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Amasya, Shaykh Hamdallah probably became acquainted with the Ottoman prince Bayazid, who was appointed the city's governor at the age of six in 1454 and served there until his accession in 1481. Shaykh Hamdallah is said to have tutored one of Bayazid's sons and even to have been the prince himself. The calligrapher's connection with the royal family may have encouraged him to move to Istanbul, where he copied at least two medical books for Mehmed near the end of his reign [Raby and Tanindi, Turkish Bookbinding, no. 33]. Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 44] in the unwove ndask typical of Yaqut.

Shaykh Hamdallah prospered in the Ottoman capital under the benevolent patronage of Mehmed's son Bayazid. Scribe and patron apparently had a warm personal relationship, and the sultan is said to have given the scribe a studio within the imperial palace and even to have held the ikhwān and adjusted the pillows while the master worked. Court registers record that Shaykh Hamdallah received a salary of thirty akçe, or silver pieces, daily. This was the equivalent of the salary paid the second tutor to the Ottoman princes, suggesting that Shaykh Hamdallah continued to work as the royal tutor in the capital. In the colophon to one sumptuous manuscript of the Koran finished during the first ten days of Dhu'l Hijja 901/15 September 1496 [TKS 137], Raby and Tanindi, Turkish Bookbinding, no. 33], Shaykh Hamdallah signed himself 'the royal scribe' [kattib al-sultanī], showing that he worked in the imperial scriptorium, and in the colophon to another undated manuscript of the Koran [Geneva, Prince Sadreddin Aga Khan Collection, Martin Lings and Yasir Safadi, The Qur'an [London, 1976], no. 129], A. Welch and S. C. Welch, Arts of the Islamic Book: The Collection of Prince Sadreddin Aga Khan [Ithaca, NY and London, 1982], no. 4], he signed himself the perfect 'rūḥī and head of the scribes, indicating that he had performed the pilgrimage and that he was in charge of the imperial scriptorium.

After Bayazid's abdication, Shaykh Hamdallah's star fell. His Khalwatiyya connections may have made him unwelcome at the court of Sultan Selim I [The Osman], and on the heels of the sultan's ascension in 1512, the calligrapher left Istanbul, taking up residence in a village on Mt. Alemdag, where he had often gone for spiritual retreat. Almost immediately after the accession of Suleyman in 1520, Hamdallah returned to Istanbul, but died shortly thereafter and was buried in Uskudar, where he owned estates given him by Bayazid.

Shaykh Hamdallah's legacy lived on in the works of his many followers, but also in legend. Like Yaqut, Shaykh Hamdallah is said to have been a master of the Six Pen, and later chronicles include many anecdotes stressing his connection to the master, using the same epithets (qiblat al-kuttub, synonym of calligraphers) for both. Sultan Bayazid, for example, is said to have questioned whether Hamdallah's work was equal to that of his famous predecessor and had seven examples of the master's hand brought from the imperial library for Shaykh Hamdallah to study. The scribe cloistered himself with the manuscripts, and when he emerged, to everyone's amazement, he had not only mastered but improved on all of Yaqut's scripts. This incident recalls that of the Buynid patron 'Adud al-Dawla and his calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwab, who perfectly imitated the script of his predecessor Ibn Muqla. In this case, Shaykh Hamdallah outdid his predecessor, not just imitating but perfecting the work of his artistic master. Similarly, Shaykh Hamdallah is said to have had seven pupils, one more than the six who had followed Yaqut. Although probably apocryphal, these anecdotes are nonetheless instructive, for they show that by the fifteenth century calligraphic status was conferred mainly by association with the tradition of Yaqut. Later commentators emphasized the relationship, making Shaykh Hamdallah the 'Safawid of Anatolia' and Amasya the 'Baghdad of Anatolia.' Such rewriting of history had already occurred with Yaqut.

16. Serin, Seyh Hamdullah, put together a list of 115 works: 30 manuscripts of the Koran, 50 partial manuscripts, 131 albums with calligraphic specimens and religious works, and 6 prayer books. The proliferation of single-page specimens and the canonization of Shaykh Hamdallah's style also meant that later calligraphers often copied his work, including his signature. Thus, the colophon in an album [London, Khalili Collection, ms. 158], Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 35] is probably not the hand of Shaykh Hamdallah, as his father's name Mustafa is misspelled, with the final alif maqṣura mistakenly written with an alif instead of the requisite final ya'. The desire to have an authentic example of Shaykh Hamdallah's work (with the commensurate increase in prestige and value) means that many specimens are unquestionably accepted as his hand. It remains for scholars to establish reliable criteria for discerning original works by Shaykh Hamdallah from later copies and imitations.

18. For example, a medium-sized mnhâqaq in Shaykh Hamdallah's scroll [Serin, Seyh Hamdullah, pl. 186], is labeled mnhâqaq al-khâlîfah [literally, the mnhâqaq of the hidden], a term similar to al-nâshq al-faddâ (literally, the nashq for divulging secrets) used by al-Tayyibi for a medium-sized nashq.
20. E.g., IUL 12687, Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 45 and Khalili Collection, CAL 17 and ms. 38, Safwat, Art of the Pen, nos. 55–6.
22. The Ottomans, like many before them, typically commissioned fine copies of the Koran divided into thirty sections [āyaq], as well as many fine boxes of inlaid wood and ivory designed to hold the thirty-part copies donated to the largest complexes founded by the sultans and their retinue. As well as complete manuscripts, famous calligraphers often transcribed sections or parts of the Koran, notably the last juz' [Sura 114], known as juz' 'ammah [Turkish arsen (c)]] after the opening word of Sura 78, 'ammah [concerning]. The section that contains the shortest and most poetic chapters of the Koran, it remains popular today, and is the one presented and translated by Michael Anthony Sells [ed.], Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations [Ashland, OR, 1999]. Another popular selection was Sura 6 [al-A'ra'ın, The Cattle], read in the hope of blessing, often followed by other frequently recited suâras such as 36 [Yâ Sin], 55 [al-Rahman] and 67 [al-Mulk]. These chapters, selections, or single juz' were made to display the calligrapher's hand, the show that his work was deemed worthy of collection already during his lifetime.
23. Raby and Tanindi, Turkish Bookbinding, nos. 37, 38, 40, and 41.
25. Putting together archival records and extant manuscripts, Raby and Tanindi, Turkish Bookbinding, 204, suggested that the artists themselves
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bore the costs for producing these luxury books in expectation of a substantial return.

26. This double page can be compared, for example, with an earlier one in Istanbul dated 897/1492–2 [TKS Y 1496, fol. 41].

27. Sehla 5. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom, Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250–1800, The Pelican History of Art [London and New Haven, 1994], fig. 296, Serin, Suyuk Hamdullah, fig. 181, which has different spacing of the verses and longer bowls and extenders. See also the fine copy penned just before his death (JUL A 6553, Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 52).

28. Hamdullah established a family line that passed to his son Mustafa Dede (d. 1541/1538), who taught his son Darvish Muhammad (d. 1509/1532), who in turn taught his son Pir Muhammad Efendi (d. 1588/1530). At least a dozen members of Hamdullah’s family became calligraphers, and many members of the Khalwiyya continued his tradition of calligraphy.

29. Later calligraphers often practiced by copying his hand. Yassi Petso palabras [ed.], Tulips, Arbeäques and Turks: Decorative Arts from the Eastern Empire [New York, 1982], figs. 163 and 164, illustrates a calligraphic specimen penned by Shaykh Hamdullah juxtaposed to its close copy penned by the nineteenth-century calligrapher and musician Qadi’-‘askar Mustafa Efendi. The script is virtually identical but the decoration differs.

30. Mamlok authors considered ghabar to be a smaller version of the curvilinear thuluth (see Chapter 8), but few, if any, Ottoman sources have anything to say on the subject. Modern Turkish authors, e.g., Derman, Letters in Gold, 32, consider ghabar a smaller version of naskh, probably because ghabar was used for Koran manuscripts, which were traditionally written in naskh.

31. A san‘i‘n Koran manuscript in the Khalili Collection (QUR25, Rogers, Empire of the Sultans, no. 20), for example, is attributed to the first half of the sixteenth century because its illumination is comparable to that in a Koran manuscript copied for Sultan Sulayman by Abdallah ibn Eyas and illuminated by Bayram ibn Jafar in 930/1525–32 [TKS, X 39, Atl, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 8].


33. There is no readily accessible study of this master nor his work. Meanwhile, see the short bibliographies in Turner, DeA, Hafiz Osman/ Derman, Letters in Gold, 23, Hafiz Osman, Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 231.

34. Hafiz Osman’s lack of government position meant that for example, he visited Egypt in 1672 and made the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1676–77. During his travels he signed and dated many calligraphic specimens, and a comprehensive recording and study of these works would flesh out his career.

35. The calligrapher is said to have suffered a stroke shortly thereafter and died at home on the 20th of Jumada II 1210/1 December 1698. He was buried in the Sünbül Efendi Suli Lodge in Istanbul.


37. According to Derman, Letters in Gold, 74, Art of Calligraphy, 231, Hafiz Osman penned twenty-five copies of the Koran. The Sabanci Collection owns a small Koran manuscript in his hand finished in Ramadan 1063/September 1653, a selection of chapters copied in 1661/1750–51, and a copy of Sura 6 [al-‘An‘am, The Cattle] transcribed in 1061/1651–2 [see Derman, Letters in Gold, nos. 15, 16 and fig. 13].

38. The hiyla became popular under the Ottomans. For a general description, see Salwai, Art of the Pen, 46–9; Derman, Letters in Gold, 34–7. This example [Dublin, CBL T559.4] was published by David James, Islamic Masterpieces of the Chester Beatty Library [London, 1981], no. 40. Another dated 1101/1690 [TKS CY 143] is illustrated in Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 78.

39. See, for example, the two calligraphic specimens (TIEM no. 246 and TKS 3655.5) illustrated in Petso palabras, Tulips, Arbeäques and Turks, nos. 173 and 174. On the hiyla dated 1101/1690, Hafiz Osman inserted the last two syllables [zaman] above the end of the line in a smaller script.

40. See, for example, the albums of specimens calligraphed by Sekerzade Mehmed Efendi in 1158/1745–6, Sabanci Collection, no. 208; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 31, and the two specimens in the Khalili Collection by Qadi ‘-‘askar Mustafa Efendi dated 1288/1872–3 and 1304/1885–4; Salwai, Art of the Pen, nos. 69–70.

41. Hafiz Osman’s hand was so revered that lithographed copies of his Koran manuscripts were produced, first in Istanbul beginning in 1875 and also in Europe. Harriott Robinson, From Venice to Cairo: The History of Arabic Editions of the Koran, in Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution, a Cross-Cultural Encounter, a Catalogue and Companion to the Exhibition, ed. Eva Hanebutte-Benz, Dagmar Glass, and Geoffrey Roper [Westhofen, 2000], 167 and notes 74–5.

42. Arabic printing was the subject of a large exhibition and symposium held in Mainz in 2000; Eva Hanebutte-Benz, Dagmar Glass, and Geoffrey Roper, eds., Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution, a Cross-Cultural Encounter, a Catalogue and Companion to the Exhibition, ed. Eva Hanebutte-Benz, Dagmar Glass, and Geoffrey Roper [Westhofen, 2002], 131 and n. 12 with references.

43. The decree is translated in George N. A’Ityeh [ed.], The Book in the Islamic World: The Written Word and Communication in the Middle East [Albany, 1995], 283.

44. Hanebutte-Benz, Glass, and Roper, Middle Eastern Languages, 70.


47. Reproduced in Mahdi, ‘Manuscript to Printed Books,’ fig. 1.1.

48. Bloom, Paper before Print, 158 and fig. 83.
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50. Kreiser, Beginnings of Printing.
55. For Hasan Riza (1849-1920), see Derman, Letters in Gold, 156. He grew up in Tarnovo (now Veliko Tarnovo) in Bulgaria, where his father was a postmaster, and then entered the palace service of Sultan Abd al-Hamid, joining the imperial brass band. He also studied calligraphy and became a teacher at the school of calligraphy (Madrasat al-khattatin), which had been opened in Istanbul on 6 Rajab 1332/31 May 1914. A master of naskh as well as the large versions of naskh and thuluth, Hasan Riza, like his contemporary Haif Osman Nuri Efendi (d. 1884), was one of the few Ottoman calligraphers who excelled in the art of making small Koran manuscripts in the ayat bat kinar format.
58. The additional paragraph of description reads: He was the most generous-hearted of men, the most truthful of them in speech, the most mild-tempered of them, and the noblest of them in lineage. Whoever saw him unexpectedly was in awe of him. Whoever associated with him familiarly, loved him. Anyone describing him would say, I never saw the like of him, before him or after him. Peace be upon him.
59. See, for example, the magnificent one made in Sha'ban 1333/October 1905 (Sabanici Collection, no. 155; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 16). Below the standard layout canonized by Haif Osman, Hasan Riza added a bottom line of large thuluth to balance the other two. It contains a hadith qudi, a Tradition said to have been spoken by God in the Prophet's words, saying that if it were not for you [Muhammad], if it were not for you [Muhammad], then I [God] would not have created the heavens. The repetition of the first phrase allowed the calligrapher to repeat shapes and create internal rhythm within the line. Although Hasan Riza's hilya follows the calligraphic tradition established by Haif Osman, the decoration is typical of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to the ornate floral border, like the one added to the hilya penned by Haif Osman (Figure 12.4), Hasan Riza's hilya is notable for the stops between the sentences. Each one consists of a small ligatured print of a calligraphic composition containing the profession of faith surrounded by a sentence associated with Muhammad's role as the seal of prophets: O Muhammad, your name is victorious, so look wherever you will, you will be victorious and

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succeed. Hasan Riza knew well the advantages of lithography: he produced the plates for a lithographed edition of the Koran published in 1884, which was widely distributed and repeatedly reprinted because of its clarity. Such lithographs continued to be made in the twentieth century, see the example by Hamid Alya dated 1366/1949 (Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 159). 60. Tim Stanley, "OTMAN as a Centre of Qur'an Production in the 19th Century," in M. Uğur Derman 61 Yar Armağanı, ed. Irvin Comel Schick (Istanbul, 2000), 483-512.
61. London, Khalili Collection, QUR143; Rogers, Empire of the Seljuks, no. 41.
66. For short biographies of him, see Atil, Süleyman the Magnificent, 46-63; Turner, DoA, 'Ahmad Karahisari,' Derman, Letters in Gold, 56; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 216.
67. Ahmad studied with the Persian master Asadallah Kirmani (d. 893/1488) and frequently acknowledged his debt to his teacher in his colophons by signing himself one of Asadallah's pupils (al-amdi). Ahmad Karahisari seems to have been the first to have evolved such a colophon incorporating the names of both master and pupil. See Rado, Türk Hatattari, 73, Safwat, Art of the Pen, 40, no. 1. By the late sixteenth century the practice had become universal. Such a signature implied that the calligrapher had been awarded a license and was allowed to take on his own pupils. To include his master's name also signified a calligrapher's legacy, thereby enhancing his own reputation.
69. Istanbul, TRS, Y.Y. 999, Atit, Süleyman the Magnificent, no. 98; Rogers and Ward, Süleyman the Magnificent, no. 158. The upper and lower lines of the splendid opening double page are written in large gold thuluth outlined in black, while the main text in the manuscript, five smaller lines on each of these pages, is penned in a small black naskh. Gold cartouches inscribed in white tawqīhī at the top and bottom give the name of the suzur and the verse count. The text is surrounded by stunning illumination of arabesque scrolls, cloud bands, and naturalistic plants, designs that prefigure the work of the illuminator Fakhr al-Memin. Later connoisseurs appreciated the quality of the manuscript, for it was rebound in the seventeenth century in a resplendent cover of silver cloth decorated with gold plaques encrusted with rubies, turquoises, and pearls.
70. Istanbul, TIEM 1443, fols. 1b-2a, Atit, Süleyman the Magnificent, no. 10; Rogers and Ward, Süleyman the Magnificent, no. 16; Curatola, Eredità dell'Islam, 14.
71. See, for example, the frontispiece to an anthology made for Sultan Bayazid II c. 1500, reproduced in Petsopoulos, Tulips, Arabesques and Turbans, pl. 182.
have led calligraphers in Iran to transcribe similar Arabic texts in the same fashion.

90. Berlin, Museum für islamische Kunst 1985-7. Elke Nießwéher-Eberhard, "Die berlinische Murakka von Hafiz Osman," Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen 31 (1989): 41-59; Blair and Bloom, The Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250-1800, fig. 325. It contains ten pages bound in an accordion format. Each page has a long line of large muhaqqaq above four shorter lines of smaller naskh flanked by floral panels. Another undated album (TKS H.E. 2131, Esin Ati, Turkish Art [Washington, DC, 1980], fig. 176) opens with a similar line of large muhaqqaq followed by three lines of smaller naskh and balanced by another line of large thuluth. Hafiz Osman often penciled the basin in muhaqqaq and juxtaposed it to other large lines of text in thuluth, as in another album dated 1563/1669 in the Sabancî Collection [Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 14]. A good view of the accordion format is illustrated in Derman, Letters in Gold, fig. 16.

91. See Chapter 7 and note 32. Another is the elision of ālīf to āyn/ghayn, also used in this album.

92. The former is in the Khalili Collection, MSS 28, Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 56. The latter is in the collection of IRCICA in Istanbul; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 145.

93. On the levva, see Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 45-6.


95. See, for example, the large (width 137 cm) pricked drawing made by Sam Efendi in 1381/1900 and the levva produced from it by the illuminator Bahá al-Din Efendi, illustrated in Derman, Letters in Gold, fig. 17, and no. 51, or even the wider one (85 x 170 cm) illustrated in Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 145. Large hilyas could be mounted in the same way.

96. The difference in quality of illumination often distinguishes a good panel from a poor one made from the same stencil.

97. In an analogous way, medieval authors in the Islamic lands were able to disseminate their works faster than their contemporaries in the West by dictating their works orally rather than having them copied visually. The rate of production thus increased geometrically, rather than arithmetically. This procedure resulted in an explosion of books. See Bloom, Paper before Print, 116.


99. For example, Mustafa Raqin designed the inscriptions for his brother's gravestone in Edirnekapı cemetery, as well as the bands of calligraphy inside the Nusretiya Mosque in the Tophane quarter of Istanbul.

100. Istanbul, TİEM, nos. 3509, 3510, 3544-6; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 39 and n. 17. On the technique, see also Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 39-43.

101. Istanbul, Sabancî Collection, no. 73; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 27. Another of the same design on blue pasteboard is illustrated in Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 93. It shows the differences in execution using the same stencil, as the spacing is more crowded. The dot of râh, for example, crowds the dot of sâd in the blue pasteboard example.

102. An accomplished musician and Koran reciter, Mustafa studied calligraphy with Yaşarizade Mustafa İzzet (see below, note 147) from
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whom he adopted the penname İşzet. He also served as chief judge (qadi ‘āsik) of Anatolia. Short biographies of his life (1801–76) are readily available in Turner, Das, ‘Mustafa İzzet,’ Der Ottoman Empire, 2, Gold, 156; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 232–3. See also Talip Met, ‘Kadıasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi,’ in M. Uğur Derman 65 Yaş Armağanı, ed. Ervin Cemil Schick (Istanbul, 2000), 399–416.

103. London, Khalilli Collection, CAL140-209 and MXD 264-A-B, Safwat, Art of the Pen, nos. 83–90; Rogers, Empire of the Sultans, no. 2. The cardboard boxes are smaller (35 cm in diameter) as opposed to the 60-cm diameter of the wooden ones.

104. Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 85.


106. El2′, Tutun.’

107. One of the earliest examples (Karimzade Tabrizi, Alwā bi ʿāthār-i naqšghābi, 3:153) is attributed to the hand of the Ottoman gilder Muhammad Nuri Bursavi, who was active c. 1860. Another example in Istanbul University Library (A.Y. 6531) is signed Qadiri and dated 1314/1896–7.

108. London, Khalilli Collection, CAL140 and CAL 163; Safwat, Art of the Pen, nos. 146 and 152.

109. London, Khalilli Collection, CAL152; Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 153. The Qadiriyya were noted for their pilgrimage rituals and the objects used on them. See, for example, the striking maroon shield-shaped banner (known in Turkish as sañik) made in Ottoman North Africa in 1094/1684 (Harvard University Art Museums 1985.20, Shulé S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom [eds.], Images of Paradise in Islamic Art [Hanover, NH, 1991], no. 8a).

110. London, Khalilli Collection, CAL163; Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 144; Rogers, Empire of the Sultans, no. 217.

111. Rado, Türk Hattatları, 239.

112. London, Khalilli Collection, CAL 145, 145–8, 153 and 390; Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 149; Rogers, Empire of the Sultans, nos. 309–10.

113. This preference is clear as none of these zoomorphic compositions are included in Derman’s magisterial volume on Islamic calligraphy, Art of Calligraphy.


115. As with a calligraphic lion penned by Ahmad Hilmi in 13 Jamā‘a 1331/19 April 1913, London, Khalilli Collection, CAL242; Rogers, Empire of the Sultans, no. 307.


117. Munich, Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, cat. no. 31–7; Schimmel, Ismic Calligraphy, pl. 470; Annemarie Schimmel, ‘Calligraphy and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey,’ in The Devon Lodge Architecture, Art and Saints in Ottoman Turkey, ed. Raymond Littches (Berkeley, 1993), 242–52.


119. Schimmel, Ismic Calligraphy, pl. 448.


121. On Ismail Zuhidi, see Derman, Letters in Gold, 96; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 226.

122. Sufis also attached great symbolic to numbers (Annemarie Schimmel, The Mystery of Numbers [New York and Oxford, 1995] and letters [Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions, Appendix 1]). This trend was already developed in the sect known as the Hurufis, founded by Fadallallah Astarabadi, who was executed for his heretical ideas in 1398. For Hurufis, the word—the supreme manifestation of God—is revealed in the human face, which becomes the Koran. According to Fadallallah, Adam had been given nine letters, Abraham fourteen, Muhammad twenty-eight, and he himself thirty-two, corresponding to the Persian version of the Arabic alphabet. Such Sufi-inspired pictures became extremely popular in later times.

123. See, for example, Blair and Bloom, Images of Paradise in Islamic Art, nos. 9 and 10; Tim Stanley, Miriam Rosser-Owen, and Stephen Vernooy, Palace and Mosque: Islamic Art from the Middle East (London, 2004), no. 1. For nineteenth-century hilyas, see above, note 59.

124. Rado, Türk Hattatları, 199.

125. Schimmel, Ismic Calligraphy, II. Forms of the Basmala, Ile.

126. The decree, issued a week after the death of Mehmed the Conqueror, is in the archives of the Topkapı Palace. Ayyülgül Nadir [ed.], Osmanlı Sancılı Peranmanı/Imperial Ottoman fermentation (Istanbul, 1986), no. 7. It is said to be the earliest preserved land grant in divanı script. For another example of unpointed divanı, see the land grant (bezat) defining the boundaries in the district of Tunushisar in Macedonia issued by Bayazid II in 914/1508; Sabancı Collection, no. 35; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 35.

127. The Ottoman prince Sulayman Chelebi, ruler in Rumeli from 1403 to 1413, already had his tughra engraved on his coins; see El2′, ‘Tughra,’ 863.

128. ‘Notes sur la tughrá ottomane,’ Byzantion 18 (1948): 311–34. More recent work on the tughra includes Nadir, Ottoman Ferment, Atr, Suleyman the Magnificent, 56–43; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, 56–9; Derman, Letters in Gold, 33–30. Nadir’s volume is particularly useful in illustrating a series of dated documents from the Turkish archives. I thank Tim Stanley for making his copy available to me.

129. Although some of the Turkish words can be found in contemporary sources, they are not really technical terms, and the English equivalents are preferable as they are more graphic; see Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, 58.

130. The endpapers in the volume on the decorative arts from the Ottoman Empire by Petropoulos, Tlipa, Arabesques and Turks, contain a convenient drawing of the thirty-four tughras used chronologically by the Ottoman sultans.

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134. See, for example, the land grant issued by Bayazid II on 1 Safar 890/1 February 1493; TSKS Archives E.553/35, Nadir, Ottoman Permants, no. 8.

134. It was used by Turkish rulers from the time of the chief of the Ughurs and the Salijs to see El./5, ‘Tughra’.

135. It can be seen on an endowment deed issued in mid-Kahi 174/8-17 March 1334 and now preserved in Istanbul Municipal Library (no. 10). It is illustrated in Nadir, Ottoman Permants, no. 1. The bowl of the jewels ending the three words in the monograph, Orhan ibn ‘Uthman, are stacked like the planks of a boat, a shape that reappears in later zoomorphic images representing the boat of salvation. At the side are the signatures of three of Orhan’s sons, written as in this with stacked letters.

136. Istanbul, TKS, 67816/3; Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 3; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 10.

137. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 4.

138. Istanbul, TIEM, 2238; Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 3; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 9.

139. See, for example, the one in the Khalili Collection (CAL.558; Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 90). This example, which measures nearly half a meter wide, has been drawn on cream-colored paper card, pasted on thin card, and mounted in a silver frame. The gold letters are outlined in black ink, with details added in black to show where some strokes impale others, like swords.

140. Istanbul, Sabanci Collection, no. 14; Dermin, Letters in Gold, no. 70.

141. Derman attributed the work to Nashet on stylistic grounds.

142. In 1970 Rükkat Kunt, a modern master who attempted to revive the classical style of illumination, added the gold wreath that encloses the tughra and extends around the invocatio at the top of the document. She worked in the style of gold decoration known as halkal [dissolved gold] in which motifs are painted in a wash of gold ink and then outlined in full-strength gold ink. Although color is provided only by the background paper, the technique gives a subtle shaded effect. She often used this style for chain borders and floral decoration, which she added in the margin around earlier pieces. This is the case with a pasteboard panel containing a poem in thuluth calligraphed by Mahmud Jalal al-Din at the turn of the eighteenth to nineteenth century and restored by Rükkat Kunt in the 1970s (Sabanci Collection, no. 74; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 32).

143. JU.L, T.1467; Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 26; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 31.


145. For details on these albums, see Chapter 7.

146. JU.L, 1426; Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 49; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 53. The frontispiece is illustrated as nos. 420 and 53.

147. Istanbul, TKS E.61; Atl., Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 18; Rogers and Ward, Suleyman the Magnificent, no. 24.

148. Brief biographies in Annemarie Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture (New York, 1984), 53; Turner, Do’a, ‘Esd Yasari;’ Derman.

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Letters in Gold, 100; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 239. The full-length study by Sibeyl Unver, Mehmed Esad Yasari: Hayati Ve Esereleri [Istanbul, 1955] was not available to me.

Yasari served as master calligrapher in the Imperial Palace under Mustafa III (r. 1757-73), and is said to have been carried from room to room in the palace in a special basket. Despite his infirmity, he reportedly had so many students that the stationer Qadr Utma was able to earn a living selling polished paper outside the master’s front door. Until his death in 1758, Yasari remained in Istanbul, except when he was taken on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1706/791-2 by his son, also a calligrapher, Mustafa ‘Izet, known as Yasarizada (d. 1265/1849).

149. Inscriptions in his hand are found in the barracks of the Black Eunuchs within the Haram at the Tokapi Palace and elsewhere in Istanbul.

150. Istanbul, TKS, GY 324/37-3; Derman, Art of Calligraphy, no. 103. His master Sayyid Muhammad Dedeqada signed the bottom corner in smaller script giving his pupil Muhammad Yasari permission to sign his works.

151. A master calligrapher like M. Uğur Derman [Art of Calligraphy, 43-5] can spot these differences immediately. For less practiced eyes, one quick and practical way to quantify the differences is to print out the quatrains at the same size and hold them up to the light one behind the other. The tiny differences in letter shapes are thus visible.

152. Brief biography in Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 230-1. He is said to have mastered the principles of perspective, designing inscriptions so that they could be seen from afar in proper perspective.

153. Istanbul, Sabanci Collection, no. 256; Derman, Letters in Gold, no. 53. The calligrapher worked in the palace and was also known for his ability to stretch short place names to fill large spaces on lithographed maps. On him, see also Derman, Art of Calligraphy, 243.

154. See, for example, the album pages penned by Yasari in the late eighteenth century and Muhammad Hulusi Yazgan in 1323/1904 (Sabanci Collection, nos. 342 and 322; Derman, Letters in Gold, nos. 28 and 53).

155. Derman, Letters in Gold, 16-17, figs. 11-13, makes the interesting comparison of the same composition penned in large thuluth and nasta’līq/‘arṭūsīq.

156. London, Khalili Collection, CAL.558; Safwat, Art of the Pen, no. 147; Rogers, Empire of the Seljuks, no. 218.