



CONSTRUCTION AS REPRESENTAION

CURATORIAL TEAM



Mustafa Âlî of Gallipoli, Nusretname [The Book of Victory]. 1580. folio no: 195b. Topkapı Sarayı Yazma ve Matbu Eserler Koleksiyonu [Topkapı Palace Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Books]. Inventory No: Hazine 1365.

One of the most prominent incidents Mustafa Âlî of Gallipoli recounts in his work, which features his experiences as an imperial clerk throughout the Persian expedition, is the construction of the Castle of Kars in the 16th century by the Ottoman Empire. His work, titled Nusret-name,¹ which means “the book that recounts victories,” contains letters he has inscribed to educate pupils and clerks on the intricacies of historiography and the art of clerkship, along with construction methods. Created based on the descriptions in these letters, this miniature is of vital importance in the sense that it defines the era’s professional experts, craftspeople, and lines of work, in addition to being the representation of a “textbook” and one of the early examples of the writings on architecture in the region.

1 The treasury’s manuscript of Nusretname, which also has copies in 9 archives such as The British Museum, Vienna National Library, National Library of France and Egyptian National Library, is different from other copies due to the actual recounting of descriptions since it was transcribed while the author was still alive. For more information, see Günay Kut, “Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Hazine Kitaplığı’ndaki Kimi Minyatürlü Yazmalar,” [Miniature Paintings from the Treasury Section of the Topkapı Palace Museum Library] Paper presented within the scope of the 41st Library Week.