

Throughout the book, the hundreds of illustrations, including a generous selection in colour, are extremely useful for seeing changing styles across the centuries. The diagrams are consistently clear and useful, and the appendices are superb: one summarizes the main stylistic changes of binding style in diagram form, another provides colour plates of a variety of typical bindings at fifty-year intervals, the third proposes some ways forward in standardizing how bookbindings are described and recorded, and the fourth acknowledges the value of previous work identifying individual tools and workshops. From its introductory remarks to its annotated bibliography (including internet resources) Pearson's text proves that it should be considered the standard guide to early modern bookbindings. After studying this invaluable book, readers will feel that they have been given the tools to analyze and describe early bookbindings with confidence, and they will also be convinced of the field's importance.

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Caroline Campbell and Alan Chong, ed. *Bellini and the East*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005. Pp. 144.

This is the catalogue for the exhibition "Bellini and the East," which was held at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, and at the National Gallery of London in the first half of 2006. As such, it is both less and more than its title promises. It is not a newly-researched monographic study of Gentile Bellini, scion of the leading family of painters in Venice, who in 1479 travelled to Constantinople at the invitation of Mehmed II. But neither is it only a study of a single painter in his relation to the sultan's court. It embraces in broadest terms the relations between Venice and Constantinople in those early decades following the city's fall to the Turks. Moreover, it is richly illustrated with the paintings, coins, drawings, engravings, and book illustrations that made up the exhibition. While the focus of exhibition and book is the time span between two major Ottoman conquests—of Constantinople in 1453 and of Cairo in 1517—it includes some earlier and later works that establish the context.

For too long, Venice and Constantinople/Byzantium/Istanbul occupied separate scholarly worlds. Each had scholars producing work of high quality, but the works occupied historiographical traditions that were largely self-contained. Certainly authors described the connections and influences of each city on the other, but largely in passing and as a border presence; these authors spoke fundamentally to their own academic peers, and not to those in the other city. Yet this miscast the symbiotic relationship between the two—the two cities were thoroughly wrapped up in each other politically, economically, and culturally for centuries before and after 1453. Venice originated as a military outpost of the Byzantine Empire, and became the city's short-lived master after engineering the crusade/sack of 1204. Ironically, the

barriers raised by language and religion seem to have loomed higher for scholars than for merchants and citizens, who continued their back and forth traffic even in spite of wars. The continuing eastern pull preserved Venice's cultural and ecclesiastical arm's-length distance from "Italy" until the Risorgimento made that stance an anachronistic conceit. A new generation of scholars is now dealing more directly with the relationship between the two cities and, at a certain level, this exhibition marks that scholarly shift.

The catalogue offers four survey essays on the context and content of the exhibition. Deborah Howard in "Venice, the Bazaar of Europe" reviews Venetian contacts with Byzantium and beyond, emphasizing how thoroughly trading links pushed Venetians into eastern Mediterranean cities, particularly Damascus, Cairo, and Alexandria. Its reputation as an international city populated largely by foreigners gave rise to a later invented tradition of Venice as a city with resident of Arab and Persian communities. In fact, Venice in this period had few Muslim visitors and no Muslim residents to speak of; the many foreigners were all Christian or Jewish. Venetians fed their fascination for Eastern goods with metalwork and with paintings that planted elaborate costumes into fictional and often localized settings. Caroline Campbell in "The Bellini, Bessarion, and Byzantium" explores the links that developed around one foreigner who did base himself in Venice, Cardinal Johannes Bessarion, who came to Italy for the Council of Ferrara-Florence and then converted to Catholicism. Bessarion's gift of his library was the basis for Venice's Marciana library, while his gift of a relic of the True Cross to the Scuola of the Carità became the focus of a grand civic-religious procession. Part of Venice's appeal to Bessarion was its status as headquarters of the Greek diaspora—about 4,000 in a population of 110,000. Beyond that, it had long patterned itself as the new Byzantium, particularly after 1204. The adopted identity shaped mosaic work, painting, and architecture through the fifteenth century; architecture offers the most obvious link, but the trade in icons was brisk and their forms and colouring shaped the work of the Bellini and others. J.M. Rogers moves on to "Mehmed the Conqueror: between East and West." Many European visitors fashioned Mehmed II the "Grand Turk" as a model in military affairs, governing, and culture—less an Orientalist exotic than a paradigmatic Prince in all but religion. His largely secular personal culture fed the association. Mehmed collected and commissioned little Qu'ranic art, but much poetry and science, and his library contained many Arabic and Persian chivalric romances. Both exhibition and catalogue feature books, manuscripts, and albums from the Topkapı library and other Turkish institutions. These show that Mehmed's fascination with portraiture led him not only to western European but also to Chinese artists. His successors lacked the fascination, disposed of the portraits, and turned to narrower and more conventionally religious forms. Alan Chong addresses "Gentile Bellini in Istanbul: Myths and Misunderstandings" and starts by noting how quickly after his death Bellini's reputation sank to that of a self-promoting hack: dry, laboured, and arrogant. Yet not long before, he had been one of Venice's most prominent artists, sent by the Senate in response to Mehmed II's request in 1479. Very little is known of

his time or work there beyond his own aggrandizing accounts and a commendation letter reputedly by Mehmed II upon his departure in 1481. Chong raises but does not attempt to resolve the reattribution of some of Bellini's works to Costanzo da Moysis (Costanzo da Ferrara), also sent from the Naples court in response to Mehmed's request for an artist. Apart from the essays, a section on "Italian Images of Mehmed the Conqueror" shows medals from various Italian cities, a jar, an engraving, and Bellini's famous National Gallery portrait of 1510-20; Mehmed moves in these from a generalized version of the former Byzantine emperor to emergence of a more individualized portrait based sometimes on Roman models and with an imperial theme. A section on "Bellini in Istanbul" reproduces the images known to be of his hand, and those once attributed to him but now to his workshop—carefully rendered and fascinating studies.

The volume is richly illustrated and well annotated. While it does not address directly current analytical or theoretical debates, the authors write in awareness of and sometimes with allusion to these—successfully situating the catalogue in the current discussion without losing sight of their own distinct purpose.

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