George Sphrantzes was a courtier in the Byzantine empire, serving as an important diplomat and ambassador for several emperors. Towards the end of his life, Sphrantzes composed a chronicle, known as the Chronicon Minus, which is partly an autobiographical work. In the section republished below, the author writes about the siege of Constantinople, and about the lack of assistance the Byzantines received from their Christian neighbours.

[the city has been taken, the Emperor Constantine killed]

9. On Tuesday May 29 [1453], early in the day, the sultan took possession of our City; in this time of capture my late master and emperor, Lord Constantine, was killed. I was not at his side at that hour but had been inspecting another part of the City, according to his orders. Alas for me; I did not know what times Providence had in store for me!

10. My late emperor, the martyr, lived for forty-nine years, three months, and twenty days. His reign lasted four years, four months, and twenty-four days. He had been the eighth emperor of the Palaeologan Dynasty. The first was Michael, the second Andronikos, the third Michael, the fourth Andronikos, the fifth John, the sixth Manuel, the seventh John, and the eighth was Constantine. The Palaeologan Dynasty ruled over the City for 194 years, ten months, and four days.

11. I was taken prisoner and suffered the evils of wretched slavery. Finally I was ransomed on September 1, 6962 [1453] and departed for Mistra. My wife and children had passed into the possession of some elderly Turks, who did not treat them badly. Then they were sold to the sultan's Mir Ahor (i.e., Master of the Horse), who amassed a great fortune by selling many other beautiful noble ladies.

12. My children's beauty and proper upbringing could not be concealed; thus, the sultan found out and bought my children from his Master of the Horse for many thousand aspers. Thus their wretched mother was left all alone in the company of a single nurse; the rest of her attendants had been dispersed.

[explanation of why Venice did not come to the assistance of Constantinople:]

3. An important meeting of the senate was held in Venice. The doge Francesco Foscari was opposed to dispatching aid not because he was inept (indeed, our emperor Lord John and others who had met him and talked to him maintained that they had not seen a wiser man in Italy), but because of spite and malice; for spite generally overlooks advantage. The reason for his attitude was the following: Foscari had sent Alvise Diedo as his intermediary to Lord Constantine - who was then the despot of the Morea - to propose marriage between his daughter and Lord Constantine, promising a handsome
dowry. Lord Constantine agreed to this. betrothal, not so much because of the dowry, but because his territories would be joined to those of Venice. I advised him to agree more forcefully than others, and he took my advice.

4. Once Constantine had become emperor and come to the City, this marriage was out of the question. What nobleman or noblewoman would ever receive the daughter of a Venetian - even though he might be the glorious doge - as queen and lady for more than a short time? Who would accept his other sons-in-law as the emperor's fellow sons-in-law, and his sons as the brothers-in-law of the emperor? The doge insisted on the marriage and, after our final rejection, this man became our enemy. Thus during this meeting of the senate, even though the noblemen Alvise Loredano and Antonio Diedo argued and demonstrated that Venetian interests would be hurt if the City fell, they were unable to prevail.

Full source:
http://militaryrevolution.s3.amazonaws.com/Primary%20sources/Sphrantzes.pdf