

Worksheet for Emine Fetvacı’s “Ottoman Illustrated Histories”
by Sascha Crasnow
(to be used with [video linked here](#))



Key Takeaways:

1. Why is Dr. Fetvacı focusing specifically on Ottoman historical manuscripts? What were some of the topics of the manuscripts?
2. Where were these manuscripts kept and among whom did they circulate? How did they function among those who read them?
3. What are some of the common aesthetics of these manuscripts?

4. Choose one of the depictions of Sultan Suleyman Dr. Fetvacı discusses in her presentation. What is the message the illustration is aiming to articulate about the Sultan? How does it do so?

5. What is the function of the embellishment on the text pages of the manuscript?

6. What is the function or impact of putting together stories from the Hebrew Bible, the Shahnamah, and/or Islamic mythology?

Contextualizing the Work

Dr. Fetvacı notes that the aesthetic styles of these Ottoman manuscripts are constant throughout their prolific production. Think of another instance of uniformity in aesthetic depictions, from class or from outside experiences (even advertising, for example). What is the impact of these consistent visuals? How does this relate to the relatively uniform aesthetic depictions in the Ottoman manuscripts discussed in the presentation?