
Sazeli Tekkesi	00110-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Celebi Abdullah	00240-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Celebi Abdullah	00271-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Lala Ismail	00294-	Ahmedi	Iskendername	971	1563-4	Ottoman
Kemankeš	00385-	Ahmedi	Tarih-i Iskender (Biografya)			Ottoman
Microfilm	01842-	Ahmedi	Iskendername	819	1416-7	Ottoman
Microfilm	01986-001	Ahmedi	Iskendername	847	1443-4	Ottoman
Microfilm	03341-	Ahmedi	Iskendername	926	1519-20	Ottoman
Veliyuddin efendi	03691-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Fatih	04816-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Serif Muheddin Targan	00013-	Al-Farabi Muhammed	el-Cam'u beyn Re'yeyi'l Hakimeyn Eflatun ve Aristotales		1907	Ottoman
Fatih	4056-011	Ali Sir Nevai, Nizameddin Ali b. Kiçkine Bahadur el Herevi	Sedd-i Iskenderi			Ottoman
Haci Mahmud Efendi	04829-001	Ali Sir Nevai, Zizmeddi Ali b. Kickine Bahadur el Herevi	Iskendername	1056	1646-47	Ottoman
Petrev Pasa	00247M02-0 02	Aristotales	Iskander'e Nasihat			Ottoman
Haci Besir Aga	00656-045	Aristotales	Iskender Zülkarneyn'e bir Nasihat Mektuve Tercumesi			Ottoman
Fatih	00675-	E-iskenderi, Muhammed b. abusselela es Safii	El-iskenderi, Muhammed b. abusselela es Safii	1140	1727-8	Ottoman

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Fuat Sezgin	01336-	E. Fuat Sezgin	Cevamu'l Iskenderaniyyin [Tipkibasim: Suleymaniye Kutuphanesi, Fatih 3538]			Ottoman
Fotokopi	00161-	Ehli as-sirazi	Iskendername	819	1416-17	Ottoman
Fatih	00676-	El-iskenderi, Muhammed b. Abusselela es-Safii	El-iskenderi, Muhammed b. abusselela es Safii	1140	1727-8	Ottoman
Microfilm	00320-002	El-varrak, Hasan b. Ibrahim b. Ebu Bekr	Bendname-i emir Kaykavus b. Iksender			Ottoman
Microfilm	03604-005	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Ottoman
Microfilm	03604-005	Emir Khusrev	Iskendername			Ottoman
Serif Muheddin Targan	00401-002	Farabi Ebu Nasr	El-Ibama an-garaz Aristotales	1325	1907-8	Ottoman
Yam Bagislar	04201-	Figani et-Trrabzoni Ramazan bin Abdullah	Iskendername	1056	1646-47	Ottoman
Yazma Bagislar	04044-	Hamzavi	Iskendername			Ottoman
Microfilm	03736-	Iskender	Visyetname-i Aritotales			Ottoman
Hz Nasuhi Dergah Matbu	00887-	Iskender b. Filpos	Tarih-i Iskender b. Filipos Tercumesi	1254	1838-9	Ottoman
Microfilm	03595-009	Jāmī	Iskendername	935	1528-9	Ottoman
I. Ismail Hakki	02413-	Mehmed Mansur	Iskenderiyye Hutuphanesine Dair Rislaledir	1300	1182-3	Ottoman
Mehmed Muster Giresun	00008-	Muhammad Fehim	Nesayih-i Aristotalis be Iskender	1264	1847-8	Ottoman
Husrev Pasa	00140-002	Mustakimzade, Sa'deddin suleyman b. Muhammed Emin	Iskenderiyye			Ottoman
Petrev Pasa	00614-003	Mustakimzade, Sa'deddin suleyman b. Muhammed Emin	Iskendername			Ottoman
Petrev Pasa	00625-005	Mustakimzade, Sa'deddin suleyman b. Muhammed Emin	Iskendername			Ottoman
Nuri Arlasez	00038-	n/a	Iskendername			Ottoman
Nuri Arlasez	00059-007	n/a	Maznumname-i Dara be cabib-i Iskender ve cevab-i Iskender			Ottoman
Serez	00242-	n/a	Kissa-Iskender zi'l Karneyn			Ottoman
Dugumlu Baba	00523M-12	n/a	Iskender-i Zulkarneyn Hikayesi	1288	1871-72	Ottoman

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Husrev Pasa	00885-	n/a	Iskenderiye kal'asinin taliyesi icin şatname	1216	1801-2	Ottoman
Yazma Bagislar	01457-001	n/a	Nasihah-i Iskender			Ottoman
Sad Efendi	02072-	n/a	Makedonyali Iskender'in Tarahi	1234	1818-19	Ottoman
Bayezid	05030-	n/a	Iskendername (Biografya)			Ottoman
Haci Mahmud Effendi	05005-001	na	Iskender Kıssası	1287	1870-71	Ottoman
Ali Emiri Farsi	00476-	Nezami	Iskendermane	1282	1865-6	Ottoman
Microfilm	03531-005	Nezami	Iskender-name			Ottoman
Microfilm	03648-005	Nezami	Iskender-name			Ottoman
Haci Besir Aga	00656-051	Silstrevi Zaim Ali	Ye'cuc ve Me'cuc ve Seddi Iskender Haddinda sual ve Cevablar			Ottoman
Ali Emiri Farsi	01059-	Sultan Sa'id Mirza curtain Sayyid Serif	Rislah-i der sualat-Sultan Said Mirza Iskender es-seyyid			Ottoman
Yazma Bagislar	01459-	Veysi Effendi	Hikaye-i Iskender-i Zulkarneyn	1255	1839-40	Ottoman
Laleli	01995-		Iskendername			Ottoman
Fatih	04186-	Ahmedi	Iskendername			Persian
Halet Efendi	00101-001	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
Halet Efendi	00101-002	Emir Khusrev	Husrev u Şirin	1004	1595-6	Persian
Halet effendi Ek	00101-003	Emir Khusrev	Leyla u Macnun			Persian
Halet effendi ek	00101-004	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender	1004	1595-6	Persian
Halet effendi Ek	00101-005	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
Murad Buhari	00253-	Emir Khusrev	Hizhirhan-i Divalran			Persian
Halet Efendi	00377-001	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
Halet Efendi	00377-002	Emir Khusrev	Husrev u Şirin			Persian
Halet Efendi	00377-003	Emir Khusrev	Matla'u'l Envar			Persian
Halet Efendi	00377-005	Emir Khusrev	Iskendername			Persian
Kadizade Mehmed	00389-	Emir Khusrev	Divan [Emir Husrev]			Persian
Lala Ismail	00395-002	Emir Khusrev	Derya-i Ebrar			Persian
Lala Ismail	00441-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
Zühdü Bey	00642-	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Husrev			Persian
Hekimoglu	00651-001	Emir Khusrev	Dibace-i külliyatlar			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-001	Emir Khusrev	Kulliyat-i Dibace-i Tuhfet-i Tuhfeti's sigar			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-002	Emir Khusrev	Tuhfetu'l siğar			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-003	Emir Khusrev	Dibace-i Vastil-i Hayal			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-004	Emir Khusrev	Vastu'l hayat			Persian

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Hekimoglu	00661-005	Emir Khusrev	Dibace-i Gurrelti'î Kemal			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-008	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskenderi			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-008	Emir Khusrev	Dibace-i Bakkiyye-i Nakkiyye			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-010	Emir Khusrev	Gezeliyyat	903	1727-8	Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-011	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar	903	1497-8	Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-015	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-016	Emir Khusrev	Husrev u Şirin			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-017	Emir Khusrev	Mecnun u Leyla			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-020	Emir Khusrev	Ruba' iyyat			Persian
H Hüsnü Pasa	00965-	Emir Khusrev	Muntebat-i Divan-i Dihlevi			Persian
Resid Effendi	01029-028	Emir Khusrev	Icaz-i Husrevi			Persian
Resid Effendi	01030-009	Emir Khusrev	Derya-i Ebrar			Persian
Şehid Ali Pasa	01349-002	Emir Khusrev	Kaside-i Husrev-i Dihlevi			Persian
Laleli	01744-	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Husrev			Persian
Laleli	01747-002	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
Laleli	01895-001	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Husrev			Persian
Esad Effendi	02574-	Emir Khusrev	Khamse-i Khusrev			Persian
Sad Effendi	02629-002	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Husrev			Persian
Esad Effendi	02630-	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Khusrev			Persian
Şehid Ali Pasa	02790-013	Emir Khusrev	Kasaid			Persian
Esad Effendi	03413-008	Emir Khusrev	Intihab-i Divan-i Emir Husrav-i Dihlevi			Persian
Esad Effendi	03422-004	Emir Khusrev	Derya-i Ebrar			Persian
Esad Effendi	03441-007	Emir Khusrev	Derya-i Ebrar			Persian
Microfilm	03604-004	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
Microfilm	03604-005	Emir Khusrev	Iskendername			Persian
Microfilm	036403-003	Emir Khusrev	Husrev u Şirin			Persian
Microfilm	03646-001	Emir Khusrev	Şirin u Khusrev			Persian
Microfilm	03646-002	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
Microfilm	03646-003	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
Esad Effendi	03702-042	Emir Khusrev	Derya-i Ebrar			Persian
Fatih	03745-	Emir Khusrev	Hamse			Persian
AYASOFYA	03776- 002	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03776-001	Emir Khusrev	Şirin ü Husrev			Persian
AYASOFYA	03776-002	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03776-003	Emir Khusrev	Hesht behişt ve Mecnun-u leyla parcalari			Persian

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Fatih	03812-	Emir Khusrev	Divan	906	1500-01	Persian
Fatih	03814-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
Fatih	03815-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
Fatih	03817-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
Fatih	03818-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03857-003	Emir Khusrev	Gazeliyaat			Persian
AYASOFYA	03857-011	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
AYASOFYA	03857-012	Emir Khusrev	Leyla u Macnun			Persian
AYASOFYA	03859-001	Emir Khusrev	Matla'ul Envar			Persian
AYASOFYA	03859-002	Emir Khusrev	Şirin ü Husrev			Persian
AYASOFYA	03859-003	Emir Khusrev	Leyla u Macnun			Persian
AYASOFYA	03859-004	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03859-005	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-003	Emir Khusrev	Mecnun u Leyla			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-004	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-005	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-006	Emir Khusrev	Nuh Sipih			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-007	Emir Khusrev	Hidir Hani			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-008	Emir Khusrev	Kiran-i Sa'deyn			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-012	Emir Khusrev	Firakname			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-013	Emir Khusrev	Feresname			Persian
AYASOFYA	03914-	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03945-034	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03946-001	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-001	Emir Khusrev	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-004	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-005	Emir Khusrev	Bahru'l Ebrar			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-006	Emir Khusrev	Leyla vü Mecnun			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-007	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-008	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-009	Emir Khusrev	Ruba'yaat			Persian
Fatih	04997-001	Emir Khusrev	Muhtasar-i Edevat			Persian
Yazma Bağışlar	05206-	Emir Khusrev	Kaside-i Mir'at-i Safa	1308	1890-1	Persian
Fatih	05325-005	Emir Khusrev	Hikaye-i Hamse -i Dihlevi			Persian
Yazma Bağışlar	05505-	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Emir Husrev-i Dehlavi	1130	1717-8	Persian
Hekimoglu	0661-007	Emir Khusrev	Esbname shut Fresu'l Feres			Persian

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
Hekimoglu	0661-008	Emir Khusrev	Dibace-i Bakkiyye-i Nakkiyye			Persian
Hekimoglu	0661-013	Emir Khusrev	Hidir Han-i Düvelrani			Persian
Yazma Bağışlar	06628-002	Emir Khusrev	Kaside-i Mir'at-i Safa			Persian
Hekimoglu	06661-018	Emir Khusrev	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	3912-001	Emir Khusrev	Matla' ul Envar			Persian
AYASOFYA	4212-003	Emir Khusrev	Gazeliyaat			Persian
Halet Efendi	00377-004	Emir Khusrev	Heşt Behişt			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-009	Emir Khusrev	Bakkiye-i Nakkiye			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-012	Emir Khusrev	Nuh Sipihr			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-014	Emir Khusrev	Fethu'l Futuh			Persian
Halet Efendi	00815-003	Emir Khusrev	Mira as-Safa			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-002	Emir Khusrev	Şirin ü Husrev			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-005	Emir Khusrev	Shirin u Khusrev			Persian
Ali Emiri Farsi	00358-	Emir Khusrev (DehleviMir Husrev b. Emir Mahmud)	Kulliyat anasir-i Dananin-i Husrev	1288	1871-2	Persian
A Nihat Tarlan Matbu	00375-	Emir Khusrev (Emir Husrev-i Dehlevi)	Şirin ü Husrev		1962	Persian
Esad Effendi	02850-	Emir Khusrev [?]	Tuhfe			Persian
Fatih	05297-002	Hasan el-Varrak	Bendname-i emir Kaykavus b. Iksender	624	1226-27	Persian
Hekimoglu	00725-025	Jami	Hiredname-i Iskender	895	1489-90	Persian
A. Tekelioglu	00099-008	Jāmī	Iskendername			Persian
Ismihan Sultan	00268-004	Jāmī	Sedd-i Iskender	979	1571-72	Persian
Turhan V Sultan	00270-005	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Husrev Pasa	00506-	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender	1245	1829-30	Persian
Hekimoglu	00660-029	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Hekimoglu	00684-010	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
A. Tekelioglu	00766-	Jāmī	Baharistan	978	1570-1	Persian
Microfilm	00927-008	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender	897		Persian
Yeni Cami	00991-025	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender	893	1487-88	Persian
Esad Effendi	01489-009	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
Aşır Effendi	0166-002	Jāmī	Sheikh-i Rudiyyat			Persian
Aşır Effendi	0177-	Jāmī	Nefehatu 'l-uns			Persian
AYASOFYA	02161-008	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03777-007	Jāmī	Hiradname-i Iskender	1002	11593-4	Persian

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
AYASOFYA	03852-005	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03853-004	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	03892-	Jāmī	Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03894-	Jāmī	Jāmi Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03895-	Jāmī	Jāmi Divan			Persian
AYASOFYA	03896-	Jāmī	Yusuf ve Suleyha			Persian
AYASOFYA	03946-009	Jāmī	Divan			Persian
Fatih	04043-009	Jāmī	Iskendername			Persian
Fatih	04044-031	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
Fatih	04045-038	Jāmī	Huudname-i Iskender			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04171-035	Jāmī	Iskendername			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04174-009	Jāmī	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04175-009	Jāmī	Iskendername			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04176M-032	Jāmī	Kİtab-i Iskendername			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04177-017	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Nuruosmaniye	04178-009	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	04206-027	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	04207-027	Jāmī	Selman ü Evsal			Persian
AYASOFYA	04208-033	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	04209-018	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Petrev Pasa	04447-079	Jāmī	Hiredname-i Iskender	939	1533	Persian
AYASOFYA	3777-007	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	42017-021	Jāmī	Hiredname-iskender			Persian
Esad Effendi	01426-005	Mustakimzade, Sa'deddin suleyman b. Muhammed Emin	Risaletu'l Iskender	1198	1783-84	Persian
Veliyuddin efendi	02137-	n/a	Cevab[-i] saualat[-i] emir Zade Iskender			Persian
AYASOFYA	04056-011	Nevai Mir Ali Sir	Sedd-i Iskender			Persian
Halet effendi Ek	00137-001	Nezami	Iskendername-i Nizami			Persian
AYASOFYA	00172-240	Nezami	Serefname-i Iskender			Persian
Halet Efendi	00376-005	Nezami	Iskendername			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-018	Nezami	Ayine-i Iskender			Persian
Bağdatlı Vehbı	01577-	Nezami	Iskendername			Persian
?	03854-004	Nezami	Iskendername			Persian
AYASOFYA	03857-0006	Nezami	İkbalname-Iskender			Persian

Collection	Demirbaş/ Acc. No.	Author	Title	H. Date	M. date	Language
AYASOFYA	03858-004	Nezami	Iskendername	933	1526-7	Persian
AYASOFYA	03858-005	Nezami	Hiredname-i Iskender	929	1522-3	Persian
AYASOFYA	03860-005	Nezami	Serefname-i Iskenderi			Persian
AYASOFYA	03860-006	Nezami	Ikbalname-i Iskenderi	902	1496-7	Persian
AYASOFYA	03861-006	Nezami	Iskendername			Persian
Fatih	04057-010	Nezami	Ayine-i Iskender	830	1426-7	Persian
Fatih	04057-012	Nezami	Iskendername	831	1427-8	Persian
AYASOFYA	04207-021	Nezami	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Hekimoglu	00656-011	Nuvidi, Zeynülabin	Hülliyat 11. Iksenename	970	1562-3	Persian
Hekimoglu	00061-019	Unknown	Heşt Behişt			Persian
Pertev Pasa	00447-009	Unknown	Hiredname-i Iskender			Persian
Hekimoglu	00661-006	Unknown	Gurret'ül kemal			Persian
Revnakoglu	00373-	Jāmī	[Divan of Jami?]			Turkish
Fuat Sezgin	01338-	Ed.Fuad Sezgin	Cevaiu'l- Iskenderaniyyin [Tipbasim: Tahran, Meclis-Sura-yi Islam, 6037]			Persian
Esad Effendi	02629-001	Emir Khusrev	Divan-i Khusrev			Persian
AYASOFYA	03912-011	Emir Khusrev	Mutahu'l futuh			Persian
AYASOFYA	04212-002	Emir Khusrev	Mukatta'at			Persian
Fatih	04997-	Emir Khusrev	Muhtasar-i Edevat			Persian
AYASOFYA	04684-	Firdevsi	Shehname			Persian
AYASOFYA	3861-001	Firdevsi	Shehname			Persian

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¹ See also Appendix B for a more comprehensive list of the Ottoman textual *Alexandriana* currently held at Süleymaniye Library.

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