Surrounding the letter are attributes of the divinity ("He is the great; He is the good; O Lord, my God . . ." etc.).

The headings of the opening pages (exhibited) show parts of Surah 61 of the Koran (Ar-Saff, or "The Ranka"). The vertical panels of calligraphy are from verse 13: (left) "Help from God and a nigh victory"; (right) "Give thou good tidings to the Believers (O Muhammad)."). It is fitting that the poem is prefaced by this scriptural benediction, for at the time when this text was being prepared, Sulayman was starting his campaign against the Hungarians (which resulted in the tremendous victory of Mohacs and the death of King Louis II in 1526, followed by the siege of Vienna three years later.)

The writing is a simple, stately nasta'liq, a style of Islamic calligraphy largely superseded at this time, particularly in Iran, in favor of the more cursive nasta'liq. The upside-down recital of the colophon on fol. 3r is typically Ottoman in its decoration, resembling the complexity of the much later calligraphic ewer of Cat. No. 86.

7 Manuscript of the Khamsa by Nizami.

In Persian. 326 ff., 21 lines to the page, 4 columns of nasta'liq, double-page illuminated frontispiece and 3 miniatures. Dated: 88/1229 [early March, 1529]. By the scribe Sayyid Muhammad ibn Sultan Muhammad al-Tahiri. Binding: European, probably 18th century. Size (binding): 19 1/2 x 14 1/4; 24 1/2 x 17 1/4 x 1 3/4 in.

EX COLL. Hapgo Kervorkian Fund.

REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Asadly and Cagman (1974), pls. 2 (earlier) and 3 (contemporary); Sotheby's, July 31, 1977, lot 236 (an earlier Khamsa, dated 1502-03, with thirty-three miniatures—three of them illustrated in the catalogue, two in color).

Manuscripts dating from the early reign of Sulayman "the Magnificent" are equally as rare as those from the reign of his grandfather, Bayazid II (see Cat. Nos. 3 and 4). This one is again in Persian, one of the great texts from Persian literature, and is illustrated with miniatures of the Turkman style which are found in the later 15th century in Tabriz and Shiraz. The painter was probably a first-generation Persian.

The subjects of the miniatures are:

fol. 19v
Jesus and the dead dog.
continued
fol. 21v
Sultan Sanjar and the old woman.
fol. 24v
Faridun hunting a gazelle.
Throughout the remainder of the volume there are spaces left by the scribe for
the addition of other miniatures which were never completed: there are more than
90, of every conceivable size and placement on the page. The manuscript, if it
had ever received its full complement of miniatures, would have been one of the
most densely illustrated of its period.
Colophons of certain of the sections of Nizami’s Khamsah are found on ff. 29v,
299v and 326r.
8 Tughras of Suleyman I.
Ca. 1550-1565. Size: 13½ x 8½. 33.8 x 40.6 cm.
EX COLL.: Jean Pozzi, Paris.
EXHIBITIONS: New York, 1973, Cat. No. 5; Los Angeles, Fisher Gallery, University of
Southern California, Los Angeles, April 21-May 13, 1977, no. 42 (repr. on cover and on
announcement of the exhibition).
REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Art Treasures of Turkey, 1966, no. 186; Metropolitan
Museum of Art Bulletin, January 1966, no. 36 and cover; Skira, 1966, p. 216— all tughras of
Suleyman I.
The tughras, or ornamental, stylized monogram of the reigning sultan, is not
unique to Turkish art, but the swagger and ebullience shown by the Ottoman
scribes is completely un-Persian. Whereas European rulers used a seal to legalize
their edicts and had a Lord Keeper of the Great (or Privy) Seal, in Istanbul the head
scribe of the royal library alone was able to duplicate the complex arabesques of
the legalizing tughras. One of the glories of the Topkapı Palace Museum is its col-
clections of such “seals,” including several examples like this one. (For literature on
tughras, see Bibliography entries Bombaci, Kühnel, McAllister, Pinder-Wilson,
Sertoglu, and Wittke.)
The spirals and swirling lines of flowers wreathing the “body” of the tughras are
very similar to those in the contemporary ceramics called “Golden Horn Ware.”
Noticeable also are the clumps of carnations noted in a miniature above (Cat. No.
3, fol. 62v) and common to many of the Iznik vessels and tiles (Ceramics 6, 8, 9).

In Turkish, 167 ff., 4 miniatures. Cat. 1550. Size (binding): 7¼ x 5¼ x 1, 19.3 x 13 x 2.6 cm.


REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Schackekeine, 1, 1966, pl. IX.

The miniatures in this curious manuscript present an uncommon style of Turkish painting. A similar series decorates the Janasp Nameh by Musa'Abd in the British Museum (Add. 24952; two of the ten miniatures are reproduced by Schackekeine, 1, 1966, pl. IX). The date 1527 for the British Museum manuscript seems somewhat early to assign to this one, although the catalogue of the Sotheby's auction (July 1, 1969) at which this manuscript was acquired listed it as “Turkish, c. 1530.”

Meredith-Owens and B. W. Robinson (now retired from the Victoria and Albert Museum) feel that such a dating is somewhat too early.

The subjects of the miniatures are:

fol. 67v
Hasan and Husayn, the sons of Ali, mourning as their father is struck down by ibn Muljan.

fol. 77r
The poisoning of Hasan, son of Ali.

fol. 100v
The young martyrs hold up their heads after decapitation at the hands of Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, military governor of Kufa in 680.

fol. 145r
Devotion paid to the horse of the martyr Husayn, son of Ali, upon its return to camp. (This identification comes from the text rather than from the inscription above the miniature, which mentions the miracle of the horse of Zayn al-Abidin.)

Although the style of the miniatures is loose and coarse, the early date of the book enhances their importance. The poet Fuzuli is said to have died in 1555.
Two dragons entwined on a spray of stylized foliage.

Cat. 1560-1575. Mounted on an album page with panels of calligraphy. Size: (whole page) 3¾ x 7½ in., 9.7 x 18.2 cm.; (drawing only, not including borders) 3 x 4¼ in., 4.7 x 9.8 cm.

There is the possibility of an effaced attribution at the upper left.

EX COLL.: Kovorkian Foundation, New York.


REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Saknias, 1929, pl. XLIII, fig. 69 ("Ecole de Hiver, première moitié du XVe siècle"); Minorsky, 1938, pl. 31, no. 439, fol. 7; Grube, 1961, pp. 176-309; Grube in Pantheon, 1962, pp. 233-246; Grube, Minuscule Miniature Paintings, 1962, pp. 96-100, nos. 76-78; Meredith-Owens, 1963, pl. XII, 1964, nos. 36-50, pls. XXIX-XXXVII; Grube, 1969, nos. 53, 54, 58, 59, 66-68, 70, 71.

The placing of a series of pictures showing dragons in vegetation into the mainstream of Turkish painting has been a hazardous one. The Persian artistic traditions, which were studied and known much earlier than the Turkish, did not at first seem to include such works. When the swirling vegetation around these beasts was compared with similar floral motifs in Iran plates and tiles, the attribution to Turkey became established. The dragon and the lion, as well as a kind of fengho used as a symbol of longevity, were all recognized as Chinese themes, and it was felt that they must have become known to Turkish artists through Turkestan. Once the evolution from the Far to the Near East was accepted, all drawings of dragons were automatically labeled Turkish.

Such was the position in the early 1960s when Ernst J. Grube organized the exhibition Islamic Miniatures ... from American Collections, first in Venice, later at Asia House in New York. That exhibition presented together three major dragon drawings, from Cleveland, the Metropolitan, and a private collection, along with similar ornamental drawings from the Pierpoint Morgan Library. Shortly before, Grube had published these and related material in the Topkapı albums Harîme 2147, 2153, and 2162 (Pantheon, 1962). In that article was published the dragon listed here as Cat. No. 97 (in Related Works).

More recently, there has been a countering of the overzealous attribution of all dragons to Turkey. B. W. Robinson, at the time of the traveling exhibition of this author's Islamic Art (1966), organized by the Smithsonian Institution, wrote that he felt the labelling of the dragon in vegetation (no. 60 in the catalogue; Cat. No. 97 here) as Turkish to be too arbitrary.

continued
Grobe himself has since presented a somewhat more complex study of the origins of the ubiquitous monsters (1969, pp. 85-109). He felt that it was the dynasties of Qara- and Aq-Qoyunlu (Black and White Sheep Turkmens) that first accepted these Chinese motifs after their initial appearance in Iran in the 14th century. They appeared in Turkish art, therefore, only after their prior espousal by Iranian artists. This excellent exposition readily accounts for two very different styles. First, there is a group of placid beasts with soft, indeterminate contours, such as Cat. No. 97. These appear to be the earlier, Iranian group. The second style—the Turkish—often features a strong black line, normally serving as the backbone for the dragon. These beasts are true monsters, "alive with almost electrical force," one of which "sucks blood and is a whirlwind of clouds" of curving branches" (Welch, 1972, pp. 291, 205). It is to this definitely Turkish style that the present drawing belongs. The strongest black arc serves not as a backbone for the beasts but as a fastening for the foliage on which they festoon themselves. The texturing and veining of the leaves place it very close to the similar decoration of the blue and white tiles of the Sinanet Odasi (Circumcision Room) in the Topkapi Palace.

The most recent presentation of this style of dragon, along with related drawings showing either foliage alone or humans and peri as major figures, appears in the second volume of Ivan Stchoukine's magnificent La Péri tome (1971). Stchoukine places them in the second quarter of the 17th century. It is true that the Sinanet Odasi was not built until the reign of Ibrahim I (1640-1648). Stchoukine does not accept the thesis of Kurt Erdmann (1959, pp. 144-153) that earlier tiles were used to decorate this building. It appears that re-use of earlier tiles was common practice and that those ceramic panels, and the drawings of dragons that relate to them, should definitely remain, as heretofore, dated to the third quarter of the 16th century rather than to the 1640s. The opinion of Professor Walter Denny is that the present drawing and others like it were foundation works for the mature Turkish style and that they influenced the style of the decoration on the tiles.
11 Portrait of a Turkish Pasha with attendants.

Right half of a double-page picture.
Cat. 1579. Signed on the cartouche at upper left: Nigar servant of Sultan Selim Khan. The other calligraphy identifies the attending officials (from left to right): Kurl Bey, Gallabi Bey; "your servant Tursak." Size: 14 5/8 x 9 1/2 in. (73 x 25.3 cm.; album leaf 17 3/8 x 13 3/4 in. 44.6 x 35.1 cm.; verso (not exhibited): Rustam mounted on Bakhsh attacks a dragon. Cat. 1595.

EX COLL. Major R. Hawkins.

REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON (by or attributed to the painter Nigar): Shou, p. 194 (Selim II shooting an arrow, attended by a page); Levey, pl. V; Sotheby’s, May 3, 1977, lot 42 and color plate (Selim II seated with a wine cup).

The portrait listed above of the seated Selim II facing slightly to his left, and this group portrait with its figures facing to their right, recently appeared at auction from the same album. They had probably been mounted onto their present album leaves at some time during the late 18th or 19th century. This identical provenance, and the extreme rarity of one Imperial Turkish picture, let alone two, appearing from the same album known to have been in India during the 19th century, suggests the possibility that, despite very different artistic conceptions, the two miniatures may have been right and left halves of the same picture. This leaf bears the artist’s signature, missing from the portrait of the sultan. The official depicted here is not identifiable, being qualified only as “Your servant, his Excellency the Pasha.”

Nigar is the pen-name of the retired admiral Haidar Reis (1494-1572), named director of the imperial shipyards, who, according to Schookine (vol. 1, pp. 29-30) found in "his new functions ... the necessary leisure for the practice of the art in which he excelled, that of portraitist." Meredith-Owens (1963, p. 20) also mentions him and lists other royal portraits by him.

A group portrait of this quality, added to the previous two minor portraits copied from prints of European rulers (Cat. No. 12 a and b), and the smaller portrait of Selim II (Cat. No. 15) constitute an important group of "Pre-Classic" Turkish portraits.
12 Two portraits after European prototypes.

a) Francis I, King of France, after Clouet; b) Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, after Cranach (f).

Attributed to Haydar Reis, called Nigari (1494-1574), ca. 1560. Mounted on album leaves. Size: 6⅝ x 3⅜ in., 16 x 8.6 cm. (album leaves): a) 8⅞ x 4⅝ in., 22.4 x 12.6 cm.; b) 9⅝ x 5⅞ in., 22.5 x 12.8 cm. Inscriptions: a) They came at the demand of Sultan Solim to Haydar thy Servant; b) One was a Spaniard; one was a Frenchman.

EX COLL.: Imperial Library, Istanbul (the so-called Bellini album, which originally contained a portrait of Mehmet II said to be by Gentile Bellini); F.R. Martin, Kirkor Minassian.


Martin, reproducing these two portraits from his own collection, listed them as "Copy after Clouet (or after Cranach?) by Haydar Bey, Court painter of Selim the Great A.D. 1520-1566." In the corresponding text (1923, I, p. 93) he stated that he obtained them from the Imperial Library in Constantinople. It is probable that they were originally copied from prints of the European rulers that arrived in Istanbul with some diplomatic embassy. The cross-hatching on 12b strongly supports this supposition; it appears to have been copied directly from a print.

The Haydar Bey listed by Martin is certainly Haydar Reis, called Nigari, who is discussed at length by Merleith-Owens (1963, p. 20) and Steshoukine (I, 1966, p. 38). The former lists other royal portraits by Nigari and mentions that these two works were "by his own hand or by a pupil." See also Cat. No. 11.

13 Manuscript of the Rawzat al-Ushshaq.

The Garden of Lovers by Arifi.

In Persian. 44 ff. of 12 lines, 2 columns to a page; and endpapers; frontispiece; 3 miniatures, ca. 1560-1575. Contemporary brown leather binding with flap; central medallions and four corner pieces with floral scrollwork stamped in gold. Floral medallions on the doublures. Size: 9⅞ x 6⅜ in., 25 x 17 cm.

EX COLL.: Michel Orou (d. 1901 as Russian minister to Athens), attached to the Russian Embassy in Istanbul.

REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Steshoukine, vol. I, pls. XIX-XXI. continued
Constant experimentation and practice, coupled with continued additions to the
staff of the royal ateliers, eventually resolved the problem of unassimilated Persian
pictorial conventions. Here the unknown artist has painted three miniatures that,
although reflecting their Iranian heritage, are as fine as any of the "Pre-Classic"
Ottoman period (the nomenclature from Atasoy and Çagman), and already rec-
ognizable as Turkish.

The subjects of the miniatures are:

fol. 23r
A Prince watches his lady gazing at her reflection in a garden pool. Such a
mirror-image reflection appears to be unique in Islamic painting before this
date. The master painter uses a palette of colors and architectural details that are
purely Turkish, yet combined with a Persian delicacy and refined technique.
fol. 29v
A Butcher's Shop. This is certainly one of the earliest genre scenes in Turkish
painting. The facial types are already Ottoman.
fol. 41v
The Fox's Journey. The animal hero of this fable is dressed as a dervish, holds a
rosary, and reveals a massive erection which is the focal point of the picture.
The landscape through which he strides includes a shepherd with his flock, a
ploughman, and a town with a Byzantine church. This kind of landscape with
its distant vistas appears here in an early example of what will become standard
Ottoman practice (see Stchoukine, vol. 1, pls. XIX-XXI for contemporary
examples; as well as Cat. Nos. 50 and 59 for later ones).
14 Manuscript of the Koran (complete).

In Arabic. 312 ff. (the first 7 are 18th century replacements). The waqf of Sultan Selim II (1566-1574), giving the book to the Selimiye mosque in Edirne (Adrianople), serves as colophon. Includes a zahmik (introductory roundel) in gold and lapis lazuli, amman double frontispiece), and 4 completely illuminated double pages. Binding: 16th century Turkish leather, rebound in the 18th century. Size (binding): 14 x 9 x 2.5 x 2.2 x 5.3 cm. Colophon (copied from the lost original onto the last of the 18th century pages rebound into the volume), the Sultan, Master of the Arabs, Persians, and their Race of Rome, the Sultan Selim Khan, son of Sultan Suleyman Khan, son of Sultan Selim Khan, may God preserve his dynasty forever and confirm it in the protected city of Edirne, by this authentic waqf made according to the law... Praise be to God... 


REPRODUCTIONS FOR COMPARISON: Art Institute of Chicago, 1966, Nos. 175, 176; Arberry, 1967, pls. 10-16; Berlin-Dahlem, Museum für Islamische Kunst, 1973, Cat. No. 1, pl. 1. (one side of a double-page frontispiece only).

The short reign of Selim II (1566-1574), between the 46 years of his father Suleyman "the Magnificent" and the 21 of his son Murad III, continued the artistic promise of the earlier reign and helped to establish the primacy of the later. The greatest masterpiece of the supreme Turkish architect Sinan (1489-1588) is Selimi's mosque in the city of Edirne (the Byzantine Adrianople), the Selimiye (1566-1574). With its stupendous dome, more than 100 feet in diameter, Sinan succeeded in bettering the impressive measurements of the Byzantine Santa Sophia, a feat he had previously been unable to accomplish in his great Istanbul mosques (the Rustem Pasha, the Sehzade [1548], the Suleymaniye [1550-1557], and the Sokollu Mehmet Pasha [1572]; among many others).

For the decoration of his mosque, the sultan ordered the finest products of the various royal workshops; the Iznik tile panels on the kiblah wall and in the royal loge are among the best Turkish ceramics extant. The other furnishings were comparable.

The present Koran was prepared at the same time. The original waqf (pious donation) of the sultan is duplicated on one of the leaves inserted later to replace destroyed or damaged originals. The prevalence of blue in its headings and margins reflects the Turkish predilection for blue and white in manuscript and ceramic decoration during the late 16th century (Cf. Cat. No. 5).
Portrait of Sultan Selim II seated.

Cat. 1566-1575. Mounted on a page from an Istanbul album. Size (within all borders): 7¼ x 3¼; 18 x 9 in. Inscription: The Sultan, son of the Sultan, Sultan Selim Khan.


This appears to be from a series of portraits of the sultans, such as Cat. Nos. 31, 33 and 40 a and b, but it may also be a portion of a larger miniature later remounted on an album page. Selim II (1566-1574) is known from other pictures to have been portly (see Stickers, I, 1966, pls. XXVII, XXX, XLI, 1966, p. 194). Certain of his descendants, notably Mustafa II (1695-1703), were truly immense in girth. Gestrations of harem life and the abandonment of personal campaigning sapped the vital forces of many of the later Ottoman rulers. Furthermore, because the custom of fratricide upon the accession of a new ruler was no longer practiced, the survival of only the best physical specimens among the princes was less apt to take place.

The rigid iconographic traditions of the portrayal of the sultans permit comparatively easy identification of the various members of the Ottoman royal house. Selim II invariably has a drooping black mustache. His father, Sulayman I, always appears thin and, if he wears a beard, it is white. Osman II (Gazi Osman- "Osmun the Young") is consistently portrayed without facial hair (Cat. Nos. 50 and 51).

The style of this portrait relates it to those in the History of the Siege of Székesfehérvár (Topkapı Sarayi, H. 1339). It may come from some historical work by Logman. It is certainly contemporary with the reign of the sultan, unlike another more elaborate, and posthumous, portrait of the same ruler (Cat. No. 40 b).

The album leaf on which the portrait is mounted is typical of many in the Istanbul albums. It bears a pencil notation on the verso, "H. 1613," no doubt the number of the Hazine album from which it was originally extracted.
16 Two miniatures from different texts.

a) A dervish or shaykh on an эмаскён миран; b) Rustam on horseback slaying a дур (Arane?) with a sword. Probably by the same artist and from the same album, ca. 1575-1585. Sizes: a) 69.7 x 4.3 cm; b) 60 x 4.3 cm. On the verso of 16a are ink drawings of three jaffari heads and the shape of an аск (horsehair) as well as a stylized signature.


The subject of 16b is unmistakably from the Shah Наме. Less easy to identify, 16a is possibly inspired by a miniature in a copy of the Majdil аль-Удаб by Husayn Mirza. It is likely that the same artist painted both pictures for an album. He may have adapted the probable Persian scene of the prototype 16a into a recognizably Turkish one. The square-topped flat hat on the second figure from the right is that of a janissary. The "stovepipe" at the upper left is the traditional headgear of the Mevlevi dervishes. A Turkish order. The other styles of costume, with their distinctive brocade patterns, are definitely Turkish. So are the golden skis, the slightly larger than normal heads, and the general feeling of "sparseness" in the unfilled backgrounds. The bright, simple palette relates these miniatures to those in the Sur Наме (Topkapu Saray, H. 1344) that commemorated events of the year 1582. The scenes depicted here are, however, far less complex.

17 Manuscript of the Jawāhir al-Gharib Tarjomat Bahr al-Aja'a'ib.

Translation of Rare Jewels by Jennabi (d. 1590).


This rare text does not appear in the printed catalogues of public collections, not in Rieu, Blochet, nor the catalogue of the Topkapı Palace Museum (Karatay 1961), and for that reason the *hamsh* page with the title is reproduced (page 33). The historian Jennabi, whose full name is recorded in the colophon, was one of the literary masters of the court of Sultan Murad III. He also wrote in Arabic.

The subjects are:

- fol. 27v
  The Ka'ba at Mecca seen from above (cf. Minorsky, 1958, no. 427, fol. 20). Removed from the volume and exhibited separately.

- fol. 70v
  Salman the Persian in the grove of date palms near Medina. (Salman met Muhammad, who was on his way to Quba, and offered him dates.)

- fol. 193v
  The request of Musa (Moses) to see Muhammad's face is granted. He first saw the Prophet and then God.

- fol. 195v
  The Jew Ibh-Saia, an anchorite, lusted for the sister of the three princes in front of his cell. (The devil tempts the ascetic and suggests that after possessing the girl he should bury her body. Ibn-Saia prefers to be killed rather than to follow the devil's suggestions, despite a promise from Satan to protect him from her three brothers, who have already been informed of Ibn-Saia's not-yet-committed crime.)

continued
continued

fol. 196v

A miracle of fraternal love. (The single mule owned by two brothers is loaded with a part of the individual share of each brother in turn. As each man makes a trip to his own home, his brother places a part of his own portion onto the pile of the other. This action is repeated by each in turn until, by a miracle, the piles of grain replenish themselves.)

fol. 217r

Sultan Murad III seated in his library. In front, a group of four dwarfs stands before a reliefs (playing fountains). Removed from the volume and exhibited separately, attributed here to Osman Nakhsh. (Overpainting on three of the faces.) What better method of portraying the royal bibliophile and aesthete Murad III than by presenting him in his library, surrounded by his books, possibly including the present manuscript (given him by the standing courtier in the lower left, who may be the author). The sultan’s back is supported by a cushion of Bursa velvet, and he is flanked by two panels with book shelves of gilded wood similar to that of the Shrine of the Relics of the Prophet at the Topkapu. The attribution to the painter Osman Nakhsh is made by comparing similar scenes, with the same large-eyed main figures, in the facsimile edition of the Hicma Namii (1969, p. 1, 9, the latter with a very similar reliefs that has identical dragon-headed spouts).

fol. 219r

An ignorant old man is told by his jealous neighbors that the sheep he has bought is really a dog. Imagining that he alone believes it to be a sheep, he releases it to get his money back from the seller. He thus loses both money and animal.

fol. 222v

The sultan punishes three robbers, whose finding of a bag of gold has led to a violent quarrel. The first is decapitated; the second hanged; and the third, after being smeared with bitumen, is released into the desert to die.