302. Underglaze-painted dish with slightly foliated rim, Iznik, ca. 1550.
Diameter 38.5 cm. London, British Museum.

on other ceramics of this type, formerly known as Damascus wares because they were once thought to have been produced there.

The so-called Damascus wares are among the finest examples of Ottoman ceramics. Mainly vessels, these pieces have extraordinarily varied designs and brilliant glazes and use an unusually wide range of underglaze colors, although fine effects were often achieved with a limited palette. The group can be dated approximately by a unique lamp from the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem [101], which has a fragmentary inscription around the footring mentioning the date 1549, the signature of the artisan, and the Iznik saint Efegida Rumi. The lamp has a pear-shaped body with a flaring neck; three handles at the shoulder would have allowed it to be suspended by chains. The shape is ultimately derived from Persian glass lamps [138], and several Ottoman examples are associated with the tomb of Bayezid.

The opaque ceramic body, however, would have rendered these lamps useless for illumination, and they must all have been intended for decoration. Unlike the earlier blue- and white examples, the Jerusalem lamp is decorated with three bands of inscriptions reserved in white on a blue ground separated by two fields of arabesque ornament in two colors of blue on a white ground. Although some of the major motifs belong to the International Timurid vocabulary, other distinctive motifs, such as the cloud-bands, small black arabesques on a turquoise ground, and bands of cartouches containing white tulip buds, link the lamp to a group of large footed bowls in the saf style and show how Ottoman designers were successfully able to combine elements from various modes of decoration in a single piece.

Another lamp [194], which was made for Suleyman's mosque in Istanbul [279–81] completed in 1557, shows how the Ottoman ceramic industry was transformed in the 1550s by the introduction of red oxide pigment. The introduction of red coincides with the new direction of the Erkiz ceramic industry as court patrons began to decorate their architectural foundations with extensive tile revetments and the production of pottery vessels increasingly became a by-product of the tile industry. In shape the Suleymaniyah mosque lamp is similar to, but larger than, the one associated with the Dome of the Rock; inscriptions play a diminished role in the decoration, which has become increasingly complex. The design is delicately drawn in black on a white ground, which is almost entirely covered by the intricate pattern of serrated leaves and composite flowers painted in two colors of thin blue, red, and black. This piece, the earliest datable example with red oxide, is experimental in color and pattern. The use of black as a field color was limited to this piece and a few other items. The red oxide was applied unevenly, showing that the potters were still mastering the technical and esthetic demands of the pigment. In later examples it was applied much more thickly; indeed, the red often stands in relief on the surface, and its glazed surface catches the light. The distinctive hue also visually organized the decoration of vessels and tiles in a new way, for the minute detail and intricacy of designs seen on this lamp were abandoned in favor of greater visual legibility, achieved through magnified scale and the contrast of leaves and flowers painted in bright red, blue, and green on a white ground. Ottoman ceramics from the second half of the sixteenth century are often delightful and charming, a welcome change from the sober imperial commissions of the earlier period.

The inauguration of the Suleymaniyah Mosque in 1557 encouraged the court scriptorium to produce and refurbish fine manuscripts of the Koran and other works for endowment to the mosque and its teaching institutions, but few if any of these manuscripts have been identified. The other major project of the scriptorium at this time was the composition, transcription, and illustration of the Shahnama-i ʿAli-i Tukumid ("Book of kings of the Ottoman house"), a history of the Ottoman dynasty in the metre and Persian verse of Firdawsi’s classic Shahnama ("Book of kings"). The Ottoman history was composed by the poet Arifi Celibi, known as "Arifi (d. 1565–1566). Although born to a Persian family, he probably came to the Ottoman court after Selim's capture of Egypt in 1517 and was eventually appointed (hakime, or court historian. A separate structure had to be added to his house as a studio for the calligraphers and fine painters employed on this project, which was intended to be a masterpiece of poetry and the arts of the book.

Only three of the original five volumes of 'Arifi's work have survived. The presentation copy of the fifth volume, the Shahnameh-i "History of Seljuk" (transcribed in fine nasta’liq calligraphy by 'Ali b. Amir Ilg Sivran in 1558), is the first important history of Suleyman’s reign. It is a lavishly illustrated chronicle, with 670 folios of fine gold-speckled and polished paper, exquisite illumination, and sixty-nine large illustrations, of which four are double spreads. In the earlier years of Suleyman’s reign the scriptorium had been occupied with the copying and illustration of such classic works as those written in Chaghatay Turkish by the celebrated Timurid poet ‘Alishir Nava’. Their illuminations are deeply indebted to Persian models; indeed, they are probably the work of painters brought from Tabriz and can be identified as Ottoman only by such details as the gold sky. In the Shahnameh, however, the pictorial and spatial formulas of traditional Persian book illustration have been combined with a distinctly Ottoman interest in topographical representation and portraiture quite unknown in the Iranian tradition.

A painting such as that showing Suleyman’s accession in 1520 [205] is distinguishable from contemporary Iranian work by the specificity of the image, which frankly depicts a contemporary event in a way unknown in Iranian book-painting. The setting can be identified as the Topkapi Palace; the first court is depicted on the left, the second court on the right. The painting combines specific references to Ottoman buildings, such as the alternating joggled voussoirs of the arcade behind the sultan and the lead-sheathed roofs of the palace towers, with conventional features of Iranian book-painting, such as titled exteriors and semi ground. The lush green foliage of the trees is typical of book-painting in the Turkoman style [91] and would have been known from manuscripts (or arista) brought from Tabriz in 1514. The representations of the major figures, such as Suleyman, the grand vizier Pir Mehmed Pasha to the left, and below him the shaykh al-islam Zeinib Ali Effendi with a white beard, are portraits probably based on such likenesses as those prepared at approximately this date by Ra‘i Ishayar, known as Nigar. The Ottoman preoccupation with status and rank is shown by the carefully choreographed procession of couriers, each group wearing a distinctive headgear.
Another double-page painting from the Suleymanname, which shows Suleyman's siege of Belgrade in 1521 [360], clearly differentiates the Ottomans from the Europeans. These differences have been explained as expressing the calm of the Ottoman camp and the panic of the city's defenders, but these works also show that the various traditions had not yet been entirely integrated into a unified style.66 The extraordinary detail of the brocaded caftans worn by the larger Ottomans on the left contrasts sharply with the unpattered clothes worn by the smaller Hungarians on the right. Although the two halves of the image were intended to depict a single event, the links of landscape are subsumed by the unvarying juxtaposition of traditional modes of spatial representation used in Persian painting with the rendering of perspective known from images in the European style. The tents of the Ottoman siege camp are depicted as overlapping planes, while the houses in the European city are depicted with shading and receding volumes.

An interest in topographical representation had already been evident in earlier manuscripts prepared for Suleyman, such as Matrakci Nasuh's Bayat-i manzul-i safar-i Tipujsyz-i Sulhun Suleymann Khan, an account of Suleyman's campaign in Iraq and Iran against the Safavids in 1554-5.1 The 128 illustrations in the manuscript, completed in 1557-8, show the towns through which the sultan passed and the battles he visited. They draw upon the author's direct observation as well as Venetian bird's-eye views, engineers' siege plans, and other sources. The representation of the former Mongol capital at Sultanbeyli in Iran [3], for example, shows many features of the site that are no longer visible, while the two-page representation of Istanbul [288], the most magnificent painting in the volume, is a valuable source for the urban history of the Ottoman capital.

This painting shows the Istanbul peninsula on the right page and Galata on the left, separated by the Golden Horn in the center. The painter has clearly depicted such Byzantine monuments as the Church of Hagia Sophia, the Hippodrome, with its columns and obelisks, and the acropolis of Valens. New Ottoman monuments include Topkapi Palace with its three courts, the covered bazaar, the Old Palace in the center of the city, and the complex of Bayezid II below it. Nasuh's contribution to the illustration of his works is difficult to determine, but

this new interest in the accurate depiction of topography remained an important preoccupation in Ottoman illustrated books.

Another type of topographic representation used by Nasuh and perhaps more common in Ottoman times is represented by illustrations to the Fuziif ul-haramayn ("Conquests of the two sanctuaries") of Muhayi Lari (d. 1735). It was written in Persian verse and dedicated in 1706 to the sultan of Gujarat, Muzaffar b. Mahmud (r. 1716–26), who is thought to have presented it in turn to Isma'il, the Safavid ruler of Iran. The first illustrated copy was produced ca. 1740 at Suleyman's court in Istanbul. It contains thirteen topographic scenes, with schematic representations of such essentials for pilgrims as the mosque of the Prophet in Medina or the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca [307]. The image schematically shows the arcades surrounding the esplanade of the Haram. A lamp hangs in each bay, but because of the conventions of representation, some lamps hang to the right, left, or upside-down. The Ka'bah stands in the upper center, with the kib, a semicircular enclosure, to its right and the well of Zamzam below it. The value of such an image lies not in its scale or topographical accuracy but in its enumeration of significant elements. The six minarets are correct in number for the time, although they have been slightly rearranged in position. Such pictorial images were repeated many times, not only in manuscripts but also on tiles, well into the nineteenth century.67

Although all the disparate sources are not entirely integrated, the manuscripts produced for Suleyman were the first in a distinctive classical Ottoman style. This style was developed throughout the rest of the sixteenth century in a series of manuscripts produced in the court scriptorium. The studio reached the peak of productivity during the reign of Murad III (r. 1574–95), when the historian Lokman cooperated with the new chief artist Osman in the composition and illustration of several historical and genealogical works. Increasingly the authors turned from Persian poetry to Turkish rhymed prose, and the illustrators repeated the compositional formulas established in the Suleymanname, although they added many details of contemporary Ottoman court life. The manuscripts are thus particularly important for their documentary value. A copy of Ahmed Feridun Bey's account of Suleyman's Hungarian campaign, Nihat unur al-akhbar des safar-i Sziget [1568–9], for example, includes the first depiction of a type of gem-encrusted gold casket, of which a spectacular example survives in Topkapi Palace.68 Osman's illustration to a volume of Lokman's history of the Ottoman dynasty, Shakhnama-yi Salim Khan (1581), shows the presentation of gifts by the Safavid ambassador to Selim II (r. 1566–74) at Edirne [308].69 Shahbuxi, the governor of Erivan for the Safavid ruler Tahmasp, was sent at the head of an embassy to congratulate Selim II on his accession. The caravan, consisting of seven hundred men and nineteen thousand pack animals, arrived at Edirne early in 1575 and brought extraordinary gifts, including enormous woolen carpets and luxury manuscripts, one of which was the Shakhnama made for Tahmasp earlier in his reign [299, 210]. The ambassador, who wears the distinctive Safavid baton, is held immobile before the Sultan by two chamberlains, typical treatment before the great Ottoman sultan, and the gifts are carried by a retinue of servants. A large medallion Ushak carpet is spread before the sultan. The increasing repetition in Ottoman manuscript painting can be seen in the use of the same composition and figures for the depiction in Istanbul of another Persian embassy, by Topnaq Khan in 1576 to congratulate Murad III on his accession.70

The court scriptorium also had to illustrate other kinds of texts, and the final project begun under Murad III was a six-volume copy of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad, composed by Mustafa Darzi in the late fourteenth century. Four volumes of the Kiib-i-i Bayat-i-i-Nabi ("Life of the Prophet") survive, one fragmentary and one exists only as scattered pages. The 814 illustrations seem to have been supervised by Hasan, who evidently worked on volume I and on some of volume VI (dated 1544–5). The style of illustration was dictated by the grandeur of the subject, for the paintings are strikingly different from those made for contemporary histories. Their size, bare landscapes, reduced cast, and suppression of detail contrast sharply with the panoply of Ottoman historical painting. The Birth of the Prophet [309], for example, has only five figures: the Prophet enveloped in
a golden cloud, his veiled mother to the right, and three attendant angels. The setting is a schematic rendering of a tiled and marble interior; the floor is covered with matting. The origin of the style used in these religious paintings is unknown, for they are unlike most work produced in the scriptorium and show no familiarity with earlier illustrations relating to the life of Muhammad [33].

**THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES**

As in architecture, the decline of Ottoman political and economic power resulted in a decline in the quality of the portable arts, as less money was available to pay for materials and craftsmen to transform them. The court scriptorium had been reduced in size under Mehmed III (?1555–1603), who had dismissed Lolem and Osman. Illustrated manuscripts continued to be produced, but they included new subjects made for a wider range of patrons and in a more folk style. For example, a large manuscript of the Fālānī ḥām, a large illustrated book of divination, produced ca. 1610 for the master-of-works Kalender Pasha, has thirty-five folio-sized paintings combining folk themes and religious figures, executed in a bold style somewhat derived from that of the Sūqārī Nāsir. The last illustrated historical-work by the official court biographer is Nadir’s Shāhnāma for Osman II (?1618–22); the text, about the conquest of Horin, is illustrated with twenty paintings indebted in style to works of the previous century. Rather than historical texts with many illustrations, most of the illustrations produced in the scriptorium were intimate figure studies and scenes from daily life for albums. Other centres of production also developed, although nothing remains from the workshop at Edirne, a provincial school developed at just this time in Baghdad, where religious and esoteric texts were often illustrated.

A similar change took place in the production of ceramics. Beginning ca. 1610, the artistic and technical qualities of both tablewares and tiles declined perceptibly. The rever- ment for the Mosque of Ahmed I, opened in 1617 (see Chapter 13), had been cobbled together from available stock, camouflaged monuments, and specific commissions of far lower quality than those produced in the mid-sixteenth century. Ceramics attributed to the second quarter of the seventeenth century show the decline in technique and craftsmanship and a widened repertoire, which ranges from figural and animal depictions to ships [31] and buildings, including pagoda-like pavilions and domed churches. The Ottoman system of fixed prices for materials and finished products left little room for artisans to make a profit in a period of rampant inflation, except by cutting the cost of labor. Designs become simplified and standardized: the characteristic border, ultimately derived from Chinese wave motifs, has become a pattern of alternating leaves and spirals, and the designs of the field are repeated in numerous examples. The dishes are approximately thirty centimeters across, three-quarters the diameter but only half the size of the standard pieces made a century earlier. The green underglaze painting is often uneven and thin and tended to run into the glaze. Evidence for the broadening of patronage can be seen in a series of tiles, probably made between 1640 and 1675 as pilgrimage souvenirs, that depict Mecca with the Kaaba at the center and a group of fifteen dishes with uncial Greek inscriptions that can be dated 1666–78. In 1648 the Ottoman traveler Esref Celebi visited Mecca and reported that there were only nine potteries left out of hundreds said to have been in operation earlier. Some potters undoubtedly emigrated to other Mediterranean lands, taking with them the workshop traditions and paving the way for the emergence of other centers of production in the eighteenth century such as Kutahya or Tunis.

Carpets had long been produced at many centers in the eastern Mediterranean, and the localization of carpets pro- duced for the Ottoman court is still a matter of speculation. A group of carpets with floral patterns in the sak style is generally attributed to the second half of the sixteenth century; these rugs are usually known as Ottoman court carpets, to distinguish them from contemporary carpets thought to have been manufactured without royal patronage. Their designs, like those of the Ushak medallion carpets [294], derive from cartoons produced in the court studio, but the variety of materials and techniques used suggests that the carpets were manufactured at different times in different locales. The carpets all have an asymmetrical knot of cotton or wool, but the ground can be wool or silk and the yarn spun with an S or a Z twist. In 1585 Murad III is known to have ordered eleven carpet-weavers to move from Cairo to the court in Istanbul (see Chapter 8). Some of the artisans undoubtedly remained in Cairo, for the largest and best-preserved example of this type of carpet is the example in the Piri Palace in Florence [31], made in Cairo. It was brought as a gift to Grand Duke Ferdinand II by admiral Da
Verrazzano, possibly a descendant of the great navigator, in 1623 and was described in contemporary inventories of the Medici wardrobe as "aurino," the standard word in Italian inventories for Mamluk carpets. Its warps and wefts are S-spun, a technique associated with Egypt. It has 23 knots per square centimeter, or some 7.6 million knots in all, and is knotted in seven colors: white, light blue, crimson, green, light yellow, orange, and brown/black. The borders are perfectly matched and turn the corners effortlessly, showing that the sophisticated design had been worked out on paper, although the field consists of only three and a half repeats of the pattern. Just as the potters of Iznik had sought to develop new markets for their products to counter the economic stagnation at the Ottoman court, the weavers in Cairo sold one of their most magnificent products on the open market to a European.

Calligraphy, the most traditional of all the Islamic arts, was the one art that continued to maintain high standards of quality in the seventeenth century. The finest calligrapher was Hafiz Osman (1642–98), who is known for his manuscripts of the Koran and calligraphic specimens. He evolved an essentially simple style of writing based on the principles of Ya'qub and Shaykh Hamdullah. Hafiz Osman taught calligraphy to Mustafa II (r. 1695–1703) and his son Ahmed; money received from royal patrons allowed the master to devote one day each week to teaching indigent students. The clarity and elegance of his style is epitomized by a manuscript of the Koran in naskh (Turk, nesh) script, as well as in an album in Berlin [312]. The album comprises ten calligraphic specimens bound in accordion format, each leaf has a large line of nususcule script juxtaposed to four lines of naskh flanked by panels of abstract floral decoration, the whole framed with marbled paper. The decoration has evolved from the dominant cartouches and arabesques typical of the International Timurid style to a more exclusively floral style, where flowers even invade the spaces between the lines of script. The style of Hafiz Osman remained the model for calligraphers of later generations; in the nineteenth century manuscripts of the Koran penned by him were lithographed at Istanbul and circulated throughout the Islamic world.

The floral style seen in the margins of Hafiz Osman's manuscripts of the Koran became increasingly important in the reign of Ahmed III (r. 1703–30), during which time there was a self-conscious attempt to recreate the artistic glories of the past. Particularly after the peace with the Austrians in 1726, in the years retrospectively called the Tulip Period (see Chapter 13), familiar patterns and flowers—tulips, carnations, and lyssactes, for example—continued to be used, but floral forms became simplified and more stylized, as naturalism gave way to a more abstract vision. A pair of voided velvet cushion covers (Turk, yeudi), presented by the commander-in-chief Abd Pasha to King Frederick I of Sweden in 1731, are the only examples of their type that can be dated with precision. The warp is silk, the weft silk and cotton, with details brocaded in silk thread wrapped with silver. The pile is green and red on a white satin ground. The organization of the pattern follows conventions established in the sixteenth century, with a central field and six lattices at either end, but the design combines familiar elements in new ways. The field has tulips in the spandrels encircling an oval medallion [313], much like that on the Ushak medallion carpet [294], but these curvilinear forms contain an octagon formed of rotated squares, much in the manner of Mamluk rugs [144], while the octagonal border elements resemble those in Holbein carpets [293].

Ahmed III, who as a prince had studied calligraphy with Hafiz Osman, was also an accomplished epistolarien and poet. His interest in books is attested by his construction of a new library in the Third Court of Topkapı Palace in 1719 (now the Topkapı Palace Library reading room) and the cataloguing of the royal collection of manuscripts. During his reign, in 1727, Ibrahim Mütefekkiş published a printing press at Istanbul; he had begun printing engraved maps a decade or so earlier, using copper-plates and probably techniques imported from Vienna. The royal scriptorium was revived, and the most famous manuscript produced there, also the most important illustrated manuscript of later Ottoman painting, was the Surname ("Book of festivals") written by the court poet Vebbi to commemorate the circumcision festivities for Ahmed III's four sons in 1721. Such entertainments had long been celebrated at the Ottoman court: great festivities surrounded the circumcision of