Arts of the Book

11. On the previous page "The presentation of gifts to Selim II by the Safavid envoy", *Shehnāme-yi Selīm Khan*, Istanbul, ca. 1571-81, Topkapı Palace Museum Library A. 3595, fols. 53b-54a

Conceptualizing the Ottoman Arts of the Book 1450-1600

Fatma Sinem Eryılmaz

In medieval and early modern Islamic culture, in addition to oral instruction, the handwritten book was the principal means for cultivating and transmitting knowledge whether literary, scientific, historical, or theological.

Books were used in schools and donated to pious foundations as instructive and educative objects. Classics of literature such as the *Shāhnāma* of the Persian poet Firdawsi (d. 1020) were copied in manuscripts that boasted varying degrees of finesse in their binding, calligraphy, illumination, and illustration. Above all, copies of the Qur'an were prepared, either in its entirety, or divided into 30 sections (*juz*) and bound individually to facilitate handling.

Fine books were esteemed as artistic objects to enjoy and to collect. They also served as vehicles of communication. The content of a book reflected the intellectual interest of the milieu where it was produced and where it was sold or given. It reflected both what was considered fashionable and what was deemed indispensable. The arts exhibited in its production communicated the prestige, wealth, tastes, and the refinement of its owner, as well as the capacities of the artists involved. The materials used for the production of books, and the professional pedigree of the artists involved in their preparation, were determined largely by who their patrons were and how much they were willing to spend.

Aside from its patron, the intended destination of a book had a decisive role in its form. A book donated by a sultan to a pious foundation, such as a middle or even a high level educational institution, would be overshadowed in elegance by a work of the same author copied for the sultan's own library. Similarly, a copy of the Qur'an used in a regular school differed extensively from a royal copy such as the one with an interlinear Persian translation [Cat. No. 1], the production of which was by the great scholar Shams al-Din Ahmed (d.1488), also known as Molla Gurani. Shams al-Din Ahmed, had taught Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-46; 1451-81) the Qur'an when he was still a prince.

Some of the most luxurious of Ottoman books were prepared as gifts for diplomatic envoys. As such, they became temporarily part of the diplomatic delegation of the state that commissioned them, representing its cultural level and ambitions, which were never detached from its political ones. Ottoman archival records and narrative sources offer us valuable information on the books given as gifts by Ottoman dignitaries; and by foreign ambassadors to members of the Ottoman dynasty. They offer clues to the messages communicated between the giver and the receiver (Fig. 11).

We know, for example, that the precious gifts brought by the Safavid envoy to Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-95) on the occasion of his accession included eighteen ornamented and gilded copies of the Qur'an, a copy of the *Shāhnāma*, and over sixty volumes of poetic compilations (*divans*) of Persian poets. In so doing, the envoy could boast the richness of his country's literary tradition while highlighting the Shiite Safavid state's orthodoxy of credence, with the emphatic repetition of copies of the Qur'an among the Safavid gifts, an orthodoxy that was often attacked by the Sunnite Ottoman state. We might interpret the titles as an indication of the hope of peaceful relations, since they underlined the common cultural and religious grounds shared by the Ottoman and the Safavid states. The selection, and the richness, of the gifts reflected the high regard the Safavid state had for its Ottoman neighbors. At the same time, we might also detect a certain strain of arrogance if we interpret the quantity, the content, and the high

artistic quality of the books as representing the Safavid claim to leadership in the cultural domain. Finally, we should not forget that the generosity of their giving also provided the Safavid state with an opportunity to demonstrate the abundance of luxuriously prepared books in their home of origin.

We do not know of any document demonstrating that any of the works included in this catalogue served as gifts to the Ottoman dynasty. The stylistic similarities of the three illustrated folios to contemporary manuscripts suggest, however, that they could have been given to royal patrons or to high officials as gifts; that is, if they had not already been commissioned by members of either group for themselves. The portrait, most probably of Mehmed I [Cat. No. 5], that clearly pertains to the late 16th century Ottoman tradition of dynastic portrait series appears to have belonged to an album commissioned for the personal collection of a royal patron or a courtier. Circumstantial evidence suggests that portraits of sultans were sometimes used as diplomatic gifts to other Western and Eastern rulers.[1] Likewise, the illustrated page narrating the *Shāhnāma* story of the enthronement of Kay Khusrev [Cat. No. 3] could have a similar provenance, possibly involving the participation of one of the powerful black eunuchs of the palace in the manuscript's production, as is suggested by the court official in the green robe represented in the image.

Finally, the folio with the illustration of the carriage with royal passengers [Cat. No. 4] closely resembles the illustrations in a contemporary history titled S*hehnāme-yi Nādirī*, a manuscript in the Topkapı Palace Museum library.[2] This is the right half (verso) of a double-page illustration and depicts the insane Sultan Mustafa sitting with his mother and courtiers in an infirmary carriage. The other half (now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art) displays the carriage transported by a crowd of people pulling ropes attached to it (Fig. 12). It is here, in this catalogue, that these two folios belonging to a now lost and highly prestigious manuscript have come together for the first time after their detachment at an unknown date.

Does this alluring representation half of a sumptuous double-page including portraits of the dynasty, above all the unique representation of a queen mother, belong to a hitherto unknown history book prepared for Sultan Mustafa or for a member of the faction supporting him?

At this point, we cannot answer the question. Neither are we able to convert the possibilities, some of which are mentioned above, into established facts. In its stead, the examples of Ottoman arts and letters included in this catalogue entice us to examine two of the fundamental practices of Ottoman cultural production, namely translation and adaptation. They allow us a privileged glance at the output of Ottoman artists who were able to transform the various influences enriching their own knowledge, shaping the tastes of their patrons into a characteristically Ottoman aesthetic.

Influences and references

The foremost, but not the unique, source of influence for Ottoman arts and letters arrived from neighbouring cultures within Islamicate civilization. For the 15th century Ottoman court, this meant first of all, the legacy of the Timurid courts. In 1402, Timur had brought to a halt not only the earliest Ottoman imperial aspirations but, by defeating and capturing Sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402), he had nearly brought the Ottoman political project to a permanent end. His descendants could not match his political and military success. Instead, they competed with one another in every field including visual culture, which found some of its remarkable manifestations in the arts of the book. What is now known as the "International Timurid Style" is represented in the illumination, paintings, and bindings of many of the books preserved in the Ottoman Palace, as does Sultan Mehmed's Qur'an [Cat. No. 1].

The Timurid courts of Khurasan and Central Asia were not the only sources of inspiration, however. Other centers, east of the Ottoman Empire, offered rival models of reference. The second 15th century Qur'an in this catalogue [Cat. No. 2], for example, provides clues to how influences of Turkmen and Shiraz provenance entered the Ottoman purview. The manuscript's formal similarities, in size, calligraphy, page layout, and illumination to a group of dispersed Qur'ans, sections of which are kept in the Chester Beatty Library (CBL, Is. 1501, 1502, see fig 13), the Mashhad Shrine Library, and private collections, associate it with the court production of the Akkoyunlu Turkmen ruler, Sultan Ya'qub (r. 1478-1490).[3] At least one of these manuscripts (CBL, Is. 1502) was prepared by the calligrapher Zayn al-'Abidin b. Muhammad al-Shirazi. We do not know when or how the example in the present catalogue, which appears to have been rebound by artists of the Ottoman court, entered the Ottoman palace. Did it, for example, arrive among at least a part of this group of Qur'ans now dispersed among various collections?

Neither do we know if its temporary presence in the palace was a consequence of military expeditions to Tabriz, or of gifts brought by Akkoyunlu or Safavid diplomatic envoys or renegade princes. What we do know, however, is that such manuscripts and their artists, who often found profitable patronage in the Ottoman court, are largely responsible for the elements of Turkmen and Shiraz origins in the Ottoman arts of the book in the late 15th and the 16th centuries.

Here we should also note that the predominance of Islamicate cultural centers as references for the Ottoman court culture cannot be explained simply by a shared system of belief. Islam, as it was practiced in the vast area stretching from the Ottoman territories in the eastern Balkans, to the formerly shamanistic central Asian steppes verging on western China, varied radically. The credence of the artists who wrote, decorated and bound these books was far from being homogeneous. Not to mention the fact that many of the texts prepared did not deal with religious topics.

To give an example, the previously mentioned epic poem, *Shāhnāma*, which remained through the late medieval and early modern period one of the most influential works of Islamicate civilization, narrated the mythic history of pre-Islamic Iran. It became the literary source of inspiration for many Ottoman histories written in the same format while illustrations representing the exploits of its heroes were reinterpreted in Ottoman guise. In this catalogue, the page narrating the enthronement of Kay Khusrev (Kay Khusraw) [Cat. No. 3] offers us a particularly apt

12. "The Pulling of the Infirmary Carriage to Eski Saray", most probably Istanbul, ca. 1622.
Recto: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Edwin Binney, 3rd, Collection of Turkish Art, M. 85.237.42.
Verso: Private collection, Genoa [Cat. No. 1]

13. Frontispiece,
third *juz* of a Qur'an,
Iran (Tabriz?), 1483-84,
Chester Beatty Library
Is. 1502, fol. 1b

case of both literary and visual translation from Persian into Ottoman idiom.

It was not religiosity, but religion as a historical and cultural experience, that made centers like Shiraz or Herat more relevant for the Ottoman palace. In other words, it was not their Muslim piety *per se*, but instead the historical experience of the Ottoman dynasty, which was inevitably conditioned by geographical circumstances, including its Central Asian origins and Anatolian past, that determined the sources which influenced Ottoman arts and letters.
It was this experience that made it more natural to develop Ottoman comparisons with former and contemporaneous dynasties and polities, Chenghizids, Timurids, or Safavids, ruling over realms governed by Islamic authorities in the early modern period.
A similar association based on Ottoman geographical and historical experience can be made for certain Byzantine models. From its beginnings at the end of the 14th century, as a principality at the eastern border of the Byzantine Empire, to the conquest of the Byzantine capital, Constantinople, in 1453, Ottoman expansion took form at the expense of the Eastern Roman Empire.[4] Even after its demise, the Ottoman armies continued their conquests of the former Byzantine lands, in both the Balkans and in Anatolia.
This physical orientation was in part natural: the sultan of the Seljuks of Rum, possibly wary of the potential threat posed by the restless Turkmen tribe to his state, settled Ertuğrul, father of Osman I, eponymous founder of the Ottoman principality, on the eastern border of the Byzantine Empire. In this way, Ertuğrul and his associates spent their bellicose energies in the service of the Seljuks fighting not against them but, instead, their Byzantine enemies.

The persistence of the Ottoman orientation of territorial expansion was also in part intentional. The Ottoman incorporation of Byzantine lands simultaneously encouraged and confirmed the idea that the Ottoman principality was being transformed into a new Roman Empire. This idea was reflected in the self-definition of the Ottoman sultans, especially Mehmed II, who first used the title "Roman Emperor" (*Kayser-i Rum*). It is curious to note that the sultan, who translated the imperial title and incorporated it into his titulature, also launched an extensive project for the translation of many books from Greek and Latin into Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, to create his own imperial library.[5] In effect, his copy of the Qur'an [Cat. No. 1] should also be evaluated as part of Sultan Mehmed's interest in translation. Here the term "translation" is not merely used in a literal sense but also in a larger cultural one; it allowed for the interpretation and diffusion of ideas, whether aesthetic or political, in various media, contextualizing them according to what the sultan and his court decided was needed. Hence, the royal workshop could create a design and use its variations both in the finials on the dedicatory, opening pages of a Qur'an prepared for the sultan, as well as on the inner lining of a kaftan manufactured for his grandson Korkud (d. 1512) (Fig. 14).
Following a similar liberal conception of translation, the Roman imperial title "*Kayser-i Rum*" was translated into a royal epithet suitable, and meaningful, in an Ottoman context. In the case of Sultan Mehmed, it described a 15th-century Muslim emperor personally inclined towards Renaissance tastes. A similar case of cultural translation has already been mentioned for the folio illustrating the enthronement of Kay

14. Kaftan of Prince Korkud
Istanbul,
late 15th-early 16th centuries,
Topkapı Palace Museum,
TSM 13-829

Khusrev (Kay Khusraw) [Cat. No. 3] where the *Shāhnāma* story was translated both in word and image into the Ottoman idiom.
The imperial theme found its next substantial manifestation in the 16th century. Sultan Süleyman (r. 1520-66) contended for the title of "universal emperor" with the Habsburg monarch Charles V, who had sacked Rome in 1529 and had himself crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1530, by Pope Clement VII (d. 1534). Sultan Süleyman's engraved portrait [Cat. No. 6a], from the collection of the Austrian archduke Ferdinand II, grants us an opportunity to see how a western rival perceived the sultan. The engraving's position in its original catalogue, immediately following the section on Charles V, reflects the assessment by the archduke, who was also the nephew of Charles V: such an arrangement was appropriate, as the two emperors had been equals in standing and historical significance.
Ferdinand's catalogue of military leaders, known as *Armamentarium Heroicum,* was an adaptation of classical models organized by the subject's brief biography (*vitae*) followed by his image (*effigies*). Through compositional references, it adapted ancient Greek and Roman visual culture to serve the aesthetic expectations of a contemporary milieu. Even though at first sight it appears strikingly different in style, the

picture representing the physiognomy of Sultan Mehmed I [Cat. No. 5] is yet another adaptation. It is the product of an Ottoman synthesis of two distinct portrait traditions, the Timurid and Italian, both of which had been feeding Ottoman artistic idioms since the reign of Mehmed II.[6]

Translation and adaptation are certainly not the only methods that characterized the formation of Ottoman aesthetic culture. They are, however, two guides conducive to understanding the cultural policy of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th and the 16th centuries. This is not to suggest that one mode was devised and followed, single-mindedly, as the cultural policy of the Ottoman state during two centuries. Naturally, that was not the case. What we can suggest here is that a frame of mind open to the influence of other cultures, deemed worthy of offering references relevant to the arts of the book, characterizes Ottoman court culture from the beginning of the 15th century, when the seeds of an Ottoman imperial culture began to produce its first shoots, and at least to the second half of the 16th century.

1. Necipoğlu 2000, p. 29.
2. Topkapı Palace Museum, H. 1124.
3. James 1981, No. 55; Safwat 2010, Cat. No. 2; Arberry 1967, No. 147, 148.
4. Kafadar 1996.
5. Raby 1983, pp. 15-34.
6. Necipoğlu 2000, pp. 28, 29.

Arts of the book. Catalogue

1. Qur'an of Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-46, 1451-1481)

Unknown calligrapher (colophon missing)
15th century, between 1444-46 or 1451-81
Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper
Closed: 34 x 26 cm
Open: 34 x 52 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Published: Sotheby's, April 1975

The Qur'an's original mid-tan binding is stippled and stamped with ornamentation on both front and back covers. The front bears an asymmetrical lobed center-piece in the shape of a pointed oval with fleur-de-lis finials. The corner-pieces are quarter segments and ornamented with arabesques and flowers similar but not identical to those in the centre piece.
The frame outside the main field is divided into equal sections, two widthwise and three lengthwise. Each of these sections is decorated inside with a band of interlace and framed with borders displaying the S-tool cable motif. The lobed roundel on the flap is likewise decorated with arabesque and floral designs.[1]
The composition of the front cover is echoed in the burgundy doublures, with some variations. The most visible difference is the polychromy of the inner cover, where outside the main field, the center-and corner-pieces all have a gold background with a blue ground reserved for distinctive designs within.
Neither the filigree center nor the elongated corner-pieces includes the flower designs executed in the outer binding.

The outer front cover

The inner front cover

The book opens with a double-page frontispiece (*zahriye*) displaying a text written in large *thuluth* in a broad, lobed pair of ogives. The aesthetic composition of the frontispiece parallels those of the outer and inner bindings, with their central ogives with finials and quarter segments as corner-pieces decorated with floral designs. The text states that Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-46, 1451-81) ordered the writing of the manuscript from Shams al-Din Ahmed Agha, who may be identified as Molla Gurani (d. 1488), one of the leading scholars and Ottoman shaykhs al-Islam (1480-88) of the 15th century, and the former teacher of the sultan as a young prince. What is ambiguous here, is whether "writing" indicates the composition of the Persian translation, the calligraphing of the Arabic original and/or the Persian translation, the supervision of the entire manuscript project, or a combination of these tasks.

The *zahriye* is the only part of the manuscript that is not translated into Persian. The text reads:

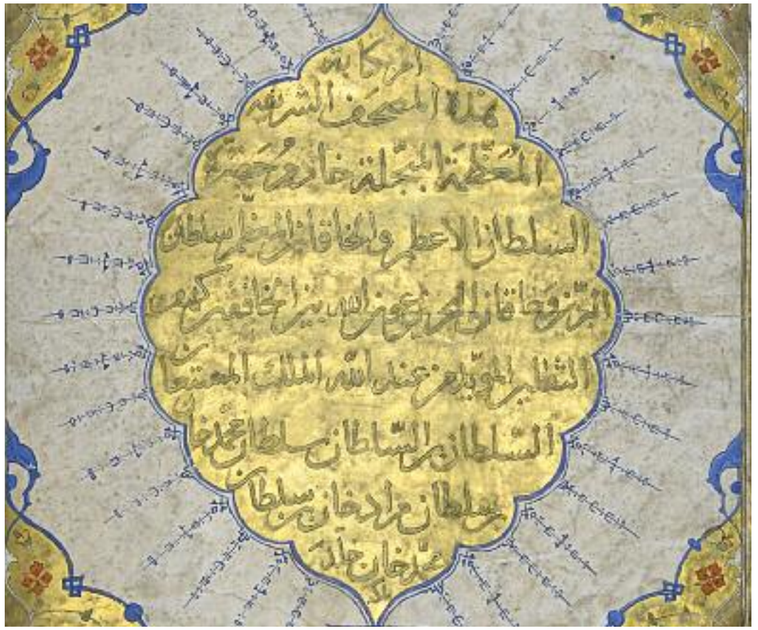
1.(fol. 1b) The servant of His Highness the Most Glorified Sultan and [of] the Magnificent Khaqan,[2] *the sultan of the two lands and the* khaqan *of the two seas, the assistant of God between the eastern and the western horizons [and in] the cave of the humans and the* jinns*, the adherent of Allah, the Supreme Authority – whose aid is implored – the sultan, son of the sultan, Sultan Muhammad Khan, the son of Sultan Murad Khan, the son of Sultan Muhammad Khan, may Heaven make him everlasting, ordered the writing of this glorified, venerable, and honorable volume [the Qur'an]*[3]

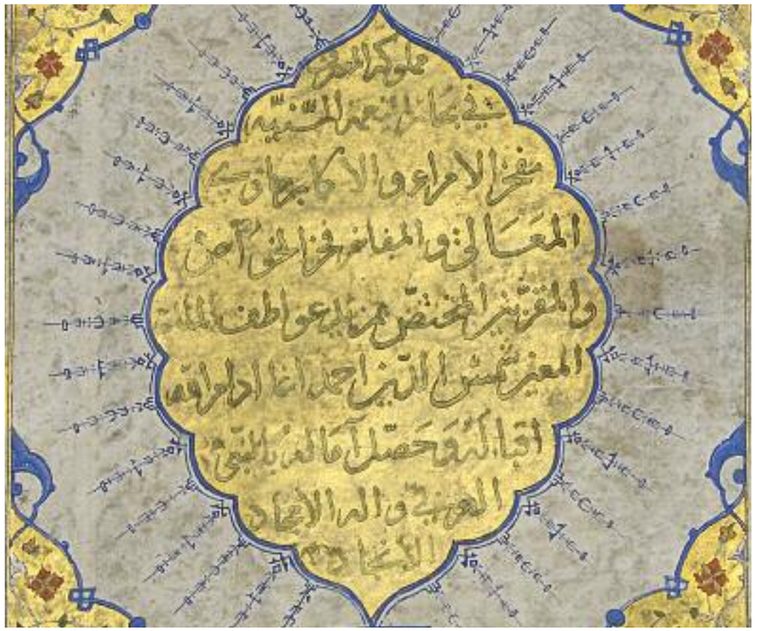
2.(fol. 2a) to his slave, Shams al-Din Ahmed Agha – may God prolong his fortune and make him attain his wishes as far as the most illustrious places of eminence through the agency of the Arabic prophet – who, in accordance with the increase of the affectionate benevolences of the designated king, is granted admission to the sea(s) of the splendid grace of [Sultan Muhammad Khan] the pride of the emirs and of the great men, the possessor of noble and honorable attributes, the glory of the nobles and of the close companions of God.

Immediately after the double-page *zahriye*, the first two suras, *al-Fātiha* and *al-Baqara*, on folios 2b-3a, are also written and translated on an illuminated double-page. Here the sura headings, in eastern kufic, are enclosed in separate cartouches and written in white on a lapis lazuli background with spiral *rumi* illuminations in red. Aside from the lapis lazuli, gold, and to a much smaller extent, black and green, are used as background, and red and yellow are used for the floral designs. Surprising for this pe-

On the previous page:
The dedicatory double-page frontispiece (zahriye)

On this page:
Details from the frontispiece



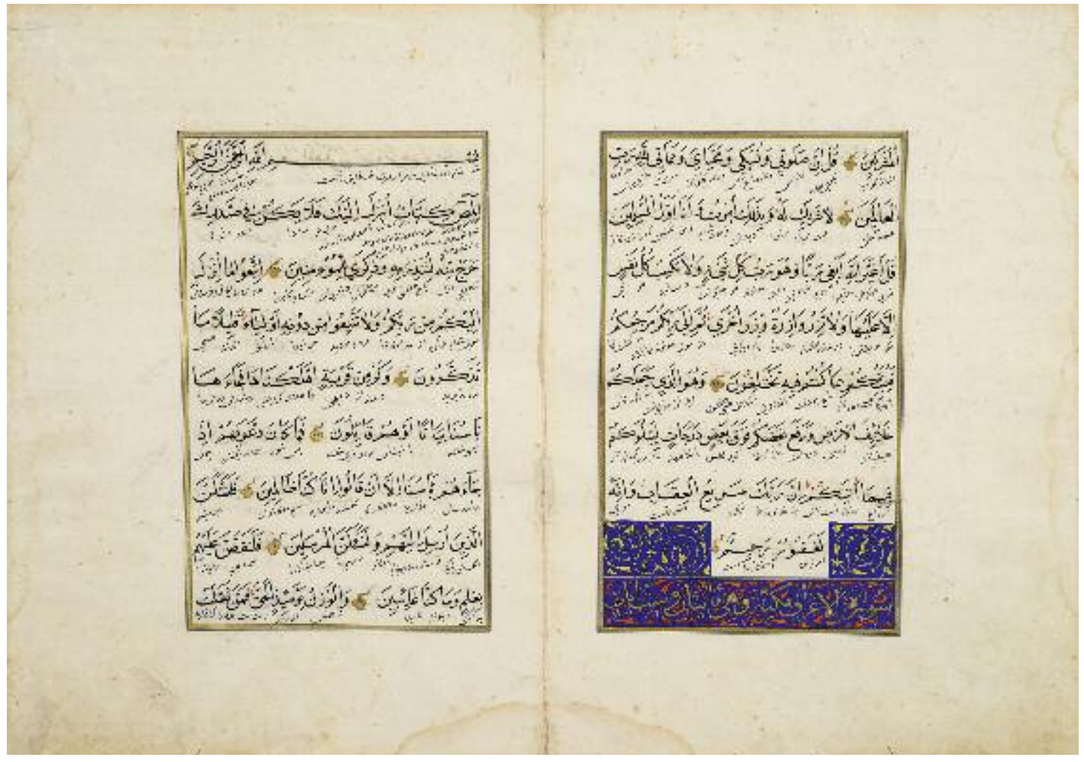


riod, the traditional gold or blue separating borders around the text are missing; however the double-page illumination includes the extended lines (*tığ*) stretching outwards from the illuminated text.
The main body of the text on these two pages is in black *naskh*. Both the original Arabic text and the Persian translation are reserved against the cross-hatched red background as if in clouds, apparently outlined after the translation was written.
The rest of the text is written in *naskh* script in black ink with the sura headings in gold *thuluth*. There are nine lines per page. The sura headings are separated by frames illuminated either with spiral *rumi* motifs in light blue or red on lapis lazuli backgrounds or occasionally with sparse floral motifs on backgrounds decorated with red cross-hatching. The quality of the calligraphy and the illumination varies through the text with a general decrescendo beginning with Sura XXXVIII, *al-Sād*. Red recitation marks guide the reader. Verses are divided by gold marks and every tenth verse is marked by the word "'*ushr*" (ten) written in gold in the margin. In addition, the obligatory postures that correspond to the recitation of certain passages in the daily prayer are indicated in the margins in gold.
This Qur'an is extraordinary both for the sultan who commissioned it and for the scholar who was involved in preparing it. The bibliophile Sultan Mehmed II is well-known for launching programs of translation into several languages for his imperial library; while Shams al-Din Ahmed was an important 15th -century scholar, especially recognized for his work on Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*) and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Moreover, he was trained in the melodious recitation of the Qur'an (*qirā'at*). Further study is needed to better evaluate the unusual stylistic choices and inconsistencies in the manuscript, as well as the level of Shams al-Din Ahmed's involvement in its preparation. Only then may its place in the creation of one of the most important libraries in the 15th century be understood and appreciated.

FSE

1. I would like to thank Zeren Tanındı and Linda Jones for their generous help with this entry.
2. The phrases "His Highness the Most Glorified Sultan" and "the Magnificent Khaqan" designate God as the most sublime ruler. They are hence capitalized in the translation to facilitate distinction from the qualifications for the Ottoman sultan. According to this cosmological orientation, the Ottoman sultan is God's servant. In this way, the relationship between the sultan and his subjects mirror that between God and the sultan.
3. Here the discord regarding the gender of the words refering to the Qur'an causes a curious grammatical error in the Arabic text.

Illuminated double-page of the first two suras, al-Fātiha and al-Baqara (fols. 2b-3a)



Qur'an interior: the end of the sixth Sura (al-En'ām) and the beginning of the seventh (al-A'rāf)

2. Qur'an

Seventh *juz* of the manuscript
Second half of the 15th century (1483-84)
Ottoman, or Shiraz Turkmen?
Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper
Closed: 38 x 29 cm
Open: 38 x 57 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Unpublished

The manuscript's brown leather Ottoman binding is stippled and has dark spots. The front cover has a small diamond shaped center-piece with a lobed outline. A bold flower design on gold leaf decorates the centrepiece while the two pendants are adorned with a single flower motif also each on gold leaf. Both the pendants and the centrepiece are set on a Roman cross impressed into the leather.

The text is fully vocalized and there are seven lines per page. The first and the seventh lines are written in *muhaqqaq* and the third line in *thuluth*. The remaining pairs of lines in between are written in *naskh* script and in smaller font, over all creating a rhythmic organization of "1+2+1+2+1" within gold margins. The sura headings in *thuluth* are framed and the third line on each page is written in gold while the rest of the text is in black ink. Red recitation marks aid the reader, while a small gold rosette indicates the end of each verse.

The facing pages of the frontispiece (seen below) are fully illuminated with *rumi* motifs and small flowers with leaves. The principal colour for the background is lapis lazuli while light blue, green, black, and red are also used. The decorative motifs are executed mainly in gold, but also in red and green.

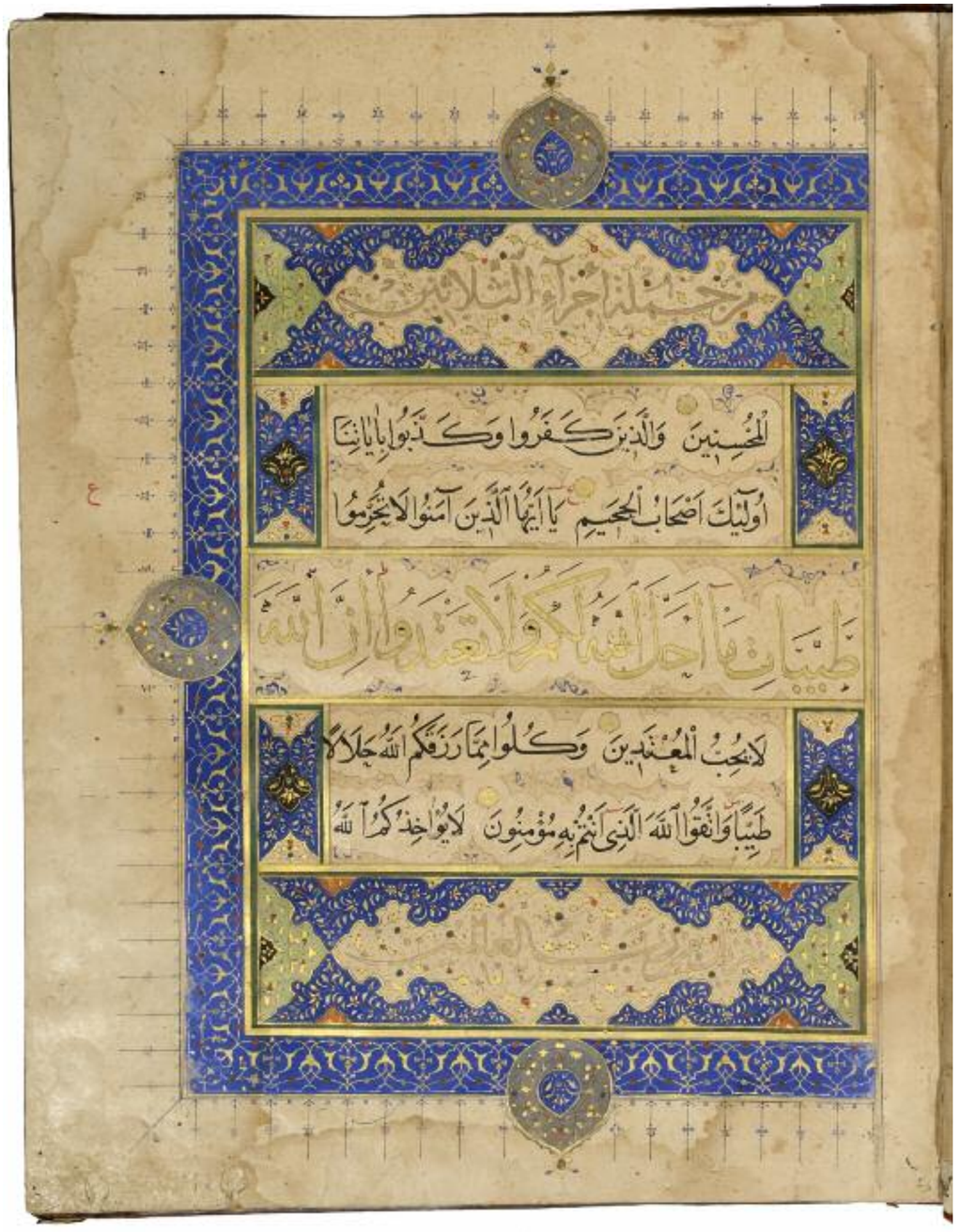
The manuscript consists of the seventh *juz* of the Qur'an.[1] Its size, the Ottoman binding, the rhythmic organization of the calligraphy, as well as the colour of the ink and the framing, suggest that it was produced as part of the same series of Qur'anic sections as two other manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Library: Is. 1501 (twenty-sixth *juz*) and Is. 1502 (third *juz*)[2] (Fig. 13). The name of Zayn al-'Abidin ibn Muhammad al-Katib al-Shirazi is given as the copyist in Is. 1502, which is dated 888 / 1483-84.

FSE

1. The word *juz* designates one thirtieth of the Qur'an. The division of the text into thirty equal parts is done to facilitate handling and bears no religious consideration.
2. Arberry 1967, p. 45, Nos. 147, 148; James 1981, No. 55.

The double-page frontispiece

Cover



Detail of the frontispiece, recto

3. The Enthronement of Kay Khusrev by Kay Kavus

Illustrated page from a *Shehnāme-yi Türkī*
Second half of the 16th century
Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper
Manuscript page: 41.2 x 27 cm
Written surface: 33.4 x 20 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Unpublished

This is an illustrated page from a copy of the first translation of Firdawsi's Persian classic *Shāhnāma* into Turkish prose.
The original translation was completed around 1450-51 by order of Sultan Murad II (r. 1421-44; 1446-51). On the basis of the style of its illustration, we can date this folio to the last quarter of the 16th century, a prolific period for the production of *Shehnāme-yi Türkī* manuscripts.[1]
The scene shows the enthronement of the young prince Kay Khusrav (Kay Khusrev in Turkish) by his paternal grandfather Kay Kavus. Kay Khusrav is one of the most important kings of the *Shāhnāma*, where the mythic history of Iran is narrated, and the rivalry of the Iranian and the Turanian kingdoms a primary theme.
He is the son of Farangiz, the daughter of the Turanian king Afrasiyab, and the warrior prince Siyavush, one of the sons of the Iranian king Kay Kavus. After his maternal grandfather kills his father, the young Khusraw survives as a result of the compassion and intelligent maneuvers of Afrasiyab's minister Piran, and is brought up by a shepherd. Finally, he escapes from the Turanian domain and after several trials, he wins the Iranian throne, thereby confirming his divine right to rule. On this illustrated page, we see the young prince, recently crowned as "the king of kings" by Kay Kavus being escorted to his hexagonal golden throne as ministers and courtiers watch, impressed.
Aside from its text, the scene also translates the well-known Iranian story visually into the Ottoman Turkish idiom. The meticulously executed textiles on the figures along with the two cushions on the throne reflect Ottoman taste as well as ceremonial etiquette. The design on the back cushion with the crown motif enclosing an ogival banding used in 16th century Venetian luxury textiles and the *cintamani* design of the seat cushion tie the illustration tightly to its contemporaneous royal Ottoman ambit and its aesthetic tastes. The quality of the clothes of the figures depicted varies in accordance with the position of their owners in the palace "hierarchy". The matte black overcoat and the somber colors of the inner caftan of Kay Kavus, who is ceding his royal authority to his grandson, contrasts with Kay Khusraw's ostentatious and bright ceremonial outfit.
Here, we should note that the contrast between dark and luminous colors invites associations with the actual transfer of authority from grandfather to grandson. According to ancient Iranian cosmology, which was revived in the early modern Ottoman court, an auspicious light of divine grace was supposed to be a mark of divinely elected rulers.
Furthermore, the combination of red and blue in Kay Khusraw's attire is often used in Ottoman representations of sultans and high officials in ceremonial scenes. While the crowns of the two protagonists are Persianate in style, the aigrette on the crown of the young "king of kings" is an accessory typical of Ottoman royal headgear. Likewise the grouping of the high officials, whose positions can easily be deduced from their attire, on one side, and the servants of the royal chamber on the other and behind the throne, is an organizational scheme characteristic of Ottoman representations of royal scenes.[2]
The painter's care in narrating details concerning proper order and clothing also applies to the psychological states and moral conduct of the figures. While Kay Kavus is looking directly to his grandson's eyes, urging him physically to sit on the throne that used to be his, the grandson seems to escape his grandfather's gaze, gesturing with a respectful motion of feigned defiance. At the level of royal authority, however, the situation, as it is precisely reflected visually, is just the contrary. Kay Kavus is shown bending before the new shah while Kay Khusraw is depicted upright with an aigrette bearing crown on his head and the royal handkerchief in his right hand.
Even though the exact provenance of the manuscript is unknown, one of the two figures looking directly at the viewer[3], the court official with a darker complexion in green, suggests that its patronage might be related to a powerful black eunuch. It is possible that this figure represents the Abyssinian or Ethiopian eunuch Mehmed Agha, a powerful figure in the court of Murad III (r. 1574-1595), who created for him the post of the Chief Black Eunuch in charge of guarding the Imperial Harem. Mehmed Agha was known for his patronage of arts and architecture, in particular, of manuscripts. He remained in his position until his death in 1590.[4] The choice of depicting the new king standing next to the throne immediately prior to his enthronement instead of the more traditional representation already seated on the throne, should also be considered in identifying the manuscript of which this individual page forms part.

FSE

1. Bağcı 2000.
2. Atıl 1986.
3. The young man in yellow standing behind the three servants of the royal chamber with a large round face, prominent nose, and blue eyes is the other figure clearly looking at the viewer. The care shown in representing the particularities of his physique as well as his gaze towards the viewer suggests that this is yet another portrait, perhaps of the painter himself.
4. Fetvacı 2013, Hathaway 2011, Kayhan Elbirlik 2010.

4. The Pulling of the Infirmary Carriage to Eski Saray (verso)

Illustrated page (half of a double-page illustration) from a historical text
Istanbul (?), first half of the 17th century (c. 1622)
Ink, opaque watercolour and gold on paper
Page: 32.3 x 24.2 cm
Painting: 23.3 x 20 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Published: M.C. David, *Art de l'Islam et de l'Inde*, Ader-Nordmann (sales catalogue), Paris, 23 November, 2013, lot 115, p. 68

This is the right-hand (verso) page of a double-page scene. Its style, particularly in its colour scheme, closely resembles that of the illustrations of *Shehnāme-yi Nādirī*[1] suggesting the participation of some of the same artists on both pages. The back of this illustrated page is mounted, together with three cut pages from a manuscript of Ottoman Turkish prose, possibly from the same manuscript as the illustration. The last, and only fully visible, page narrates part of the incident depicted in the illustration, supporting the possibility that it comes from the same book as the illustration.

The left (recto) page now in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Fig. 12) is catalogued as "Sultan Osman II with his vizier Davud Paşa, in a procession of Janissaries and guards". A reassessment of the double-page with the contemporaneous description of the anarchic enthronement of Sultan Mustafa, in Tuği Solak Hüseyin Çelebi's *Vaqʿa-yı Merhūm ve mağfūr Sultān ʿOṣmān Khān* (The Incident of the Deceased Sultan Osman Khan, whose Sins are Forgiven)[2] reveals that the scene, in fact, depicts the events immediately after the second enthronement of Mustafa I, while his nephew Osman II was still legally the ruling sultan.
Tuği Solak Hüseyin Çelebi was a soldier-writer from the unit of the royal bodyguards (*solak*), as well as an eyewitness to the uprising of a significant part of the janissaries, against the inexperienced and reform-minded young Sultan Osman II on the 19th of May 1622. On that day, a group of rebels entered the palace and, taking Mustafa from where he was kept (through a hole they made in the roof), they performed an *ad-hoc* ceremony of enthronement for him. Afterwards, fearing that Osman, who was still on the palace grounds in the Private Chambers, would have Mustafa killed, the rebels decided to transport the latter out of the Topkapı Palace to the Old Palace (*Eski Saray*).

However, Mustafa was not only mentally and psychologically unstable; he was at the same time physically extremely weak due to the dire conditions in which he was kept. Lacking the strength to mount a horse, he was placed along with his mother, his two female servants, and a courtier named Derviş in a carriage normally used in the palace to transport the sick.

In the illustration we see the red carriage occupied by Sultan Mustafa, his mother (the *Vālide*), a young courtier, and a female servant from the Harem. The first three figures are identified in black ink even though the identification of the young courtier is not legible. The preoccupied expressions of the members of the religious and possibly bureaucratic class in the top part of the depiction contrast starkly with the clearly happy faces of the janissaries depicted below. The golden coins that seem to be dropped from the Queen Mother's hand could be a reference to Mustafa's custom of dispersing gold coins to everyone and almost everywhere, a custom often perceived as a consequence of his insanity and criticized. On the back of the painting, the text explains that the soldiers, worrying that their beloved sultan would be disturbed by the movements of a regular carriage on the stone roads, put him in the bright red (infirmary) carriage.

According to Tuği Solak Hüseyin Çelebi, after placing Mustafa and his entourage in the carriage, the group of rebels found ropes to tie to the carriage and pulled it themselves until they reached the Old Palace. The folio in the Los Angeles County Museum (Fig. 12) displays the rebel crowd pulling the carriage with ropes accompanied by members of the janissary corpse. Davud Paşa and one of the high-ranking janissary officials on horseback (*kulkethüdası*) are named in black ink. A second hand added more labeling in red, most probably at a later date.

The double-page painting is particularly important in its visual narration of an event that gained a near-taboo status in its aftermath. The cruel and humiliating deposition, and the execution of Sultan Osman II by his subjects, the presence of two sultans in the capital for a period that lasted almost a day, and the act of enthroning an overtly insane figure as sultan for the second time,[3] were embarrassing details that made the chaotic and anarchic succession story following the death of Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-17), particularly undesirable for contemporary historians seeking royal or courtly patronage to relate. The right half of the double-page painting is extraordinary, additionally for its unique contemporaneous portrayal of women from the Ottoman palace, and specifically for its representation of the powerful Queen Mother. This is the first time that the double-page illustration is correctly identified and its two sides joined after their detachment at an unknown date. FSE

1. Topkapı Palace Museum, H. 1124.
2. *Musībetnāme;* Yaşaroğlu 2013.
3. Breaking with the father-to-son rule of succession, Mustafa, the brother of Ahmed I, was first enthroned on the 22nd of November 1617. On the 26th of February 1618, after a short reign of slightly over three months, he was dethroned peacefully, and Ahmed's son Osman was enthroned in his stead.

5. Portrait of a Sultan (Mehmed I or Mehmed II)

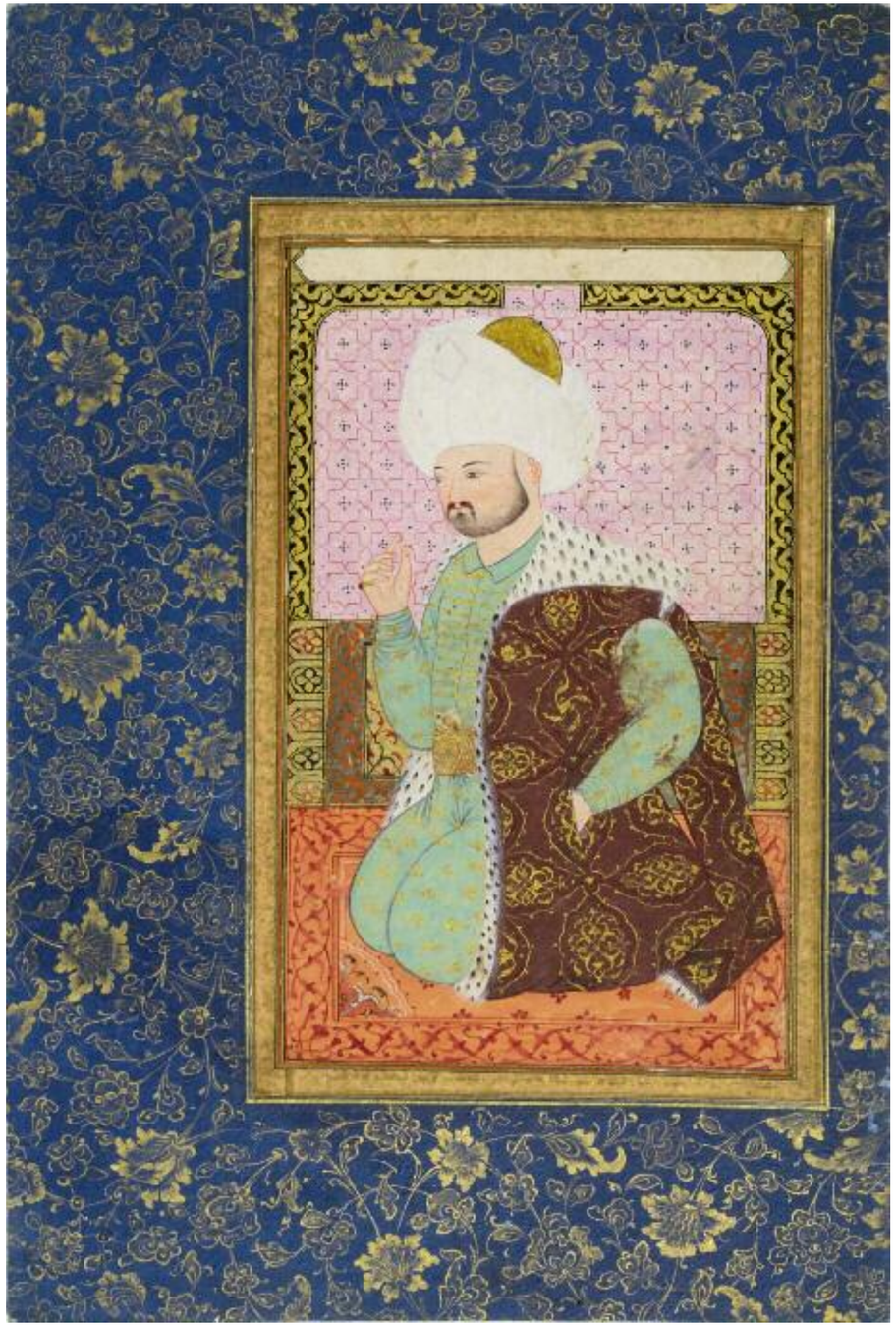
Page from an album
Anonymous, 1580-95
Watercolour and gold on paper
Page size: 34.7 x 22 cm
Painting: 21.5 x 12.6 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Published: Grube 1972, Pl. XLVIII

This is a single page from an album most probably prepared in the late 16th century. The portrait of the Ottoman sultan is mounted on a dark blue page illuminated with *hatayı* flower designs in gold, possibly of Safavid provenance.
The sultan is depicted in three-quarter profile kneeling and facing left. His physical features, the style of his turban, the colour of his green inner kaftan, and the positions of both of his hands closely resemble the portrait of Sultan Mehmed I (r. 1413-21) included in the series of the Ottoman sultan portraits in Hoca Sadadeddin Efendi's (d. 1599-1600) history *Tācü't-Tevārih*.[1] In both portraits the sultan is depicted holding a flower with his empty right hand.
In two other portraits of the same sultan, we see variations of the same gesture and colour schemes. In a *Şemā'ilnāme*[2] of Seyyid Lokman, who was court historian between the years 1569-1596/97, the painter (*Nakkaş*) Osman represented the sultan likewise wearing a green inner kaftan and with his left hand in his pocket while with his right hand, he holds a rose. In a similar representation in the *Zübdetü't-Tevārih*[3] by the same author-painter duo, the colour scheme is repeated while the sultan has his right hand in his pocket, and with the other, he is depicted holding a carnation.[4] In both portrait series, the correspondence in the name of Sultans Mehmed I and Mehmed II is echoed in their visual representations with respect to their postures, gestures, and the white fur lining of their sleeveless outer coat that is made more visible by having its collar folded outwards.
At the same time, the stone-mounted ring the sultan is wearing on the little finger of his right hand in this portrait recalls the portrait of Sultan Mehmed II (r. 1444-46 and 1451-81) attributed to Sinan bey or Şiblizade Ahmed.[5] Along with the depiction of the same white fur lining mentioned above it is possible, though less likely, that the sultan represented here is Sultan Mehmed II.

FSE

1. Topkapı Palace Museum, R 1112, fol. 117v; also published in Necipoğlu 2000, p. 263.
2. Topkapı Palace Museum, H. 1563.
3. The Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, MS. 1973. The colour of the sultan's outer coat in *Tācü't-Tevārih*, *Şemā'ilnāme,* and *Zübdetü't-Tevārih* differs from the portrait in this catalogue. In the three portraits mentioned above, the sultan is depicted wearing a sleeveless outer coat in blue; in all four, the outer coat is lined with white fur.
4. Çağman 2000, pp. 167, 168, 174, 175.
5. Necipoğlu 2000, pp. 28-29.



6a. Portrait of Sultan Süleyman

Engraving
Dominicus Custos (d. 1615) after Giovanni Battista Fontana (d.1587)
Innsbruck, 1601
Size: 46.5 x 34 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Published: Sotheby's, *Arts of the Islamic World,*
London, 24 April 2013, lot 95

6b. Portrait of Sokollu Mehmed Paşa

Engraving
Dominicus Custos (d. 1615) after Giovanni Battista Fontana (d. 1587)
Innsbruck, 1601
Size: 46.4 x 34 cm
Private Collection, Genoa

Published: Sotheby's, *Arts of the Islamic World,*
London, 24 April 2013, lot 96

These engravings of Sultan Süleyman I (r. 1520-66) and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (d. 1579) belong to the same portrait collection of military leaders prepared for the Habsburg Archduke Ferdinand II (r. 1564-95) who is known for his interest in history as well as in armament. Jakob Schrenk von Notzing, who was appointed as the archduke's secretary in 1565 and his advisor in 1588, is the primary author of the work, generally known as *Armamentarium Heroicum.*[1] It is principally a luxuriously embellished catalogue of Ferdinand's much cherished collection of armaments kept in Schloss Ambras. Under the archduke's supervision, Schrenk von Notzing compiled the mannerist illustrations and wrote the brief biographies that accompanied each figure on the opposite page; thereby preparing one of the first publications of its kind based upon a private collection.
Armamentarium Heroicum contains 125 engraved portraits, each figure represented in military costume surrounded by military paraphernalia. The figures stand in elaborately decorated niches flanked by two columns with Corinthian capitals. The classicizing *putti* climbing the columns among foliage invites the viewer to draw associations with the representations of heroes of ancient Greece and Rome while, at the same time, providing a certain touch of humor for a publication designed to please its viewer despite its serious theme.

The portrait of **Sultan Süleyman** in profile differs from the other portraits in *Armamentarium Heroicum* where the subjects are represented in frontal or three-quarter view. Instead, it is modelled on the sultan's portrait in the Ambras collection even though in the engraving, in contrast to the painting, the sultan is shown older and with a beard, and his aquiline nose more pronounced.
Tobias Stimmer used an earlier example of the same model in the collection of Paolo Giovio (1483-1552) for the engraving he prepared for the new, illustrated publication of Giovio's *Elogia Virorum Bellica Virtute Illustrium* about twenty years after the humanist's death. A comparison between Giovio's and the archduke's collections reveals the former as the main source for the corresponding portraits in Schloss Ambras. Despite the heavy military focus of Ferdinand's much larger collection of 900 portraits, as opposed to Giovio's 400 portraits of the military and intellectual elite, both collectors shared the common, classical approach of presenting a brief biography (*vitae*) with an image (*effigies*) of the subject.[2] The length of the biographical entries varied in accordance with the significance of the historical figure for the project.
The biography accompanying the sultan's image is not included in this catalogue. However, the reverse of the page with the sultan's portrait reveals that the image immediately before the sultan was that of the Habsburg Emperor Charles V (r. 1520-56 as emperor), uncle of Ferdinand II. This order in the book's organization also reveals Schrenk von Notzing's and Ferdinand's perceptions of the two emperors, peers and rivals in deeds and ambitions.

The representation of Sultan Süleyman reflects the self-confidence of the Ottoman ruler, who appears audaciously about to step out of the niche in which he is placed. In contrast, **Sokollu Mehmed Paşa** is represented enclosed prudently within the niche. Sokollu's fearful and mistrustful eyes look directly at the viewer while his long shadow lurks behind him.
The inclusion of the great Ottoman statesman should not be surprising especially in view of his powerful position in the Ottoman state, as its Grand Vizier, during an exceptionally long period between the years 1565-79 and in service to three sultans: Sultan Süleyman, Sultan Selim II, and Sultan Murad III. Moreover, Sokollu had commanded Ottoman armies earlier in his career, in the wars on the Hungarian border in 1551-52 and later, in 1566, during Sultan Süleyman's last campaign in which Ferdinand II led the Austrian troops.
The text on the reverse of the page with Sokollu Mehmed's portrait indicates that the engraving, and biography, of the Austrian nobleman and knight Wilhelm Freyherr (*i.e.* Freiherr) von Rogendorff (d. 1541) preceded it. Freyherr von Rogendorff served as the High Steward (*Hofmeister*) of Ferdinand I, father of the commissioner of *Armamentarium Heroicum*. His own involvement in the Ottoman-Austrian wars of 1529 and 1541, first as a commander of the heavy cavalry and then as commander of the armed forces, as well as his high rank, defined both by the significance of his administrative and military responsibilities and by his familial relation to the Austrian ruler, make him a perfect choice to precede the Ottoman Grand Vizier. The pairing echoes the same organizational

mentality based upon thematic and hierarchical relevance that we have seen previously with Sultan Süleyman.

FSE

1. This is an abbreviation of the original title of the book, composed of 133 words: *Augustissimorum imperatorum, serenissimorum regum atque archiducum, illustrissimorum principum, necnon comitum, baronum, nobilium, aliorumque clarissimorum virorum... verissimae imagines et rerum ab ipsis... gestarum... descriptiones, quorum arma... in celebri Ambrosianae arcis armamentario... conspiciuntur opus... a... Jacobo Schrenckhio a Nozingen... absolutum.*
2. Raby 2000, pp. 141-44.

A Note on Formal Court Wear

Portrait of Süleyman the Magnificent
Dominicus Custos

Clothing is often used to characterize and identify a historical figure; fashion and materials are indicators of status and belonging. Whenever a ruler's formal garment is involved, each detail is additionally charged with symbolic or evocative values, as every detail in his figure and attitude serves to convey authority and royalty. Accordingly, every feature in the portrait of Süleyman I, who was known in the West as the Magnificent, conveys a sense of greatness and majesty. The Sultan's attire in this engraving, made by a Western artist and meant to be an accurate likeness, includes: an undergarment, a long-sleeved inner robe and an overcoat (kaftan) lined with fur, in addition to tight trousers with soft leather boots. The undergarment seems to be made of light fabric; its small, round-lapelled collar emerges from under the inner robe. The front of the robe is decorated with frogging (ornamental braiding for fastening the front of a garment that consists of a button and a loop through which it passes). Its fabrics are ornamented with a motif of twining oval loops – possibly in relief, judging from the chiaroscuro of the engraving – which form vertical bands against a plain ground. The surcoat is the most heavily charged with the symbolism of royalty: open at the front, with broad short sleeves, it is lined with white ermine. It appears to be made from *kemha* fabric, with a characteristically Ottoman decorative motif of repeated, ribbonlike chequered bands, unfolding along sinuous vertical lines. Framed between each pair of bands are floral motifs identifiable as "pine cones" and "lotuses". Two sleeves from a similar robe, made from the same kind of textile but decorated with tulips and *cintamani* motifs, are preserved to this day in the Topkapı Palace Museum in Istanbul (Inv. 13/1895).

EGM

Portrait of Sokollu Mehmed Paşa
Dominicus Custos

Sokollu Mehmet Paşa's long political and military career, which began in 1526 as the sultan's chief esquire and ended in 1579 with death by murder, spanned the reigns of three sultans: Süleyman the Magnificent, Selim II and Murad III. Ottoman formal court garments underwent innovation during the same period, with notable changes in terms of the fabrics employed.
An idea of what the Sultan wore around the time when this portrait was engraved may be gained from a description of Murad III's attire, written in 1589 by the Venetian artist Cesare Vecellio:

It is impossible to say or imagine how very rich and more than beautiful the clothing of this Great Lord is. As far as colour is concerned, he appears now in one, now in another. Still, I will say what he usually wears: a dulimano *[loose formal overgown] of gold and a* sottana *of velvet, in whatever colour he prefers. He wears many* broccatelli *and other kinds of silk, such as* zendado, *and very often white satin woven with silver. The sleeves of all his gowns are made of the same fabric as the body of the gown. On his head he always wears a turban of very beautiful* sessa, *and when he goes out, he wears two feathers in it, one on each side, laden with pearls and jewels. He wears buttons of heavy gold and adamant. He wears short boots and always rides a horse equipped with a rein and bridle, as suits a man of his stature.*[1]The garment worn by the Grand Vizier in this portrait is closely reminiscent of Vecellio's description of the attire worn by the Janissary Agha, or the commander of the Janissaries:
He wears brocade, velvet, satin or other fabrics, trimmed with gold. His buttons are of heavy gold, and he wears his overgarment open at times and closed at others. He wears whatever colors he likes. On his feet and legs he wears short boots, red, yellow or pavonazzo. *His turban is large, like that of the Great Lord, with a* corno *of* cremesino *velvet and trimmed with one or two very valuable feathers.*[2]
Several documents preserved in Venetian State Archives testify that the Republic, in the second half of the 16th century, provided the Ottoman Empire not only with brocaded fabrics and luxury velvets, but also with complete garments. Although the Grand Vizier's policy was notoriously aimed at supporting domestic textile manufacture, involving protectionist measures, the overcoat (kaftan) worn by Sokollu Mehmet Paşa in this portrait may well be made from Venetian velvet, based on the details of the pattern and the shading effect suggested by the motifs in relief, which feels three-dimensional.

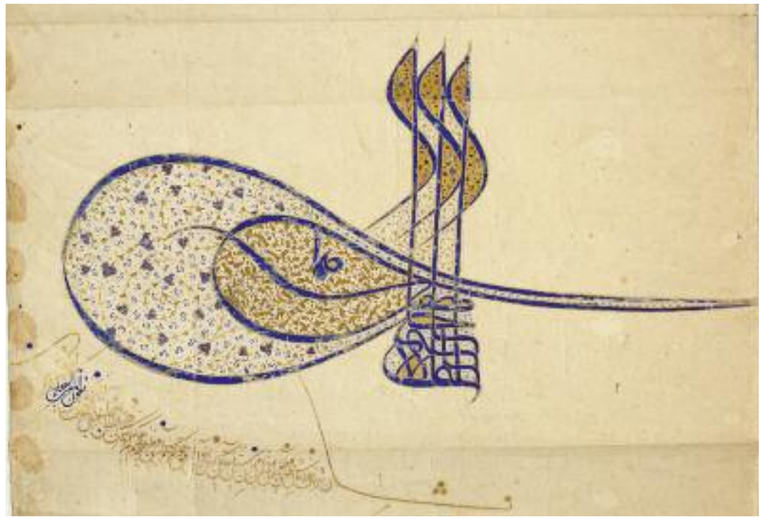
EGM

1. *The clothing of the Renaissance World: Cesare Vecellio's Habiti Antichi et Moderni*, ed. and tr. Margaret F. Rosenthal and Ann Rosalind Jones. London, 2008, 377.
2. *Ibid.*, 379.

7. Fragment of a *berat* with the *tuğra* of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent

Berat
Istanbul, 1520-66
Paper, ink, golden ink, watercolours
Size: 55 x 57 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, Inv. I. 7030

Published: Kühnel 1955, fig. 6; Im Lichte des Halbmonds 1955, no.23

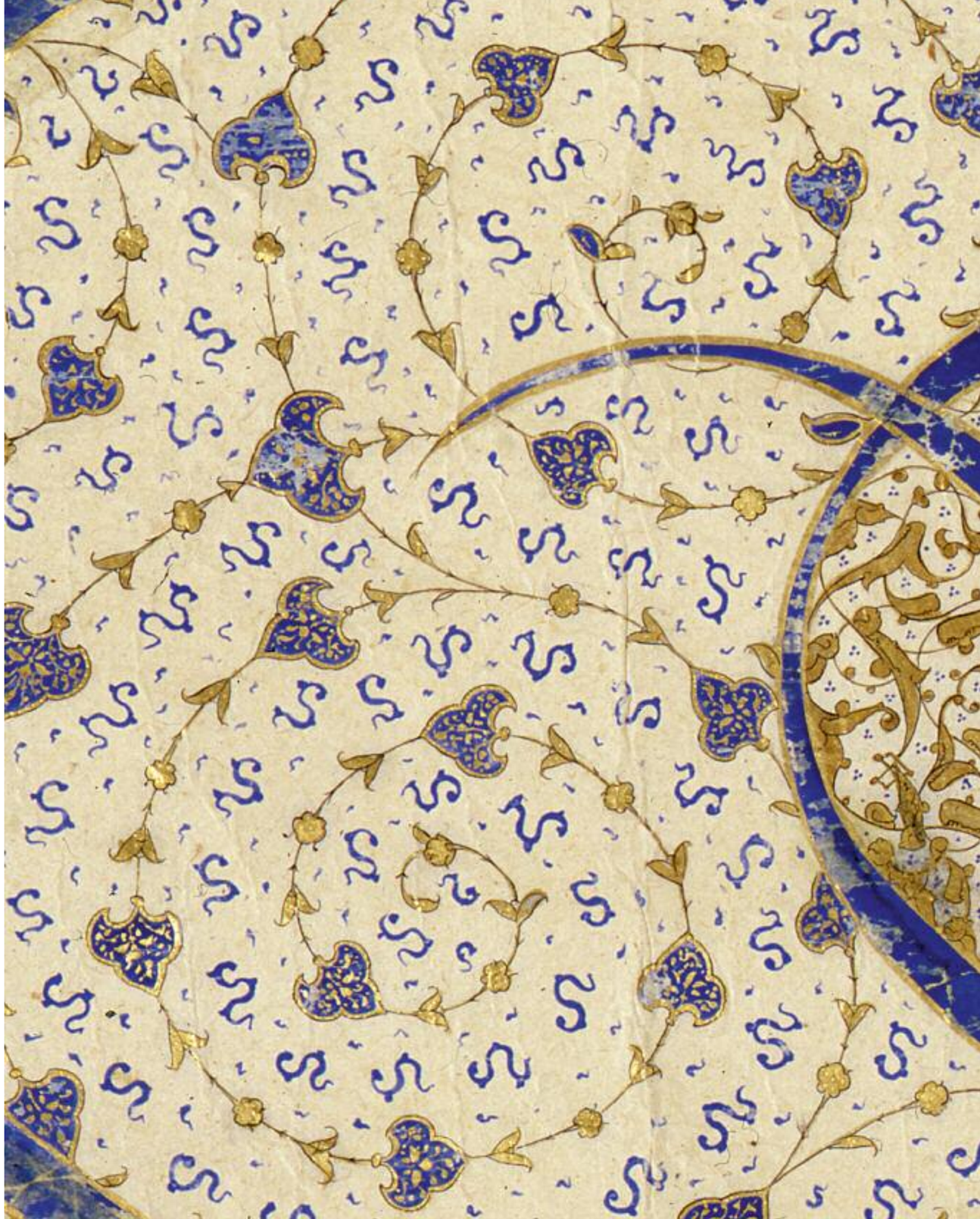


This is the top part of an Ottoman royal document of the type called *berat*. A *berat* communicated the royal will in matters such as the assignment of a person to a post or to an income, and the permission given to use a resource or to be exempt from an obligation. Like a *ferman*, it was legalized by the *tuğra* that was placed at the top of the document. The introductory segment, which is the only part of the *berat* other than the *tuğra* included here, is the part of the document that formally differentiates it from a *ferman*. Here, a variation of one of the classical formulas beginning with the word *"nishan"* is used.

A *tuğra* is the calligraphic signature unique to an Ottoman sultan. Sultan Süleyman's *tuğra* describes him as *"Süleyman Shah, the son of Selim Shah Khan, who is always victorious"*.[1] It was the chancellor's duty to design the *tuğra* for each sultan after his accession and to affix it on royal documents, such as royal decrees (*ferman*), pious endowment deeds (*waqfiyya*), and diplomatic correspondence. The presence of the *tuğra* gave the document legislative authority and indicated royal status.
*Tuğra*s were also carved on the seals of the sultans and stamped on coins minted during their reigns. Even though other states, such as the Seljuks and the Mamluks both chronologically prior to, and influential upon, the Ottoman state tradition, are known to have used the sultan's personal signature to legalize documents, the elaborate and highly institutionalized usage of the calligraphic signature is an Ottoman feature.
The Ottoman *tuğra* has four components. The lower part, known as the *sere* or *kürsü*, includes the name of the sultan and his father. The three vertical projections from this lower part are known as *tuğ*. After the *tuğra* designed for Sultan Süleyman's father Selim I, it became traditional to join these three parallel lines with S-shaped strokes known as *zülfe*. The *beyze* are the two concentric circular extensions on the left. The two *beyze* were extended to the right and intersecting the three *tuğ*, for the signature of Sultan Bayezid I (r. 1389-1402) forming the *hançer* or *kol*. These two lines to the right of the *tuğra* were joined until the design of Sultan Süleyman's signature, where the two *hançer* are left detached.
In this example, the delicate ornamentation is varied including spiral tendrils with *rumi* leaves in gold, *cintamani* designs and cloud bands in lapis lazuli, and vines with red, blue, and pink flowers on gold backgrounds. All of the ornamentation is executed within the calligraphic confines of the signature.
Tuğra ornamentation grew richer beginning with those designed for Sultan Süleyman's grandson, Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-95). Extending well beyond the upper end of the royal signature, the field of ornamentation enclosed the royal signature by the end of the 16th century, as we see in Cat. No. 8.

FSE

1. "Khan" and "shah" are two titles, the former originally Mongol, the latter Iranian, used by the Ottoman sultans. The qualifier " always victorious" (*al-muzaffer daima*) described the owner of the *tuğra*, here Sultan Süleyman.



8. Ottoman royal decree (*ferman*)

Ferman
Istanbul, first ten days of Ramadan 1015 H. / first ten days of January 1607
Paper, ink, golden ink, watercolours
Size: 200 x 65 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin, Inv. I. 7032

Unpublished

This royal order composed during the reign of Sultan Ahmed I (1603-17) bears his signature (*tuğra*) illuminated in blue and gold with spiral motifs in what is known as the "Golden Horn style".[1] By the time of Sultan Ahmed, the field of ornamentation had already assumed a triangular form that rose above the main body of the *tuğra,* nearly overwhelming it. This triangular form was inspired by the cypress tree, which invited associations with the slender beauty of the beloved, as well as the notion of eternity in Ottoman classical poetry. The *tuğra* style exemplified here survived with only a few changes until the end of the 19th century.

The text of the royal decree (*ferman*) is written in the *divani* script used by the chancellery. In this example the royal decree orders the assignment of the estates of the former Grand Vizier Derviş Mehmed Paşa, in Istanbul, to Prince Hasan of Cairo.

The document is particularly interesting with respect to the life and career of Derviş Mehmed Paşa whose service for the sultan began as the head gardener and reached its zenith as the Grand Vizier, a position that he held for less than six months. Rather than his accomplishments, he is known by his arbitrary confiscation of goods from Jewish merchants and from the estates of Lala Mehmed Paşa, who held the position of Grand Vizier before him and whose death is directly, or indirectly, blamed on him. The political plotting and arbitrary confiscation that marked his career ironically determined the nature of his own death: by execution on the 9th of December 1606. He was wrongly accused of devising a plot against the sultan's life, by excavating a tunnel between the magnificent mansion he was having built and the royal palace. The accuser was none other than the Jewish steward who had been forced to assume the expenses of the construction.

FSE

1. For more information on the *tuğra*, see Cat. No. 7.