

The fall of Constantinople

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The Entry of Mahomet II into Constantinople. Painting by Benjamin-Constant 1876

GREEKS still consider Tuesday an unlucky day. May 29th 1453, was a Tuesday; the day that Constantinople, the place they called—and often still call—the queen of cities, or simply “the city” was overrun by the Ottoman forces that had bombarded its mighty walls for the past 40 days.

In the history of warfare, this was a watershed. It proved that gunpowder could

batter down the strongest walls enough to let the attackers in; the age of immobile, iron-clad soldiers defending big stone fortresses was over. But far more was over than that.

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