

A SARTORIAL TRIBUTE TO LATE TANZIMAT OTTOMANISM: THE *ELBİSE-İ ‘OṢMĀNİYYE* ALBUM

Starting in the 1860s, the museum and the exhibition space gained prominence in the Ottoman cultural realm as new and effective channels for the public display of imperial power and rootedness. As early as 1863, a sizeable national exposition (the *Sergi-i ‘Umūmī-i ‘Oṣmānī*) modeled on contemporary European expositions was held in Istanbul in the hope of encouraging the consumption of local Ottoman products (fig. 1).¹ The most spectacular efforts to promote the modern imperial image, however, were occasioned by the world expositions held in the ma-

jor cities of Western Europe and the United States. The ultimate loci of “pilgrimage to the commodity fetish,” as Walter Benjamin described them,² the world expositions were the most prestigious arenas of global commercial exchange and fierce international rivalry in the nineteenth century. Prescribing absolute and universal criteria of achievement for all participants, the fabricated atmosphere of the international expositions had a formative impact on the changing modes and perceptions of representation throughout the century.

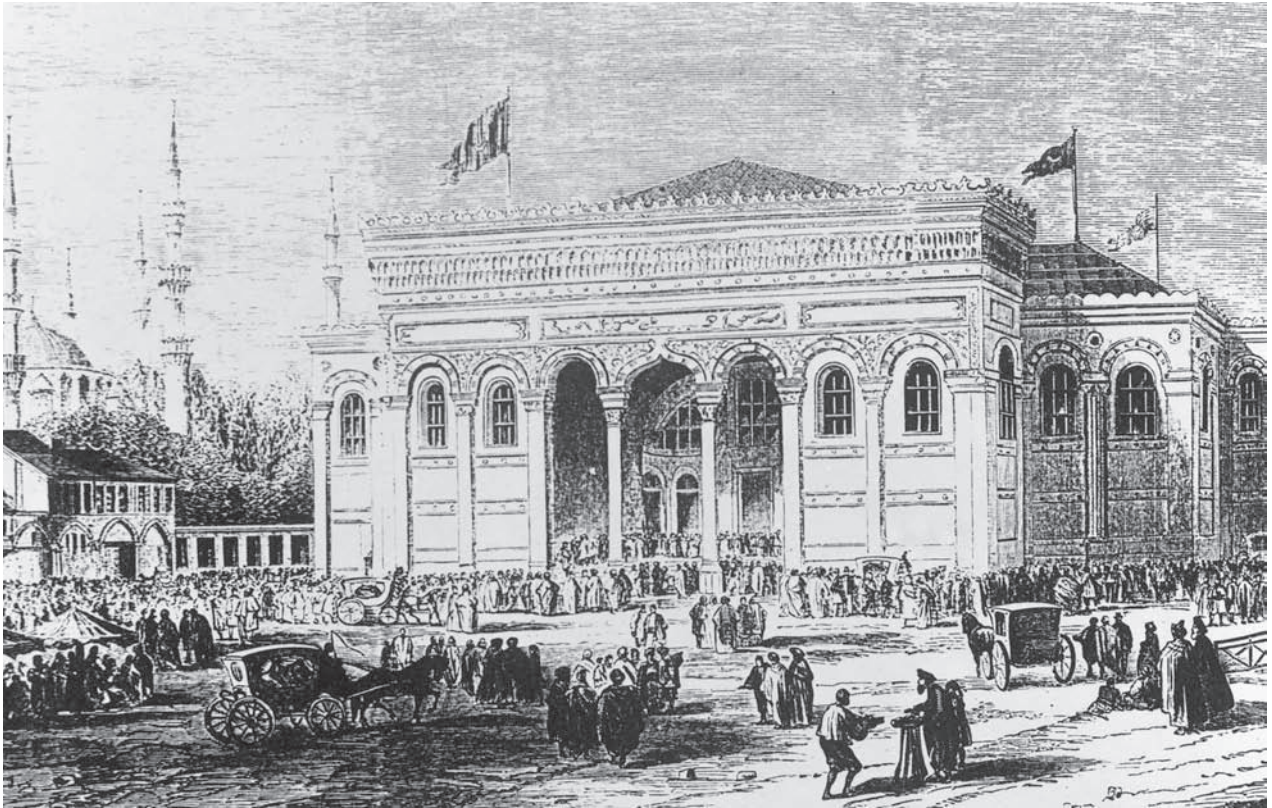


Fig. 1. Exterior of main hall, 1863 Ottoman Exposition. (After *Le monde illustré* 312 [April 4, 1863])

Attentive to the use and effectiveness of expositions in promoting imperial prestige, the Ottoman state participated in almost every major world exposition following the trend-setting Great Exhibition of London in 1851.³ Even in the less inflated shows of the earlier years, the financially burdened Ottoman state went to considerable pains to fabricate an ideal vision of its imperial domains for the eyes of a wide international audience. In their great stride towards reform and modernization, the Tanzimat bureaucrats were well aware that the state's participation in an exposition was, in all its stages, a profoundly political act.⁴ In the first place, mobilizing all the provinces to take part in a grand project of self-representation was an effective strategy for demonstrating the control and authority of the centralized state, as well as for creating a sense of cohesion among the diverse inhabitants of the loose-jointed empire. Furthermore, the organized displays of the collected material within the international arena of the exposition helped promote an image for outside viewers of the Ottoman Empire as a stable, orderly, and unified political entity. Since ambiguous feats such as "cultural and social advancement" were rendered fully measurable within the materialistic, comparative setting of the nineteenth-century exposition, the Ottoman exhibits were constructed with meticulous care to picture the empire as a strong and progressive monarchy on an equal footing with its European counterparts.

This study focuses on a photographic album of traditional Ottoman dress entitled the *Elbise-i 'Osmaniyye: Les Costumes populaires de la Turquie* (Istanbul, 1873) (hereafter abbreviated as *Elbise*), which was commissioned by the Ottoman government on the occasion of the 1873 World Exposition in Vienna. The 1873 Exposition, designed as a showcase of the thriving Vienna bourgeoisie, was the largest, costliest, and most ambitious event of its kind for the time.⁵ Although it failed to provide the desired "eastward pull" to the competitive orbit of world expositions (since the industrialized superpowers displayed a relatively low profile in the event), the Vienna Exposition was a major ground of encounter for the feverishly reshaping "ramshackle empires" of Eastern Europe. Owing to the Austro-Hungarian Empire's idealized vision of itself at the center of the new world order, acting as a stable mediator between the East and the West,⁶ countries with lesser competitive status in the previous expositions, such as Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and Japan, received an exceptionally larger

share of the total exhibition area. The Russian section, for instance, comprised some of the most applauded exhibits in the exposition, with a variety of ethnographic shows,⁷ fine arts exhibits, and a vast collection of handcrafted objects. As the Danube monarchy's closest ally and most important trade partner in the East, the Ottoman Empire enjoyed considerable presence and visibility in an exposition that was, as its organizers claimed, designed to dim all previous events of its kind in "bringing together the whole Orient in full originality."⁸ With the strategic location and unprecedented scale of its allotted exhibition area in the exposition hall and the surrounding park, the Ottoman section was expected to constitute the centerpiece of the vast array of "Oriental exhibits" in the Vienna Exposition.

The Ottoman state would have turned this propitious event into a crowning show of force had it not been facing one of its most debilitating financial crises. The inevitable budgetary drawback required a drastic reduction in the number and scale of pavilions that had initially been proposed for the Ottoman section in the exposition grounds (fig. 2). This was, however, a sacrifice that ran the risk of lending Egypt (nominally a part of the Ottoman Empire but



Fig. 2. Replica of Ahmed III fountain, 1873 Vienna Exposition. (After *L'Esposizione universale de Viena del 1873 illustrata* 3 [Milan, 1873])

represented autonomously in the expositions) the upper hand in dominating the oriental quarters in the exposition park with larger, more imposing pavilions (fig. 3). The Ottoman commission to the exposition tried to avert the impending “prestige crisis” by adopting what they called a more rigorous “methodical display strategy” that was geared to impress through order, technical competence, and scholarly weight rather than through scale and grandeur. The preparatory reports of the Ottoman commission clearly reveal a strong determination to avoid the reflexive urge to create a “picturesque bazaar effect” endemic to most “oriental” exhibits and to organize a show that would provoke:

... a serious interest on the part of the industrialists, traders, artists, and scholars of other nations... [and hence make a positive impact on diagnosing] the real causes of the decline of craft guilds as well as on discovering the remedies that would bring back the prosperity of past ages, the splendor of ancient crafts and industries.⁹

THE *ELBİSE* AND THE OTTOMAN SCHOLARLY MISSION

The heightened sense of academic ambition dominating the Ottoman exhibits was further reinforced by the display and worldwide distribution of some notable scholarly publications produced specifically

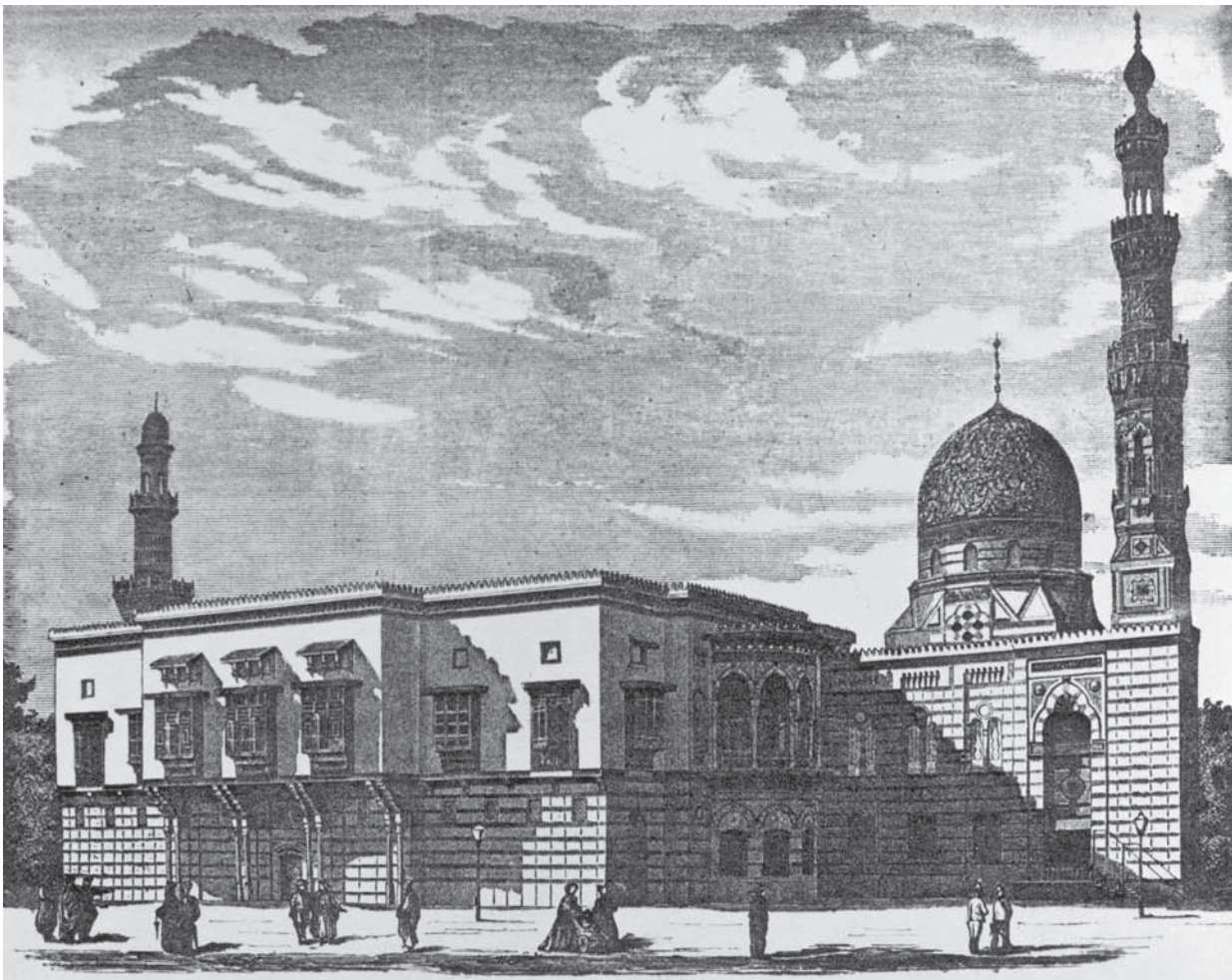


Fig. 3. Egyptian Pavilion by F. Schmoranz, 1873 Vienna Exposition. (After Carl von Lützow, ed., *Kunst und Kunstgewerbe aus der Wiener Weltausstellung* [Leipzig, 1875])

on the occasion of the Vienna Exposition. The *Elbise*, which supplemented the extensive costume exhibits in the Ottoman section, was published simultaneously with two other volumes. The three works were designed to constitute a solid academic supplement to the ethnographic, architectural, and archaeological exhibits in the Ottoman section and were meant to testify to the professed “humanitarian and progressive” ideals of the Ottoman exposition agenda. The heftiest of the three publications, entitled the *Uşûl-i Mi‘mār-i ‘Osmānī: L’Architecture ottomane* (Istanbul, 1873), was the earliest scholarly work concentrating on the history and theory of Ottoman architecture.¹⁰ A generously sized and comprehensive monograph on the Ottoman building tradition, the *Uşûl-i Mi‘mār* was adorned with meticulously crafted architectural drawings and chromolithographic plates of the highest quality (fig. 4). The other publication occasioned by the Vienna Exposition, *Der Bosphor und Constantinopel* (Vienna, 1873),¹¹ was a guidebook on Istanbul written by the director of the Imperial Museum of Antiquities in Istanbul, Philipp Anton Dethier.¹² The book provided brief historical information on many Byzantine and Ottoman monuments in the city, including some of the modern edifices built recently by the state. Supplemented with a map illustrating the urban layout of the city at the time of Justinian I, *Der Bosphor und Constantinopel* was a basic reference tool for the European traveler. While reflecting Dethier’s academic disposition, the guide’s clear emphasis on Istanbul’s Byzantine heritage also confirmed, on a broader ideological level, the desire of the Tanzimat elite to portray the Ottoman Empire as a modern state that valued and preserved its non-Islamic cultural inheritance. Neither *Der Bosphor und Constantinopel* nor the Ottoman archaeological exhibits in the world expositions were intended merely as responses to the glamorous shows of ancient Egypt, Greece, or Carthage organized by the empire’s contested vassals or former provinces.¹³ Coinciding with the Ottoman state’s novel program to expand its museum of antiquities¹⁴ and to restore the Byzantine monuments of Istanbul and reintegrate them into the remodeled urban fabric of the city,¹⁵ these exhibits spoke of a will to subscribe to a universal history of civilization as it was defined by the West. While the Ottoman reformers refabricated their dynastic history along nationalist lines, they felt the need, like the Western nation-states, to situate and secure it within a wider, yet still exclusive and privileged, “history of

humanity”: a history that found clear expression in European archaeological museums as a linear progression that extended back to ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt.¹⁶ The Ottoman archaeological exhibits in the world expositions reflected an emerging concern in the empire not only to view and present the antiquities through a historical depth of field that was shared with the West, but also to possess and protect them as an integral part of imperial property.¹⁷

The *Elbise* comprises seventy-four photographic plates, each featuring a group of live models dressed in regional outfits. The plates are organized under three main sections (the European Territories, the Aegean/Mediterranean Islands, and the Asian/African Territories) that are subdivided into twenty-two units according to the provincial divisions of the empire.¹⁸ Each plate (carrying explanatory headings in Ottoman Turkish) is supplemented by texts in French, which provide detailed comments about the sartorial traditions of the particular groups depicted as well as basic information on the history, geography, and customs of the area under scrutiny. The whole project was undertaken jointly by Osman Hamdi Bey, the eminent painter who acted as the commissary of the Ottoman exhibits in 1873,¹⁹ and Victor Marie de Launay,²⁰ a French artist and amateur historian who resided in Istanbul and worked in the Ministry of Trade and Public Works under İbrahim Edhem Paşa (Osman Hamdi Bey’s father and the official director of the Ottoman commission to the 1873 Exposition).²¹ By virtue of his scholarly interest in architecture, art, and traditional crafts, Marie de Launay played key roles in the representation of the Ottoman Empire in the world expositions throughout his long official career.²² Also the editor and a co-author of the *Uşûl-i Mi‘mār-i ‘Osmānī*, he was probably among the most influential minds behind the Ottoman scholarly mission to the Vienna Exposition.

In the Vienna Exposition the *Elbise* was displayed with a large collection of Ottoman costumes that were exhibited in the main gallery of the Ottoman section. A part of the collection, possibly borrowed from the Janissary Museum in Istanbul,²³ pertained to an idealized period of power and grandeur in Ottoman history. A panoply of Janissaries and palace officials in their historic garb guarded the west end of the Ottoman galleries (fig. 5).²⁴ The ceremonious display of historical figures evoked a timeless and romantic conception of the dynastic past that was

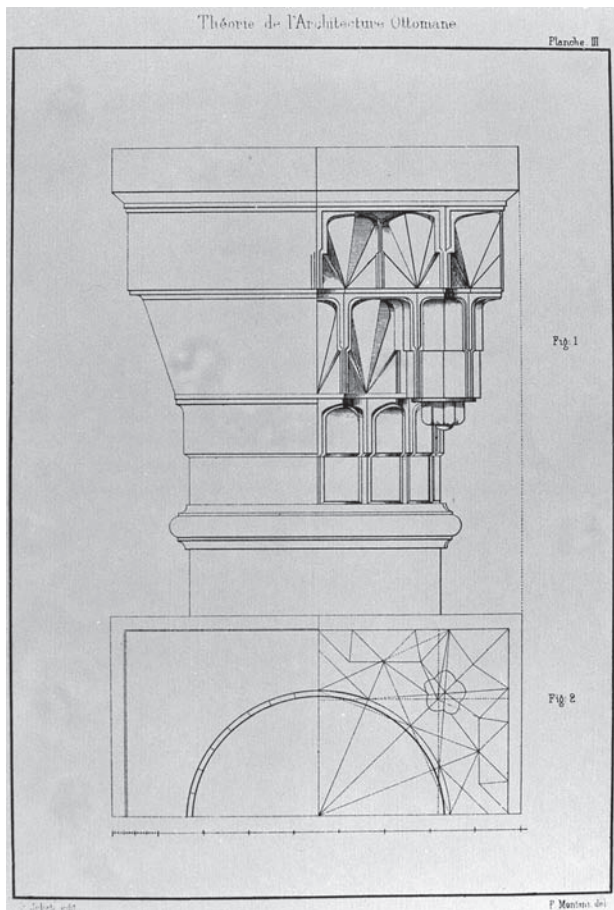


Fig. 4. "Theory of Ottoman Architecture." (After *Uşûl-i Mi'mārî*)

reworked along Ottomanist and nationalist lines as the common heritage of the Ottoman public.²⁵ But the majority of the collection, consisting of mannequins wearing the popular costumes documented in the *Elbise*, related to the immediate past of the empire and its contemporary realities. As the French title of the volume suggests, Hamdi Bey and Marie de Launay aimed the *Elbise* collection to portray the ordinary Ottoman subject from a detached ethnographic viewpoint. Categorically dismissing images of the westernized urban elite, they chose to focus exclusively on the Ottoman commoner who largely maintained the traditional tastes and lifestyle of the pre-Tanzimat era (fig. 6). Their vision was that an exhaustive and analytical documentation of popular dress would not

only present a realistic and consummate picture of the diverse Ottoman polity to the local and international viewers, but that it would also surpass and correct the orientalist generalizations and inaccuracies ingrained within common European perceptions of the Ottoman Empire. Without doubt, the Ottoman types that stood solemnly in the carefully planned settings of the Ottoman section were a far cry from the sullen and idle figures that European audiences were accustomed to find in the standard orientalist paintings and photographs of the period.

OTTOMAN COUNTER-EXOTICA

The tradition of displaying historic or exotic costumes and accessories extends back to the sixteenth-century "gallery of nations" idea in Europe, which led in the following centuries to a widening popular interest in albums and collections related to the customs and habits of other cultures. By the nineteenth century, the promiscuous desire to acquire curios for private collections and popular shows was replaced by a scientific ambition to classify and historicize local or exotic objects according to the new scholarly conventions of representation and explanation dictated by the emerging discipline of ethnography. In adopting and transforming age-old traditions of collecting, ethnography served as a useful agent for the nation-building (as well as the colonizing) policies of the modern European states. Studies on costume were now aimed to create detailed and "realistic" representations of preferred periods in the nation's history or to define and salvage regional or ethnic variations in traditional customs and dress.²⁶

By the second half of the century, national and universal expositions had become major outlets for the display of national or imperial might through the agency of comprehensive ethnographic exhibits. The Ottoman state followed suit without delay, exhibiting a modest medley of local costumes in the 1863 Istanbul Exposition, followed by a more elaborate show in the 1867 Paris Exposition that was organized within the framework of a special exposition category, "popular costumes." While the collection displayed in the 1867 exposition was hardly comparable to those of rival empires like Russia,²⁷ in the Vienna Exposition, the Ottoman Empire held in its galleries one of the most ambitious and impressive, and possibly the most competent, ethnographic exhibits of costumes. It was



Fig. 5. Interior view of the Ottoman section, 1873 Vienna Exposition. (After *Allgemeine Internationale Weltausstellungs-Zeitung* 3, 9 [June 15, 1873])



Fig. 6. Ottoman bourgeoisie, Sarajevo and Mostar. (From the *Elbise*, section 1, pl. 23)

not only the wealth and quality of the material displayed on some 250 mannequins (with detailed descriptive texts attached to the base of each figure) that distinguished the Ottoman costume exhibit as a product of serious ethnographic research. The presence of the *Elbise*, which equaled the renowned European publications of its kind in scholarly format and technique of presentation,²⁸ provided a legible and authoritative structure through which the Ottoman exhibits could be perceived. It turned what might have been viewed merely as an exotic spectacle into an organized and encyclopedic whole—a museum that offered “object lessons” in the very nineteenth-century sense of the term. The “scientific” authority of the text, in other words, imposed a more somber and conscientious mode of looking on the fair-going flaneur.

The *Elbise* was aimed to present a detailed typological documentation of Ottoman dress, bringing together subjects representing the myriad regional,



Fig. 7. Dwellers of Mecca and environs. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 39)

ethnic, social, and religious constituents of the imperial conglomerate. Local costumes and accessories commissioned from artisans of different parts of the empire were collected by the organizers and grouped according to the administrative divisions recently reorganized by the centralizing Ottoman state. The renowned photographer Pascal Sébah provided the documentation.²⁹ For each plate, models clad in meticulously assembled traditional outfits were photographed, without exception, in groups of two or three against a blank wall in Edhem Paşa's residence at Kantarcılar. Although these models had been gathered from the streets of Istanbul, the authors devoted great care to select appropriate types who matched the salient physiognomic characteristics of the ethnic groups depicted (fig. 7). Interestingly, this compositional scheme closely follows the established European convention of representing “Eastern types.” Sharing the colloquial undersurface of all nineteenth-

century ethnographic studies, the *Elbise* translated into photographic medium the tradition of exotic costume albums popular in Europe between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.³⁰ But the techniques of order and analysis borrowed from the field of ethnography and the sheer power of encyclopedic classification, further reinforced by the objective distance created by the camera, rendered the album a scholarly study that claimed to portray a facet of Ottoman life in accurate and “objective” form for a world audience. Glancing through the plates of the *Elbise*, one cannot help but notice the prevalent sense of ethnographic reserve, as well as the academic comprehensiveness and rigor, that disengages these figures from the raw and carnivalesque allure of the exotic, making them available, rather, to the controlled and discriminating gaze of the enlightened observer. There exists no underlying narrative in these compositions save that disclosed by the administrative classificatory scheme imposed by the authors. The usual religio-ethnic homogeneity of group compositions in the “exotic types” repertoire is displaced by extreme variegation in the *Elbise*. Subjects with diverse backgrounds and social roles are drawn together under the unifying theme of the administrative unit; here, the minutely delineated contrasts, specificities, and abundant variety of the Ottoman tradition render obsolete the fixed and generic “types” of the exotic genre. Furthermore, the figures in the *Elbise* plates do not interact with each other and are never engaged in any kind of daily activity. Adopting the formal stiffness of museum exhibits, they avoid the prescribed “exotic” gestures as well as the animated scenes of conversation or ceremonial characteristic of traditional costume albums. In each plate, the same camera angle and distance is maintained in order to convey a sense of objective reportage. The sole purpose of these models, frozen in the sterile void, is to provide an accurate and realistic representation of the exquisite samples of Ottoman sartorial crafts.

The scientific acuity of the album is further enhanced by the accompanying texts. Each section dealing with a specific province in the *Elbise* is forwarded by an introductory text (often one to two pages in length) that provides basic historical data about the region in question and its inhabitants. Here, as the authors display their command over historical and archaeological sources, the realities of the Ottoman world are linked to the Greco-Roman or ancient Mesopotamian past. Almost all localities in Ottoman

Asia and the Balkans that appear in the *Elbise* are provided with a brief but precise background on their pre-Ottoman past, as the authors remark cogently upon their place and significance in ancient history and mythology. While the various ethnic and religious groups of the imperial domain (such as the Kurds, Armenians, Albanians, or Druze) are situated within this broad historical context with reference to their racial origins and salient cultural traits, the authors also make an effort to trace the considerable social and cultural transformations brought on by centuries of Seljuk and Ottoman rule. Although these sweeping historical associations at times tend to be overly generalizing and even crude,³¹ they nevertheless reveal a growing desire to establish a solid continuity with the ancient past, while at the same time evoking a deeply rooted and inclusive sense of regional identity for the diverse Ottoman public (fig. 8).



Fig. 8. Shepherd from Diyarbakır and Kurds from Mardin and Cizre. The authors draw attention to the headgear of the Kurd from Mardin (center), which they claim is clearly traceable to headgear depicted in the ancient monuments of the Nemrud tumulus. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 23)

For each provincial unit, the introductory remarks are followed by detailed comments on the individual figures portrayed in the plates. Here the authors offer a rich and vivid survey of tastes, practices of daily life, local customs, rituals, and professional habits particular to various regions of the empire. Occasionally, as the authors choose to confront openly the habitual misconceptions of the European audience, their style approaches the highly propagandistic tone of tourism brochures. Several passages in the *Elbise*, for instance, testify to the considerable level of freedom enjoyed by Muslim women, by Jews, or by other minorities in Ottoman society. Throughout the text, however, the main emphasis is on the material realities of the empire, and particularly on what Ottoman commoners wear. Traditional costumes are described in studious detail (with reference to the materials, style, usage, and technology involved) and praised for their well-designed functionality, comfort, “picturesque charm,” and highly reasonable production costs.

COSTUME AND IMPERIAL SOLIDARITY

In the introduction of the *Elbise*, Hamdi Bey and de Launay make a clear distinction between two types of clothing: “garment” (*vêtement*) and “costume.” The former stands for the modern (European) manner of dressing, which, the authors claim, is perpetually inflicted by the “caprices of fashion,” while the latter represents unwavering local traditions in dress, which are “perfectly adapted” to the peculiar conditions and proprieties of their use (the particular climate and geography involved, the social rank and profession of the user, and so on). It was the insight of the Ottoman authors that while the modern garment effaced all signs of social and cultural difference in society, homogenizing the world with its “strict and cold uniformity,” local costume “[imposed] lively sentiments of confraternity and solidarity...and thus realized, on a national scale...the rational definition of the good and the beautiful,” which the authors summarized under the rubric “*variety in unity*.”³²

The way Ottoman subjects are represented in the *Elbise* corroborates the role attributed to costume as a crucial agent of social order and harmony. In a number of photographs, the inhabitants of one location are grouped together according to their social, professional, or household affiliations, as in the case, for instance, of the artisan couple from the city of



Fig. 9. Potter couple from Çanakkale (Dardanelles). (From the *Elbise*, section 2, pl. 3)

Çanakkale (fig. 9). But in most cases, people from various walks of life are brought together totally irrespective of their social standing or occupation, in order to provide a comprehensive and amalgamated picture of the diverse imperial conglomerate. The *Elbise* photographs reveal an unmistakable effort to portray subjects of dissimilar ethnic and religious backgrounds alongside each other.³³ It is quite striking to note, for instance, that out of a total of seventy-four plates in the *Elbise*, thirty-five display groups with explicitly mixed ethnic or religious origins (fig. 10).

The very image of multi-ethnic unity conveyed by these syncretic tableaux was diametrically opposed to that defined and imposed by the early Tanzimat reformers, which entailed rigorous dress codes on the official level, promoting uniform Europeanized attire



Fig. 10. A Greek woman from Burdur, a bourgeois from Konya, and a Muslim woman from Burdur. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 9)

and the fez as the ubiquitous markers of the new and more homogenous Ottoman identity.³⁴ The *Elbise*, then, with its celebration of local diversity in dress, is a very accurate indicator of how the terms of participation within the reformulated Ottoman identity were altered during the Late Tanzimat. With a few decades of reforms behind them, the Ottoman intellectuals were now keen to utilize the visual power of clothing in order to emphasize the expressed cultural differences (the abundant “variety”) of Ottoman society, which were happily and harmoniously subordinated to a supra-ethnic, supra-religious sense of imperial and national unity. Appropriately, Europeanized attire is displayed in only one case in the *Elbise*. The first plate of the album features a young “bourgeois” gentleman from Istanbul wearing the “black official dress” adopted by government employees and the westernized upper classes. The authors openly acknowledge the civic virtues of this outfit, which makes an



Fig. 11. Istanbul types: a modern bourgeois, a domestic servant, and a traditional bourgeois. (From the *Elbise*, section 1, pl. 1)

“efendi, bey, or pasha” out of anyone, whether Greek, Armenian, or Levantine, and they recognize it as an agent that helps dispel age-old hatreds nurtured by some intolerant Muslims. Yet they still find it regrettable that the “noble, comfortable, and healthy” alternatives offered by traditional costume are stamped out by the constricting and ungainly standards of westernizing fashion (fig. 11).³⁵

Starting in 1862, the state embarked on a new set of administrative reforms propagated by Fuad Paşa and the architect of the 1876 constitution, Midhat Paşa, which were aimed to bind the potentially centrifugal ethnic and religious groups in the empire under the central authority of the state by affording them certain rights of representation, albeit in a very limited, proto-constitutional framework. Between 1863 and 1865, the three major *millet*s, the Greek, Armenian, and Jewish religious communities, were allowed to form their own constitutions—a reorganization

through which the state hoped to curb the power of the clergy and integrate the communities further into its secularized administrative superstructure. Reforms in provincial administration followed between 1864 and 1876. Starting with the Balkans, where the pan-Slavic threat demanded immediate action, a more hierarchical administrative structure was introduced to the newly delineated provinces. The new system allowed popular participation to the lowest layer of its hierarchy through the agency of local councils that comprised elected Muslim and non-Muslim representatives.³⁶ Considered alongside the corporate reorganization of the craft guilds (*esnaf*), these developments fostered a more complex vision of a collective, multi-ethnic Ottoman community, with renegotiated terms of cohesion and loyalty. While constitutional democracy was still beyond the pale in Ottoman politics, and the implementation of reforms was severely impaired by inconsistencies in rule, the Tanzimat elite's novel vision of egalitarian citizenship was nonetheless given content through official rhetoric, art, and ceremonial; these were the means by which the state gave tangible form to its utopian image of popular participation without actually redistributing power.³⁷

By classifying the multifarious Ottoman "types" (representing ethnicity, religion, class, profession, and gender) according to the new administrative divisions of the empire and collating them under the uniting theme of "Ottoman costume," the *Elbise* clearly projected the state's desire for complete physical and psychological control over the imperial domains. At the same time, it also presented an ideal portrayal of Ottoman subjects and citizens as defining a collective, supranational body while actively imprinting their differences in its various layers. In one plate from the section on Konya, for instance, two priests (one Armenian and one Greek) and a Muslim preacher were brought together not solely because they shared membership in parallel branches of a centrally monitored institutional framework—that is, the clergy—but also because they represented, collectively and on equal terms, the province of Konya itself (fig. 12).

THE AUTHORS AND THE PROMOTION OF "NATIONAL" TASTE

In the Ottoman catalogue of the 1867 Paris Exposition, Marie de Launay made the bold assertion that "the profound and naive sentiment in art that the Ottomans possessed" was not revealed in paintings



Fig. 12. Greek, Muslim, and Armenian men of religion from Konya. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 8)

or statues, but in "the myriad objects of daily use, where the fantasy of the artisan came into play through strictly established rules."³⁸ That the Orient was an abundant source for original models in decoration and applied arts was a conviction held by many European art historians and orientalist scholars in the nineteenth century. This view, it seems, was readily appropriated by Marie de Launay for the promotion of Ottoman art and architecture, not only because the issue of applied arts and their integration with architecture was one of intense interest and debate in Europe, but also because it conveniently overlapped the pending cultural concerns of a new period of economic protectionism in the Ottoman Empire. During the late 1860s and 1870s, the improvement of small industries, revival of crafts, and reorganization of the *esnaf* organizations had emerged as immediate concerns in the new economic program of the Ottoman state. At this period, not only pioneering reformers like Midhat Paşa, but also some

firm figures of the Tanzimat status quo, such as Edhem and Ahmed Vefik Paşas, ardently supported projects related to the revival of domestic crafts and industries in the empire (such as the revival of the Kütahya tile industry, the founding of the Ottoman School of Industry, and so on). Marie de Launay was responding to a rising demand in the empire, a demand propagated by a certain section of the Ottoman ruling elite and intelligentsia, for the promotion on a public scale of traditional crafts and local industries. Most of his work, therefore, was directed towards the cultivation and dissemination of a new sense of artistic appreciation for traditional objects of daily use, local costumes, and vanishing decorative or architectural crafts. Marie de Launay's commitment to this mission is best revealed in the following sentences from the *Uşul-i Mi'mār-i 'Osmānī*:

It is to be observed that scarcely more than a hundred years ago, Ottoman art was still alive in Istanbul in all its grand vigor. In our opinion, the state of debility into which it currently seems to have fallen...may be attributed to no other cause than the passion of the Ottoman rich for the things they call *à la Franka*. As soon as they forgo all those ridiculous specimens of art and industry (that are alleged to be a good buy but are in fact merely cheap)...with which they encumber their homes both inside and outside, and have the good taste and patriotism to prefer the products of the art and industry of their own country, one will see a prompt revival and a renewed progress as great, if not even greater, than what obtained of yore.³⁹

On the one hand, then, the “aesthetic mission” that Marie de Launay undertook was aimed to curb the overwhelming penchant of the urban upper classes for European goods, and was thus commensurate with the official program of supporting and promoting the domestic economy.⁴⁰ On the other hand, one should remember that this mission was also part of a cultural propaganda effort, conducted through international exhibits and related publications, to create a market for Ottoman goods abroad and to improve (and rectify) European perceptions of Ottoman culture and civilization. The scale of this “representative” dimension, I believe, must not be underestimated for any Ottoman cultural endeavor of the nineteenth-century, given that the obsessive concern with European perception of the empire was, on the whole, a fundamental building block in shaping the Tanzimat's reformative agenda.

Marie de Launay was not the only figure on the Ottoman intellectual stage striving to assess, salvage, and promote the traditional arts, although without question he was one of the most vocal and productive. His closest collaborator in these efforts was the co-author of the *Elbise*, Osman Hamdi Bey, the French-educated artist and bureaucrat who was described by archaeologist Salomon T. Reinach as “le plus parisien des Ottomans, le plus Ottoman des parisiens.”⁴¹ Hamdi Bey's paintings, more than his writings, testify to the rise of a connoisseurial interest in traditional arts and crafts in the Ottoman Empire (fig. 13). During his long stay in Paris, he frequented the ateliers of Gustave Boulanger and Jean-Léon Gérôme as an *élève libre* (independent student), and in the footsteps of his masters he produced paintings in the orientalist (or “ethnographic,” as it was alternatively labeled in Europe at the time) manner throughout his artistic career. But in contrast to the majority of

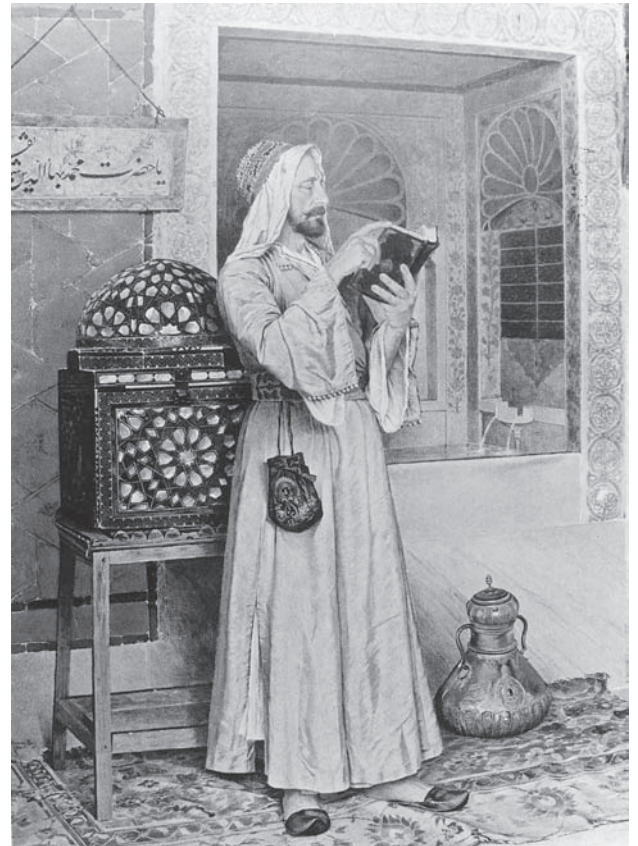


Fig. 13. Osman Hamdi Bey, *Water of Life*, 1904. (After Cezar, *Sanatta Batıya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*)

European artists, for whom the ideological constructs about the East existed as an uncritically accepted discursive substructure, Osman Hamdi Bey manipulated the orientalist genre as an instrument to deliver a clear alternative message informed by a larger cultural and ideological agenda. The Ottoman artist employed and appropriated European techniques of looking in order to construct what he held to be “objective” scenes of a putatively native and pristine Ottoman-Islamic past. What he delineated in these paintings was an image of the past that both reinforced and nourished the Late Tanzimat’s proto-nationalist constructs of Ottoman history and at the same time ardently challenged the current Western misrepresentations of the Orient. But rather than dealing with the ideological underpinnings of Osman Hamdi’s artistic work, I would like here to focus specifically on the material world that was manifested in his paintings. Osman Hamdi Bey’s historical genre paintings usually featured a carefully selected architectural décor in which figures clad in glistening local costumes posed in frozen gestures, without emotion, seemingly bearing the weight of fulfilling a profound historical duty. The architectural settings in these paintings offer such a rich display of crafts, and the space represented is so saturated with myriad traditional artifacts, fine costumes, and rarities (belonging, characteristically, to various time periods and geographies), that one cannot but attribute this atmosphere of abundance, so endemic to the nineteenth century, to a bourgeois zeal for profuse material display. The paintings of Osman Hamdi may thus be considered among the early indicators of a nascent commodity culture (in the modern European sense, of course) among the Ottoman upper classes, as well as of the initial critical efforts to reroute this culture to local resources through the legitimizing power of history. The Ottoman painter used what his critics called “la science du décor,”⁴² the technical precision and photographic realism of the orientalist genre, as a modern agent to display the splendor of traditional Ottoman arts and commodities in their reconstructed context of use.⁴³ Maybe the most appropriate analogy in defining the material dimension in Osman Hamdi’s paintings, then, is that of the world exposition: a fictive atmosphere and an ideal stage set where art, architecture, crafts, and the picture of a productive and harmonious society are framed in unison for the eyes of an avidly materialistic nineteenth-century audience.⁴⁴

But what Osman Hamdi and Marie de Launay sought to rediscover in history was not merely aesthetic and technical guidelines for the resuscitation of arts and crafts in the empire. Like many nineteenth-century romantics, they also envisaged the past (of course, the Ottoman-Islamic past in particular) as a paragon of moral order and social harmony that, they believed, their contemporary environment severely lacked. Marie de Launay’s opening sentences for the “Notice sur le vieux Galata,” his collection of articles on the Genoese suburb of Byzantine and Ottoman Constantinople, epitomize his plea to return to that unsullied status quo ante:

Today, everyone knows how much the history of the Middle Ages and Early Modern times (the studies of which were long neglected and even scorned) is fertile with lessons. There, one indubitably finds all elements of progress, much advocated by certain doctrines in our day, with regard to issues such as the physical and moral condition, i.e., the *well-being*, of the so-called *inferior* classes and particularly the workers, as well as the *perfection of the products of art and industry*. For many nations, among which Turkey needs to be counted, true progress involves a clear and resolute return to the past. The cost of having renounced the *immortal* principles [of the past] will be largely compensated for by the vigor regained by these anemic nations as they immerse themselves in the sources of their glorious past.⁴⁵

There is no information on whether Osman Hamdi Bey and Marie de Launay were aware of the theories of John Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc on the role of artisans in medieval society. However, it is hard to miss in these statements the forceful impact of Midhat Paşa (a close friend of the Edhem Paşa family and the person whom Osman Hamdi held to be the model of statesmanship), whose modernizing agenda centered on the consolidation and mobilization of the Ottoman middle class through the agency of vocational schools and trade organizations.⁴⁶ Both Osman Hamdi Bey and Marie de Launay seem to have shared the belief that the middle classes, and particularly the traditional *esnaf* organizations, were the essential agents that had sustained the “general moral and material well-being” of Ottoman society in its ideally delineated historical state. They maintained that in the nineteenth century, whatever remained of these organizations, which they deemed the living vestiges of a medieval paradigm, comprised the seedbed for the revised, more culture-specific social reforms of the Late Tanzimat. Both authors believed in the cru-

cial role played by the Ottoman artisans, not only in preserving “national taste” against “corrupting influences,” but also in safeguarding the traditional social structures that engendered public order and harmony. In fact, the majority of figures depicted in the *Elbise* belong to the category of urban middle classes (see appendix, below).

In a special section devoted to the *esnaf* organizations in the Ottoman catalogue of the 1867 Paris Exposition, for instance, Marie de Launay locates the roots of ideal social harmony in the traditional work and family environment of the artisan:

...[the artisan] works in his own house: his family is raised before his eyes; his wife and his daughter, also workers, take care of the home, increase the affluence of the community through their work, and offer their children the examples of a proper activity circumscribed by the sense of duty.⁴⁷

From a political viewpoint, the *esnaf* organizations were also recognized to be useful agents in implementing the multi-national Ottomanist policies of the Tanzimat. As religiously and ethnically diverse organizations, they offered a traditionally grounded cosmopolitan model for the Tanzimat reformers, who sought to reinstitute secular social bonds that would initiate a new era of intercommunal solidarity in the empire. The *Elbise*, in its collated representation of the Ottoman middle class and the *esnaf*, was devised, above all, as a powerful visual tool to deliver this message of popular harmony (fig. 14). Marie de Launay and Osman Hamdi contended that traditional costume, in delineating regional and professional affiliations, was a crucial determinant in maintaining “sentiments of solidarity” within the society:

The workers’ guilds (*esnafs*) of Turkey are worth noting as testimony of the moralizing power of costume. [Costume] imposes a sense of shared responsibility, which engenders feelings of solid confraternity and professional integrity...to all members of the guild.⁴⁸

The Ottoman authors’ plea for restoring the putatively untarnished middle-class moral codes was indissolubly linked to a broader concern among the Ottoman intellectuals regarding the long-term cultural and social effects of the project of wholesale modernization. The rising critical tenor of the Late Tanzimat (propagated by novelists, journalists, and members of the elusive Young Ottoman circle) centered mostly on the violent changes observed in the



Fig. 14. A Kurd from Yozgat alongside a Christian and a Muslim artisan from Ankara. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 11)

production and consumption patterns of Ottoman society and the disruptive social effects thereof—such as the superficial modes of “self-fashioning” that afflicted the Europeanized elite. Within the vibrant and charged cultural atmosphere of the later Tanzimat years, dress, as the most visible and accessible indicator of personal taste and consumption, stood out as an intensely heated field of public debate and confrontation.⁴⁹ In the case of the *Elbise*, the Ottoman authors’ reconfirmation of age-old notions of dress (as a defining marker of stable social identity) and fashion (as a distinctive symptom of moral decay) was therefore a powerful and pertinent cultural statement that resonated well with the increasingly visible reactionary conservatism of the Late Tanzimat.

CONCLUSION

Seeing the East as the West’s fossilized medieval past was among the stock orientalist constructs of the nineteenth century. And while this comparative frame-

work was oftentimes used to point directly and contemptuously to the naïveté and unenlightened inertness of the Orient, in many cases it also contained a sense of distant admiration, coupled with a yearning for the West's lost innocence. There was an element of romantic appreciation in this view of the Orient, for, alongside its vices, this unchanging world was also deemed to preserve what was pure and noble about the past. For Marie de Launay and Osman Hamdi, the *esnaf*, with their picturesque costumes and social and professional practices rooted in medieval times, represented these positive and virtuous qualities that were believed to be preserved in the Orient. They considered the traditions and lifestyle of the *esnaf* valuable assets, not only for their stride towards an "Ottoman artistic renaissance," but also for the larger social reforms to be undertaken by the Tanzimat. A unique and alternative course for Ottoman modernization, they believed, could only be defined by reaching back to tradition, and the traditions associated with the *esnaf* were crucial in evading the imminent danger of "moral corruption" that they directly associated with Western modernization.

Marie de Launay and Osman Hamdi selectively manipulated certain Western views of the Orient in their bid for salvaging, reviving, and promoting local traditions. But one must also realize that in some cases these strategies of adoption and manipulation bordered on outright imitation. In the *Elbise*, the two authors' account of the social and cultural definitions of dress, along with the terminology they employ, draws heavily on the reports of the 1867 Paris Exposition jury concerning the category entitled "The Popular Costumes of Diverse Countries." In fact, the central premise of the Ottoman authors' argument, the dichotomy of "costume" and "garment," had already been discussed in exactly the same terms by a member of the French jury, Edouard Armand-Dumaresq, in his special report on the category of popular costumes.⁵⁰ To ascertain where the Ottoman authors' discursive strategy stood with respect to the line between appropriation and plagiarism is beyond the intentions and scope of this discussion. The fact remains, however, that for Tanzimat intellectuals, the "paradox of rediscovering tradition" inevitably involved representing it with conceptual tools borrowed from the West.⁵¹ What is worth noting about the adoptive strategy employed by the Ottoman authors is that in criticizing Western modernization, or rather in trying to discover an alternative path for Ottoman mod-

ernization, they conveniently turned to the sources of the West's own anti-modern, anti-industrial critique. Armand-Dumaresq's unfavorable delineation of European urban dress (what he distinguished as *vêtement*) was made the basis of the *Elbise*'s counter-discourse whereby the authors denounced westernizing trends in Ottoman taste and, at the same time, extolled the "unblemished" traditions of the East as a panacea for the social ills of modern society. In the case of the *Elbise*, the replication of Armand-Dumaresq's eulogy on popular costume was timely and effective, for it was perfectly in tune with the internal dynamics of Late Tanzimat modernization and its move to root itself in local tradition. The very counter-discourse appropriated by the authors is a clear indication of the novel critical tenor with which the second generation of Tanzimat reformers viewed the enterprise of modernization.

The *Elbise*, then, testifies to the ambiguities, contradictions, and incurable optimism of official Ottoman discourse as it sought to define the terms by which a modern and overarching Tanzimat identity could be reconciled with tradition and cultural diversity. But one also needs to remember that in its romantic and traditionalist view of Ottoman culture and society, the *Elbise* renders the products of "indigenous tradition" very favorable and attractive to the eyes of a modern European audience, who displayed an immense aesthetic curiosity for anything "untarnished" by the ills of modern industrialism. This compliance should not come as a surprise, however, since the westernized Ottoman elite were equally obsessed with the sensual allure of "pure" and "authentic" tradition, and since the aesthetic arsenal of Late Tanzimat traditionalism drew heavily from the sensibilities of European orientalism. In the *Elbise*, the sense of romantic enthrallment that the authors derived from exploring the rich and unspoiled repository of local traditions can best be observed in the portrayal of the "least civilized" denizens of the vast Ottoman domain—the nomads and tribesmen. The rowdy Bedouins, Zeybek brigands, Kurdish horsemen, and all other "wild things" are depicted, like colonial subjects, in their colorful and picturesque peculiarity, with a clear accent on their primitiveness and savagery. They appealed to the modernizing Ottoman elite not only as disparate relics enriching the vast and diverse Ottoman heritage but also as domestic marginals subjected to the power and control of the centralized state (figs. 15 and 16).



Fig. 15. The “wild things”: a Druze and two Christian “mountain dwellers” from the environs of Lebanon. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 29)



Fig. 16. Two Zeybeks and an artisan from Aydın. (From the *Elbise*, section 3, pl. 4)

APPENDIX

The Distribution of the Number of Individuals in the *Elbise* According to their Social/Professional Status

PROVINCES	Number of Individuals				
	Urban*	Rural**	Marginal***	Clergy	Total
Part I – “The European Provinces” (including Istanbul, Edirne, the Danube, Prizren and Shkodra, Ioannina, Salonica, and Bosnia)	43	12	2	7	64
Part II – “The Ottoman Islands” (including Crete, the Aegean Islands, and Cyprus)	11	10	3	1	25
Part III – “The Asian Provinces” (including Bursa, Aydın, Konya, Ankara, Kastamonu, Sivas, Trabzon, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Aleppo, Adana, Syria, Baghdad, Hijaz, Yemen, and Tripoli)	59	20	35	7	121

*The urban population comprises what the authors refer to as members of the Ottoman “bourgeoisie” (mostly craftsmen and some merchants) as well as the workers.

**The rural population comprises peasants and farmers.

***The “marginal” group includes various kinds of nomads (Bedouins and members of Turkoman and Kurdish tribes) and irregular armed bands (such as the Zeybeks).

NOTES

Author's note: A shorter version of this paper was presented in the Fifth Workshop on Ottoman Material Culture (Boğaziçi University, Istanbul), organized by Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph Neumann in October 2000.

1. The Ottoman Exposition, consisting of a main exhibition hall and a separate machine pavilion, opened in February 1863 in Sultanahmet Square. Various products (handicrafts, industrial and agricultural products, paintings and architectural projects, etc.) from Istanbul and the provinces, including Egypt, were displayed to the public for almost five months. On the Ottoman Exposition, see Rifat Önsoy, "Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Katıldığı İlk Uluslararası Sergiler ve Sergi-i Umumi-i Osmani," in *Belleten* 47, 185 (Jan. 1985): 195–236; and *Coup d'oeil général sur l'exposition nationale à Constantinople: Extraits du «Journal de Constantinople»* (Istanbul, 1863); also several articles on the exposition appeared in *Mi'rat* and *Mecmû'a-i Fünûn* during January and February 1863 (Ramazan and Şa'ban, 1279).
2. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Age of High Capitalism* (New York, 1977), pp. 164–166.
3. The only exception was the 1853 New York World Exhibition, in which the Ottoman Empire could not afford to participate due to the considerable transportation expenses. The history of Ottoman imperial display in the expositions has been studied within the general framework of the Islamic world by Zeynep Çelik, in *Displaying the Orient* (Berkeley, 1992).
4. The word "Tanzimat" (literally, "reordering") in the title pertains to the period of intense modernization in the Ottoman Empire that was officially inaugurated by the declaration of the Imperial Rescript of the Rose-Chamber in 1839. The end of the Tanzimat period is generally considered to be the enthronement of Abdülhamid II and the declaration of the short-lived Ottoman constitution of 1876.
5. To this day, the loud fanfare of the Vienna Exposition remains largely unnoticed, as contemporary studies tend to focus predominantly on the rigorous Anglo-French rivalry that set the tone for the competitive format of the world expositions. On the Vienna Exposition, see Jutta Pemsel, *Die Wiener Weltausstellung von 1873: Das gründerzeitliche Wien am Wendepunkt* (Vienna, 1989); and Karlheinz Roschitz, *Wiener Weltausstellung 1873* (Vienna, 1989).
6. Especially after Julius Andrassy's appointment as the minister of foreign affairs in 1871, the liberal government in Vienna pursued a more active foreign policy concerning, above all, the Balkans and the Middle East. Informed by the broader liberal agenda of integration into the world economy, Andrassy's foreign policy entailed a greater commitment on the part of the Habsburg state to sustain political stability and peace in its turbulent regional setting in order to enable the free eastward expansion of Austrian goods and capital.
7. The ethnographic exhibits, grouped under the title "Exposition collectif du Turkestan, du Caucase, et de l'extrême nord," presented a scientific assessment of Russia's own "oriental" cultures, such as the Kalmyks and Turcomans, located along the borders of its empire. Similar exhibits were organized by the Society of the Friends of Natural Sciences, Anthropology, and Ethnography of the Imperial University of Moscow, both in the 1867 Exposition and, on a larger scale, in the 1872 Moscow Polytechnic Exposition. For the Russian section in the Vienna Exposition, see Commission Impériale Russe, *Catalogue special de la section Russe à l'Exposition universelle de Vienne en 1873, publié par la Commission impériale de Russie* (St. Petersburg, 1873).
8. Jacob von Falke, "Die Länder und ihre Kunstarbeiten," in *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst* 9 (1874): 248.
9. From the report presented to the head of the Ottoman commission, Edhem Paşa, on March 5, 1872. *Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Wien*, AR, F34 S.R. (Handelspolitische Akten, 1873–74), Karton 145, R. 25, 61/1.
10. The *Uşûl-i Mî'mârî-i 'Oşmânî* was prepared by a group of Ottoman and Levantine architects and artists. It included Ottoman Turkish, French, and German versions of the same text. Immediately following the publication, copies of the book were sent to the major libraries around the Western world. On this publication and its cultural and ideological context of production, see Ahmet Ersoy, "On the Sources of the 'Ottoman Renaissance': Architectural Revival and its Discourse During the Abdülaziz Era (1861–76)" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 2000).
11. Simultaneously a French version of the book, entitled *Le Bosphore et Constantinople: Description topographique et historique*, was published by the same publisher, Alfred Hölder (Vienna, 1873).
12. On P. A. Dethier (1803–81) see Semavi Eyice, "İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinin İlk Direktörlerinden Dr. P. A. Dethier Hakkında Notlar," *İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri Yıllığı* 9 (1960): 45–52; Oluş Arık, *L'histoire et l'organisation des musées turcs* (Istanbul, 1953); and Bernhard Höhner and Bernd Paffgen, "Philipp Anton Dethier als Archäologe und Historiker," in the 1981 Kerpen edition of *Der Bosphor und Constantinopel*, pp. vi–ix.
13. In the 1867 Paris Exposition, the Ottoman Empire displayed some Assyrian antiquities from the Nimrod area along with reconstruction drawings by P. A. Dethier of various Byzantine monuments. See Salaheddin Bey, *La Turquie à l'exposition universelle de 1867* (Paris, 1867), pp. 151–152; and M. Fr. Ducuing, ed., *L'Exposition universelle de 1867 illustrée: Publication internationale autorisée par la Commission impériale*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1868), p. 2.
14. The first archaeological collection of the palace was formed in 1846–47 and displayed in the Hagia Irene, a former Byzantine church within the confines of the Topkapı Palace, along with a collection of historic Ottoman arms and accoutrements. The building served as the "Imperial Museum" until 1875, when the enlarged archaeological collection was moved to the Çinili Köşk, a fifteenth-century pavilion in the palace that was renovated and adapted to its new purpose. In 1883, under the directorship of Osman Hamdi Bey, the museum was moved to its new buildings adjacent to the Çinili Köşk. On the history of the museum and its collections, see Wendy M. K. Shaw, "Possessors and the Possessed: Objects, Museums, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1846–1923" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, 1999); Mustafa Cezar, *Sanatta Batıya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1995); Remzi O. Arık,

- Türk Müzeciliğine Bir Bakış* (Istanbul, 1953); Tahsin Öz, *Ahmet Fethi Paşa ve Müzeler* (Istanbul, 1948); *Müze-i Hümayün-Rehnumâ* (Istanbul, 1911–12); *Catalogue explicatif, historique, et scientifique d'un certain nombre d'objets contenus dans le Musée Imperial de Constantinople* (Istanbul, ca. 1871); and Albert Dumont, *Le Musée Sainte-Érène à Constantinople* (Paris, 1868).
15. From the 1860s on, the Ministry of Public Works and the Commission for Road Development (İslâhât-i Turûk Komisyonu) made efforts to restore the Byzantine monuments in Istanbul and to incorporate them into urban renewal projects. The area around Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome was cleared in 1865; in the same year the oldest ceremonial artery in the city, the Divanyolu—the Byzantine “mese”—was enlarged and regularized, and certain monuments around it, like Constantine’s column, were repaired and surrounded by plazas. On the nineteenth-century urban transformation of Istanbul see Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul* (Berkeley, 1986).
 16. In discussing the emergence of a “historicized framework for display” in early-nineteenth-century European museums, Tony Bennet demarcates two interrelated constructs of historical progression, the “universal” and the “national,” that have been influential in the establishment of separate types of collections. Related to the expansion of the European time horizon beyond the medieval and classical periods with the help of advances in archaeology, the former construct found tangible form in the institution of the archaeological museum, the collections of which testified to an evolutionary history of civilization rooted in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt. The latter construct, as an indispensable instrument of the nation-state ideology, imposed the monumentalization of a recent or immediate past through the national museum collection. Both collections worked together in forming the image of an evolutionary history of humanity that culminated in the supremacy of Western civilization and of the nation-states that it embodied. See Bennet, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” in Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (eds.), *Thinking About Exhibitions* (London and New York, 1996), pp. 81–112. For the Ottoman reformers, it was crucial to locate the Ottoman past in both levels of historic progression, since its exclusion from the evolutionary framework fixed it within the timeless continuum of the ethnographical collection. On the development of the European museums and their interrelation with the nineteenth-century practices of history writing, see the incisive works of Stephen Bann, *The Clothing of Clío: A Study of the Representation of History in Nineteenth-Century Britain and France* (Cambridge, 1984); and Germain Bazin, *The Museum Age* (New York, 1967).
 17. The official Ottoman correspondences related to the expansion of museum collections and the surveillance of archaeological excavations in the empire reveal an acute consciousness of the fundamental role of the museum for the definition of a modern state; the museum is described as “an essential institution of a civilized nation,” “a school,” and “the initial site of visit for foreign dignitaries and travelers.” Furthermore, it is suggested in these documents that it was the presence of the Imperial Museum that rendered the archaeological remains in the empire a part of the Ottoman state’s cultural property, or, in the Ottoman bureaucratic vernacular, “the valuable produce of the [Ottoman] land of plenty” (*bu memleket-i keşrûl-bereketiñ mahşûl-i kıymet-dân*). Related documents in the Ottoman archives (hereafter BOA) are: BOA (*Meclis-i Mahsus*) 2348; (*Dahiliye*) 41355; (*Şuray-ı Devlet*) 547; (*Meclis-i Vala*) 24685.
 18. The European Territories include the provinces of Istanbul, Edirne, the Danube, Prizren and Shkodra, Ioannina, Salonica, and Bosnia; the Aegean/Mediterranean Islands group includes the provinces of Crete and the Mediterranean Islands (including Cyprus); while the Asian/African Territories include the provinces of Hüdavendigar (Bursa), Aydın, Konya, Ankara, Kastamonu, Sivas, Trabzon, Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Aleppo, Adana, Syria, Baghdad, and last, the provinces of Hijaz, Yemen, and Tripoli under one subheading.
 19. Osman Hamdi (1842–1910) was sent to Paris by his father to study law; instead he attended classes in art and archaeology at the École des Beaux-Arts until his return home in 1871. Although Hamdi Bey was not a registered student of the École, it is generally assumed that he had worked in the ateliers of Jean-Léon Gérôme and Gustave Boulanger (in fact, in several *Salon* catalogues he is listed as “a student of Boulanger”). On Osman Hamdi’s connections to the École, see Gerald M. Ackerman, *The Life and Work of Jean-Léon Gérôme* (London, 1986), p. 168; Vasif Kortun, “Osman Hamdi Bey Üzerine Yeni Notlar,” in *Tarih ve Toplum* 41 (May, 1987): 25–26; and Henri Metzger, *La Correspondance passive d’Osman Hamdi Bey: Mémoires de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, vol. 11 (Paris, 1990). Osman Hamdi became one of the most active figures of Ottoman cultural life after returning to Istanbul. From 1881 to 1910, he served as director of the Imperial Museum. Later, he played a major role in the establishment of the Imperial School of Fine Arts (1882), where he taught painting until his death. Apart from the *Elbise*, he contributed to several publications that were related to his work in archaeological excavations. In addition to writing a brief study entitled *Les Ruines d’Aslan-Taş* (Constantinople, 1889), he was co-author with [Yervant] Osgan Efendi of *Le tumulus de Nemroud Dag* (Constantinople, 1883) and with Salomon T. Reinach of *Une nécropole royale à Sidon: Fouilles de Hamdi Bey* (Paris, 1892). The major works on Osman Hamdi are: Cezar, *Sanatta Batıya Açılış ve Osman Hamdi*; Zeynep Rona (ed.), *Osman Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi* (Istanbul, 1993); *Birinci Osman Hamdi Bey Kongresi* (Istanbul, 1992); Refik Epikman, *Osman Hamdi* (Istanbul, 1967); and İpek Aksügür Duben, “Osman Hamdi ve Orientalism,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 41 (May 1987): 27–34.
 20. Marie de Launay was born in 1822 or 1823 in Paris; he was the son of Césaire Marie de Launay, an official connected to the palace. He arrived in Istanbul either during or right before the Crimean War, along with many other Europeans for whom the Anglo-Franco-Ottoman alliance offered new opportunities in the Orient. The records do not provide the date and location of his death but indicate that he retired in December 1890. See BOA, *Sicill-i Ahval* Collection, 6/593. His publications include: *Coup d’œil général sur l’exposition nationale à Constantinople: Extraits du «Journal de Constantinople»* (Istanbul, 1863); “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Péra des Génois),” *L’Univers: Revue orientale, politique*,

- scientifique*, November 1874–March 1875; and, with the chemist Bonkowsky Bey, *Brusa ve Civarı* (Bursa and Environs) (Istanbul, 1880).
21. A distinguished technocrat and a suave westernized intellectual, Edhem Paşa was a genuine product of Tanzimat modernization and a model bureaucrat of the times of reform. For an extensive biographic record of Edhem Paşa (ca. 1818–93), see İbnülemin Mahmud Kemal İnal, *Son Sadrazamlar*, vol. 2 (Istanbul, 1982; first pub. 1940–53), pp. 600–35; M. Zeki Pakalın, *Son Sadrazamlar ve Basvekiller*, vol. 2 (Istanbul, 1942), pp. 403–75; İbrahim Hakki Uzunçarşılı, “İbrahim Edhem Paşa Ailesi ve Halil Edhem Eldem,” in *Halil Edhem Hatıra Kitabı*, vol. 2 (Ankara, 1948), pp. 67–83; Osman Nuri Ergin, *İstanbul Şehrinleri* (abridged by A. Nezihi Galitekin), (Istanbul, 1996; first pub. 1927–28), pp. 230–41; and Mahmud Celalettin Paşa, *Mir’at-ı Hakikat*, vol. 2 (Istanbul, 1980; first pub. 1326/1908–9), pp. 148–49.
 22. According to his official biographical record, Marie de Launay was author of the voluminous catalogue of the Ottoman exhibits in the 1867 Paris Exposition, *La Turquie à l’exposition universelle de 1867* (see n. 13, above), generally attributed to the director of the Ottoman commission, Salaheddin Bey; as a member of the international jury, he contributed as well to the general exposition catalogue.
 23. The Imperial Museum in Hagia Irene, which combined the functions of an archaeological and a military museum, also housed a permanent collection of historic costumes (“Yeniçeri Kıyafethanesi”) belonging to members of the royal household and various divisions of the Janissary corps. During the Abdülaziz era, the collection, displayed on 140 mannequins, was moved to one of the buildings of the School of Industry on the Atmeydanı (ancient Hippodrome). See: Sermed Muhtar, *Guide: Musée militaire ottomane* (Istanbul, 1920); idem, *Müze-i ‘Askerî-i ‘Osmânî* (Istanbul, 1920); Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople* (trans. M. H. Lansdale), vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1896), pp. 232–35; and Wendy M. K. Shaw, “Phantoms of Bygone Days: The Performance of History in Ottoman Military Museums” (paper presented at the thirty-first Middle East Studies Association Conference, Nov. 22–24, 1997).
 24. *Wiener Weltausstellungs-Zeitung* 2, 48 (June 8, 1872): 7.
 25. It was not long after their cleansing by Mahmud II (1826) that the Janissaries were reintegrated into a more romanticized rewriting of Ottoman history. During the Abdülmecid era (1838–61), artists and intellectuals like Ârifi Paşa started collecting Janissary costumes and paraphernalia that had survived from the modernizing state’s attempt of complete extermination. Albums and exhibits related to the royal household and its army followed in the 1850s, and the accumulation of visual knowledge on the subject culminated in the official institution of the Janissary Museum. Thus, during the first half of the Tanzimat era, Ottoman public memory on the “troops of ill will” was entirely subdued and reconstructed through the agency of museums, exhibits, and albums. A single generation after their extinction, the Janissaries were already embedded in a distant and glorious past with which the Ottomans comfortably associated. Early examples of the historicized Janissary image are found in Ârifi Paşa’s *Mecmû‘a-i Teşâvir-i ‘Osmânîyye=Les anciens costumes de l’empire Ottoman* (Paris, 1862); and Jean Brindesi’s *Musée des anciens costumes musulmanes* (Paris, 1855).
 26. There is a colossal body of nineteenth-century publications related to historic or traditional dress and accessories. The following titles are only selected as representative examples of the types of albums and encyclopaedias that were widely referred to at that period: E. E. Viollet-le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné du mobilier français* (Paris, 1858–75); Joseph Strutt, *A Complete View of the Dress and Habits of the People of England* (London, 1842); Jacob von Falke, *Costümggeschichte der Culturvölker* (Stuttgart, 1880); Stepan Stepanovich Strekalov, *Russkii istoricheskii odezhdny* (St. Petersburg, 1877); and Auguste Racinet, *Le costume historique* (Paris, 1888), where the *Elbise* was used as the main reference for the section on the Ottoman Empire. On pre-nineteenth-century practices of collecting and their subsequent transformation by the discipline of ethnography, see Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Objects of Ethnography,” in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds., *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington, 1991), pp. 386–443; Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, eds., *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford, 1985); Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (New York, 1992); Kenneth Hudson, *Museums of Influence* (Cambridge, 1987); Bann, *The Clothing of Clio*; and Bazin, *The Museum Age*.
 27. On the costumes exhibited in the Istanbul Exposition, see Alfred de Caston, *Musulmans et Chrétiens: La Turquie en 1873 et 1874* (Istanbul, 1874), p. 92. Although about a hundred costumes were prepared for the Ottoman section in the Paris Exposition, due to lack of space only eighteen were displayed. See Marie de Launay, “Costumes populaires de Constantinople,” in *L’Exposition universelle de 1867 illustrée*, vol. 2, pp. 3 and 134. In the Russian Empire, ethnographic studies supported by the state played a major role in the definition of an imperial or national identity. Apart from the world expositions, a number of national ethnographic exhibits were held in Moscow and St. Petersburg, one of which was even described by the Ottoman historian Lütfi as evidence to the seriousness of pan-Slavic threat instigated by Russia in the Balkans. See the section entitled “Garâ’ibât-ı Avrupa: Sergi-i İnsânî” (European Curiosities: the Human Exhibition), in Lütfi Efendi, *Vak’a-nüvis Ahmed Lütfi Efendi Tarihi* (abridged by Münir Aktepe) vol. 12 (Ankara, 1988), pp. 45–46.
 28. The printing was done by the *Levant Times and Shipping Gazette* in Istanbul.
 29. On the Sëbah studios see: Institut d’études françaises d’Istanbul, *Images d’Empire: Aux origines de la photographie en Turquie* (Istanbul, 1994).
 30. On this subject see: Süheyl Ünver, *Geçmiş Yüzyıllarda Kıyafet Resimlerimiz* (Ankara, 1958); Nurhan Atasoy and M. Sertoğlu, *Osmanlı Kıyafetleri: Fenerci Mahmud Albümü* (Istanbul, 1986); Metin And, “17. Yüzyıl Çarşı Ressamları,” in *Tarih ve Toplum* 16 (1985): 256–61; Leslie Meral Schick, “Ottoman Costume Albums in a Cross-Cultural Context,” in *Art turc= Turkish Art: Tenth International Congress of Turkish Art, Geneva (17–23 September 1995)* (Geneva, 1999), pp. 625–28; A. Arbasino, ed., *Il Turchi* (Parma, 1971); and Hans-Albrecht Koch, ed., *Das Kostümbuch des Lambert de Vos*, 2 vols. (Graz, 1991).
 31. In discussing the racial origins of certain ethnic groups, the authors sometimes revert to gross essentialisms traceable to

- the ethnic particularism of the Ottoman elite. In one case, for instance, they contrast "one of the most ancient nations of the world," the urban and "law-abiding" Armenians, to the "harsh and rowdy" Kurds, perpetually inflicted by the base urges of looting and pillaging. See the section on Erzurum, part 2, section 8 in the *Elbise*.
32. *Elbise*, p. 6.
 33. In the imperial decree issued in 1872 for the publication of the *Elbise*, it is explicitly stated that the album would provide a complete picture of the "Muslim and non-Muslim subjects residing in all corners of the empire dressed in their local garb." BOA, *İrade (Dahiliye)* 45907.
 34. The 1829 dress code issued by Mahmud II aimed to reestablish central control over the traditional dress conventions that had demarcated the various social, religious, and ethnic differences among Ottoman subjects. The law required all Ottoman officials to wear the simple Europeanized frock coat ("stambouline") and the fez as the standard expressions of a common, collective Ottoman identity, thus eliminating the established signs of distinction conveyed through traditional dress. Although the regulation was enforced only for state employees, the new westernized style was adopted and appropriated by various segments of society. See Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720–1829," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997): 403–25.
 35. *Elbise*, section 1, pl. 1.
 36. On the new administrative reforms of the latter Tanzimat era, see Skender Rizaj, "Midhat Paşa'nın Rumeli'de Vilayetler Kurulmasındaki Rolü," in *Uluslararası Midhat Paşa Semineri* (Ankara, 1988), pp. 59–70; Roderic Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856–1876* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 114–60; idem, "The Millets as Agents of Change in the Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Empire," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. B. Braude and B. Lewis (New York, 1982); idem, "The Advent of the Principle of Representation in the Government of the Ottoman Empire," in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East*, ed. William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago, 1968); and Vartan Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire, 1839–1863* (Istanbul, 1988).
 37. A good example of how the new syncretic Ottoman identity was promoted through imperial ceremonial is the establishment of the royal guard ("Silâhşorân-ı Hâşşa") in 1864. The guard consisted of the children of selected Muslim and non-Muslim notables from around the empire; these children, wearing the traditional costumes of their places of origin, escorted the sultan in full regalia. Unfortunately no research has yet been carried out on this interesting topic. See Ahmed Cevdet Paşa, *Tezâkir*, compiled by Cavid Baysun, (Ankara, 1986), no. 21, pp. 9–10; and *Journal de Constantinople* (November 3, 1864): 2. The reinvention of ceremonial dress was a strategy adopted by many nineteenth-century ruling houses in Europe in their attempt to evoke images of imperial rootedness and inclusiveness. See, for instance, Bernard Cohn's study on the "archaized" staging of royal ceremonials in Victorian England and their orientalized counterparts in colonial India: "Cloth, Clothes, and Colonialism: India in the Nineteenth Century," in *Cloth and Human Experience*, ed. Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (Washington, 1989), pp. 303–54.
 38. *La Turquie à l'exposition*, p. 141.
 39. *L'architecture ottomane*, p. 58. English translation from the reprint, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Mimarisi: Ottoman Architecture* (Istanbul, 1998), p. 36.
 40. By the 1860s the Early Tanzimat policy of free trade liberalism, which had opened the doors of the empire to a heavy influx of Western goods, was accused of incapacitating local production and turning the country into a mere supplier of raw materials within a world system dominated by the industrialized West. Starting in 1861, as the beginning of an ultimately futile reaction against Western economic hegemony, import duties were raised, and certain measures were taken by the state to protect and support local production.
 41. Salomon Theodore Reinach, "Hamdi Bey," in *Revue archéologique* 15 (May–June, 1910): 407.
 42. Adolphe Thalasso, *L'Art ottoman: Les peintres de Turquie* (Paris, 1911), p. 21.
 43. Like many orientalists, Osman Hamdi took advantage of photography in depicting architectural settings. Most of the historical artifacts and costumes appearing in his paintings were modeled after originals from his private collection or that of the Ottoman Museum. On the uses of photography and props in Osman Hamdi's paintings, see Belgin Demirsar, *Osman Hamdi Tablolarında Gerçekle İlişkiler* (Ankara, 1989).
 44. A similar observation is made by Wendy Shaw in her recent article on Osman Hamdi Bey, "The Paintings of Osman Hamdi and the Subversion of the Orientalist Vision," in *Aptullah Kuran İçin Yazılar=Essays in Honour of Aptullah Kuran*, ed. Çiğdem Kafescioğlu and Lucienne Thys-Senocak (Istanbul, 1999), pp. 423–34. Here, the author analyzes the paintings of Osman Hamdi as expressions of his personal mission as a museum director and collector.
 45. Marie de Launay, "Notice sur le vieux Galata," in *L'Univers: Revue orientale, politique, scientifique* 1 (November, 1874): 25–26. Italics are his.
 46. Although Osman Hamdi Bey, a focused and hard-working bureaucrat under the reign of two sultans, was not an overtly political person, sources confirm that his close contacts with Midhat Paşa were crucial in the formation of his ideas on social reform. (In fact, his friend Salomon Reinach goes as far as calling Osman Hamdi a "midhatiste.") It is quite likely that Midhat Paşa's vision of a regenerating Ottoman middle class had a lasting impact on the young official, and possibly on Marie de Launay as well. A similar faith in the middle classes is revealed in the letters Osman Hamdi wrote to his father from Baghdad, where he worked as the secretary of foreign affairs under the direction of Midhat Paşa. In a letter dated April 27, 1870, for instance, he contrasts, with youthful idealism, the morally "irreproachable" artisan families, both within the empire and in Europe, and the terminally "corrupted, infested, and depraved" households of the upper classes. See Edhem Eldem's "Quelques lettres d'Osman Hamdi Bey à son père lors de son séjour en Irak (1869–1870)," in *Anatolia Moderna: Yeni Anadolu* 1 (1991): 136. Also see: Selim Deringil, "Son Dönem Osmanlı Aydın Bürokratının Dünya Görüşü Üzerine Bir Deneme," in *Osman*

- Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi: Sempozyum 17–18 Aralık 1992*, ed. Zeynep Rona (Istanbul, 1993), pp. 3–11.
47. *La Turquie à l'exposition*, p. 164.
 48. *Elbise*, p. 6.
 49. The most striking expressions of the debate on dress and fashion are found in the burgeoning media of popular cartoons in the period when changing tastes and their gendered manifestations were satirized in the most abrasive fashion. For an incisive outlook on the articulation of the same theme by the satirists of the Young Turk era, see “Fashion Satire and the Honor of the Nation,” in Palmira Brummett, *Image and Imperialism in the Ottoman Revolutionary Press (1908–1911)* (New York, 2000), pp. 221–57.
 50. Edouard Armand-Dumaresq, “Classe 92: Spécimens des costumes populaires des diverses contrées,” in *Exposition universelle de 1867 à Paris: Rapports du jury international*, ed. Michel Chevalier, vol. 13 (Paris, 1868), pp. 857–69. Armand-Dumaresq (1826–95) was a painter and engraver who specialized in drawings of historical military uniforms. See Emmanuel-Charles Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs, et graveurs*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1976; first pub. 1911–23), p. 263.
 51. The phrase is, of course, borrowed from Frantz Fanon. See “On National Culture,” in his *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York, 1963; first pub. 1961), pp. 207–48.