Crimean in origin, Nazif was born in 1262/1846 in the city of Rusçuk (now Ruse, Bulgaria). His father, Mustafa Efendi, brought him to Istanbul, where he was trained in the Imperial Palace Service (Enderûn-ı Hamâyun) of the Ottoman court. He studied sâîhâ and neshî first with Şefik Bey (see cat. nos. 48–49) and then with Abdullah Vali Efendi (1248/1832–1313/1853), a student of Abdullah Zâhidî's (see cat. no. 47). He studied tâhir, celi divânî, the tugh, and celi sâîhâ with Sami Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62). It is said that while Sami Efendi was grieving over the death of his friend Çarşambali Arif Bey (see cat. no. 56), he saw the work of Nazif Bey and consoled himself, saying, 'God has taken Arif and put Nazif in his place.' For his part, Nazif Bey used to say, 'Only after meeting Sami Efendi did I begin to untangle the secrets of calligraphy.'

In his youth, Nazif Bey engaged in the sport of wrestling. To keep up the strength in his hands and arms, he would chop wood at every opportunity. (Calligraphers employed various methods to protect their hands from fatigue. Şevki Efendi [see cat. nos. 50–51] used to put his writing hand inside his jacket, in the gap between buttons, to cushion his hand when he was out walking.)

Nazif Bey worked as a calligrapher in the General Staff Department (Erkân-ı Harbiye Dairesi), where he was noted for his ability to stretch short place names to fill large spaces on lithographed maps. One of the great calligraphers, he spent his life producing superb works in all the scripts, from the smallest and most delicate to the largest celi. Although he wrote an elegant neshî, he unfortunately never found time or opportunity to write a Qur’an. His work is most frequently seen in celi sâîhâ and celi tâhir behvas, or in inscriptions cut in stone. Examples of the latter include inscriptions on the Orhaniye barracks, the Yıldız clock tower, and the Harbiye dining hall, all in Istanbul. He was also skilled at making camel-hide puppets for the famous Karagöz shadow plays. Nazif Bey died from a heart ailment on Rebiülvervel 59, 1331/March 8, 1913, and was buried in the Yahya Efendi Cemetery, in the Beşiktaş quarter of Istanbul.
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the city of Rusek (now Ruse,
is father, Mustafa Efendi, brought him
where he was trained in the Imperial
ice (Enderünam) of the
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see cat. nos. 48–49) and then with
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was buried in the Yahya Efendi Cemetery, in the
Beşiktas quarter of Istanbul.
When one thinks of Ottoman calligraphers of naskh in the last century, Hasan Riza’s name is the first that comes to mind. He was especially known for his musahafa, which were reprinted again and again and made him famous throughout the Islamic world.

Hasan Riza was born in 1265/1849 in the Üsküdar quarter of Istanbul. He studied calligraphy with Yahya Hilmi Efendi (see cat. no. 57) but left to accompany his father, Nazif Efendi, and the rest of the family to Tarnovo (now Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria) when his father was appointed post-office director in that city. When the family returned to Istanbul in 1282/1865, Hasan Riza enrolled in the Imperial College of Music (Mustafa-i Humâyûn), a teaching institution for the Imperial Brass Band, and began studying naskh and naskh with Şefik Bey (see cat. nos. 48–49), the calligraphy teacher there. He obtained his ikast from Şefik Bey but also benefited from associations with KadıASKER Mustafa İzzet Efendi (see cat. nos. 44–45), Şefik Bey’s teacher, and with Sami Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62), from whom Hasan Riza learned to fill.

In 1288/1871, Hasan Riza was appointed imam of the Imperial College of Music, and when Şefik Bey retired in 1296/1879, he replaced him as calligraphy master at the college. When the Calligraphers College (Medrese-i hattât) was opened on Receb 6, 1332/May 31, 1914, he was appointed its master of sâlic and nekh but had to give up the job when his eyesight began to fail. He died on Şemâziyelhâr 10, 1328/March 2, 1920, and was buried in the Rumelihisar Cemetery, in Istanbul.

Hasan Riza Efendi did his best work between 1300/1883 and 1330/1912, creating a number of exquisite large hîyes. He was particularly adept in sâlic. He also produced works in tâlib and sel salih, but his greatest achievement was in naskh (he left nineteen musahafa in that script).
ne thinks of Ottoman calligraphers of the 19th century, Hasan Riza’s name is the first that comes to mind. He was especially known for his dhafer calligraphy, often referred to as the first to be written in the city of Istanbul. He studied calligraphy under Efendi (see cat. no. 57) but left to his father, Nazif Efendi, and the rest of the family to Turkey (now Istanbul). He was appointed post-office director when the family returned to Istanbul.

Hasan Riza enrolled in the College of Music (Müşka-ı Hümayun), a tradition for the Imperial Brass Band, playing the lutes and ney with Şefik Bey (see p. 49), the calligraphy teacher there. He also benefited from Şefik Bey’s teaching, as Efendi’s custom of writing large-size hujus. In order to extend his hujus, Hasan Riza often added a lower line in the lower left corner. If it was not for you, if it were not for you.

This hujus includes the extra line of calligraphy at its bottom line. The work was written in 1393/October 1905, at the height of Hasan Riza Efendi’s artistic powers. The illumination, unfortunately, is in the questionable taste of the time. The dhuveyr (strokes) between the sentences have an unusual feature. Here, and on some other large hujus by Hasan Riza, each dhuveyr consists of a small black rectangular print of a calligraphic composition of the Muslim profession of faith—There is no divinity except God, and Muhammad is His Prophet—surrounded by the sentence “O Muhammad, your name is Victorious. You will be victorious and succeed.”

This text is associated with Muhammad’s being the “Seal of the Prophet”—the last prophet. There are small circular compositions cut out and pasted onto the edges, with the text illuminated around the edges.
Ahmed Kâmil Efendi was born on Cemâzîyelevel 26, 1278/November 29, 1861, in the Fındıklı quarter of Istanbul. In elementary school, he began studying with the calligraphy teacher Süleyman Efendi. When he graduated from high school, he was appointed to the accounts office of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Meanwhile, he had begun learning the sâhil and nesh scripts from Sami Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62). Four years later, in 1301/1884, at Sami Efendi’s request, he wrote a hifse that became his isâyet. When he was transferred to the clerical office of the chancery of the Imperial Council of State (Divan-ı Hümayûn), his calligraphy master suggested that he change his pen name from Kâmil to Hâşim—which would make for an easier and more attractive signature. For a few years thereafter, his works are signed Ahmed Hâşim, but he later returned to his original name.

While at the Imperial Council of State, he learned from Sami Efendi to write divvâni and Celt divvâni and to design the tugra, and was appointed writer of correspondence. When his master retired, Kâmil Efendi took his place and became chief clerk in the Department of Imperial Medals and Medallions at the Imperial Council of State, where he taught the hâkât-i müstenvio—all the scripts then in use. After the Calligraphers College (Medreselühbâtîtin) was opened in 1332/1914, he worked there as a professor of sâhil and nesh. He also taught nêkh at the Galata Sarayı Sultanî School, starting in 1337/1918. In 1341/1922, the Central Office (Bahiâtî) of the imperial government was abolished, as was his position at the Imperial Council of State. He continued to work at the Calligraphers College until that, too, was abolished with the change from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet. In 1355/1936, he became professor of calligraphy at the Academy of Fine Arts (now Mimar Sinan University), where he remained until his death, producing a rich body of work. He was invited to visit Egypt twice—first in 1351/1933 and again in 1358/1940—and during both stays produced many works, including several calligraphic pieces that can be seen in Cairo’s Mosque of Prince Muhammad Ali Pasha, in the Manyal Palace, and in the palace’s calligraphy exhibition room.

Haci Kâmil Akdik died on the evening of Cemâzîyeahir 29, 1360/July 23, 1941, at his home in the Gelenbevi section of the Fatih quarter of Istanbul and was buried in the Çumhurîyyet Cemetery, in Eyüp. He was the last man to win the title of nesh-i hattâtîn, or chief calligrapher, a title given to the senior and most knowledgeable calligrapher in the Ottoman state. He earned this honor on Şevval 10, 1333/August 21, 1915.

Haci Kâmil continued to work until the last days of his life, retaining his sureness of touch and power of vision to the end. He left a substantial body of unrivaled works. In his official capacity at the Imperial Council of State, he wrote in divvani, Celt divvani, or nêkh many menyüs, berats, mukhvedênâmê (treaties), and tashkünlâmê (certificates), as well as many meşk collections for teaching calligraphy. But it was his works in sâhil and nesh, in murâkkîs, lehalas, hilâs, hifse, and cúc from the Qur’an, that won the greatest admiration and were most sought after. He made only one meşk.

Although Kâmil Efendi gained great depth from his study of sâhil and nesh with Sami Efendi, in Celt sâhil he was never able to rise to the level of Nazif Bey (see cat. no. 64). Shortcomings that are insignificant in the small scripts are jarring in Celt. Sami Efendi, the great master of the Celt style, had this to say about the Celt scripts, which did not reach artistic maturity until the early nineteenth century: 'Not to write Celt is to be unaware of the secrets of calligraphy.'
Kâmil Efendi was born on 26, 1278/November 29, 1861, in the
river of Istanbul. In elementary school,
writing with the calligraphy teacher
fendi. When he graduated from high
as appointed to the accounts office of
if it Sami Efendi's request, he wrote a höye
his name. When he was transferred
of the chancery of the Imperial
the sütun and neşâf scripts from Sami
(x-quote: 59-62). Four years later, in
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the city of Istanbul—his name, which would make for
of a more attractive signature. For a few
years, his works are signed Ahmed Hâşim,
returned to his original name as
the Imperial Council of State, he
Samî Efendi to write diârî and ceî dârî
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When his master retired, Kâmil
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of Imperial Medals and Medallions at
Council of State, where he taught the
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1339/1933 and again in 1359/1940—and during both
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calligraphic pieces that can be seen in Cairo's
Mosque of Prince Muhammad Ali Pasha, in the
Manyal Palace, and in the palace's calligraphy
exhibition room.

Haci Kâmil Aksik died on the evening of
Gümüleyhâri 29, 1360/July 23, 1941, at his home
in the Gelenbi section of the Fatih quarter of
Istanbul and was buried in the Gümüleyhâri
Cemetery, in Eyûb. He was the last man to win the
title of nesâfî-bâtûtan, or chief calligrapher, a title
given to the senior and most knowledgeable
calligrapher in the Ottoman state. He earned this
honor on Şevval 10, 1333/August 21, 1915.

Haci Kâmil continued to work until the last days
of his life, retaining his sureness of touch and power
of vision to the end. He left a substantial body of
unrivalled works. In his official capacity at the
Imperial Council of State, he wrote in diârî, ceî
dârî, or rûû many menûs, berats, mawâhedênâmê
(treaties), and taawûkâmê (certificates), as well as
many menûc collections for teaching calligraphy. But it
was his works in sütun and neşâf, in murâkah savas, lehâs,
exes, hâyê, and cz from the Qur'an, that won the
greatest admiration and were most sought after. He
made only one mudâfâ.

Although Kâmil Efendi gained great depth from
his study of sütun and neşâf with Samî Efendi, in ceî sütun
he was never able to rise to the level of Nazif Bey (see
cat. no. 64). Shortcomings that are insignificant in
the small scripts are jarring in ceî. Samî Efendi, the
great master of the ceî style, had this to say about the
ceî scripts, which did not reach artistic maturity until
the early nineteenth century: 'Not to write ceî is to be
unaware of the secrets of calligraphy.'

as he lay dying, he said, 'I do
not grieve at my death. I am
only sorry that I could not
really learn calligraphy.'

The text of this letter is a hûzû
'The learned ones of my
community resemble the
prophets of the children of
Israel.' The dev dû used to
decorate the hûzû is by
Nemîddin Oksay (see cat.
no. 63-72).
İsmail Hakki was born in Zihicce 10, 1289/February 9, 1873, in the Kuruçeşme quarter of Istanbul. His birth coincided with the Kurban Bayrami prayers for the Festival of the Sacrifice at the end of that year’s pilgrimage to Mecca. On his father’s side, his ancestors had been calligraphers for five generations, and the young İsmail Hakki studied sulüs and nasih with his father, Mehmed İlim Efendi (1855/1839–1942/1924), who himself had studied with Kadısker Mustafa İzet Efendi (see cat. nos. 44–45). He graduated from the painting division of the Ottoman School of Fine Arts in 1355/1837, but continued to study in the engraving division.

İsmail Hakki worked in the chancery of the Imperial Council of State (Divanı-1 Hümâyun), where he learned divâni, ceji divâni, celi sülüs, and the tughra from Sami Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62). He was soon appointed to the post of second, then first, tughrek, or writer of tughra. He taught nasih at various schools and taught the tughra and celi sülüs at the Calligraphers College (Medreseetulhüdürü). Among the outstanding calligraphers he taught were Mâcid Ayral (1308/1891–1360/1961) and Mustafa Halim Özyazıcı (1315/1898–1358/1964).

When the Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin alphabet in 1347/1928, İsmail Hakki began to teach the art of illumination at the Eastern Decorative Arts School. After 1355/1936, he taught illumination at the Academy of Fine Arts (now Mimar Sinan University), but he did not teach the new classicism of Muhâsin Demirhan (see cat. no. 43) and Rıkkat Kunt (see cat. no. 98). He assumed the surname Altunbezer—allunbezer means ‘gilder’ or ‘iluminator’—because of this work.

İsmail Hakki fell ill in 1364/1945 and had to give up his job. He died on Şaban 20, 1365/July 19, 1946, and was buried next to his father’s grave in the Karacaahmet Cemetery, in Istanbul. In accordance with a provision in İsmail Hakki’s will, Necmeddin Okay (see cat. nos. 69–70) copied the inscription for İsmail Hakki’s gravestone.

İsmail Hakki’s many compositions attest to a highly productive artistic career. His works in celi sülüs, which he executed with ease and swiftness, are particularly notable, as are his tughra and his writing in divanı and ceji divanı on fermans, beratâns, and meqârâns. He is also remembered for his works in mosques and domes in Istanbul (in the Selimiye, Lâleli, Edirnekapı, Zeyney Sultan, and Şemsi Paşa mosques, among others) and in Anatolia (in Ayvûn and Eskişehir). He also left lovely oil paintings, done with academic precision. Hakki Bey is also famous as a grower of roses.

67. LEVIA

ISTANBURH, FIRST HALF OF 20TH CENTURY
COLOR ON PAINTED CARDBOARD
94 x 59 cm
SM 355–1946–1974

The type of title called a miniatür is created by writing a title form within the mirror image of the text. In this hecale, İsmail Hakki Altunbezer showed his skill by making three separate miniatür compositions: the verse, the Qur‘an verse, and the signature. Like other calligraphers who were trained in figurative art, İsmail Hakki sometimes allowed that training to influence his calligraphy, and a hint of that influence is evident here. This work was prepared by the artist himself with the 20-endil process, using his own stencil. He decorated the margin area with a design of his own devising, alternating between gold and a yellow guache. Tugrakes, Hakki Bey invented this style, and it disappeared with his death.
Hakki was born on Zilhicce 10, icy 9, 1873, in the Kuruçeşme quarter. His birth coincided with the Kurban Bayram of the Festival of the Sacrifice at that year's pilgrimage to Mecca. On his 5, his ancestors had been calligraphers, and the young Ismail Hakki and nesh with his father, Mehmed Hmili (1839–1924), who himself had Kadiasker Mustafa İzet Efendi (see cat. 3). He graduated from the painting the Ottoman School of Fine Arts in but continued to study in the engraving.

Hakki worked in the chancery of the council of State (Divân-i Hümâyûn), armed divânî, celle divânî, celle sâbû, and the umi Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62). He was set to the post of second, then first, writer of tughra. He taught nê threatening at various times. I taught the tughra and celle sâbû at the College (Medresetülhattatîn). Among long calligraphers he taught were Mámîd (1891–1964) and Mustafa Halim (1898–1964).

The Arabic alphabet was replaced by the set in 1347/1928, Ismail Hakki began to set of illumination at the Eastern Arts School. After 1955/1956, he taught a at the Academy of Fine Arts (now University), but he did not teach the in Muhasin Demirnonat (see cat. no. 38). He assumed: Altunbezer—altunbezer means 'gilder' or '-because of this work.

Iftak fell ill in 1964/1943 and had to sh. He died on Şaban 20, 1365/July 19, as buried next to his father's grave in the Cemetery, in Istanbul. In accordance in Ismail Hakki's will, Nencmîn (cat. nos. 69–70) copied the inscription for Ismail Hakki's gravestone.

Ismail Hakki's many compositions attest to a highly productive artistic career. His works in celle sâbû, which he executed with ease and swiftness, are particularly notable, as are his tughra and his writing in divânî and celle divânî on fermanâ, berât, and majûrs. He is also remembered for his works in mosques and domes in Istanbul (in the Selimiye, Lâleli, Edirnekapı, Zeynep Sultan, and Şemsî Paşa mosques, among others) and in Anatolia (in Afyon and Edirne). He also left lovely oil paintings, done with academic precision. Hakki Bey is also famous as a grower of roses.
68. LEVHA

LEVHA
ISTANBUL, UNDATED
GOLD AND GOLD LEAVES, ON PAPER
MOUNTED ON CARDBOARD
SM 90. 4406. 11 A

The phrase 'Istil' or declaration of faith, 'There is no God but God and Muhammad is the apostle of God,' was frequently inscribed by calligraphers, usually in official script forms. However, calligraphic perfection in the writing of the phrase 'Istil' was achieved only when Mustafa Ural was hired for the job. When the phrase 'Istil' is written as a single line, upright letters like 'ya' and 'la' are spaced at the beginning and end of the inscription, leaving excessive empty space in the centre, as we see for example in the case of the 18th-century inscription by Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703-1730) on the door of the Apartment of the Holy Mante at Topkapi Palace. Mustafa Ural's innovation created a composition in the form of an extended pentagon, which by means of illumination was formed into a rectangle. This composition, of which variations were used by many calligraphers, was perfected by Sami Efendi in 1754-1756.

The phrase 'Istil' illustrated here is the work of Tallaksevan Ismail Hakki Altunbeizer, a pupil of Sami Efendi. He executed this inscription, which is based on Sami Efendi's own composition, while his master was still alive, and before signing it took it to show him. Sami Efendi picked up his pen and wrote the signature 'Ismail Hakki Efendi.' (This was written by Sami's student Hakki) in an official composition. Years ago I saw a Khamsa Ishl in Istanbul with such a signature. Ismail Hakki Altunbeizer signed his later work in the simple form 'Ismail Ishl' (Written by Hakki).

Ismail Hakki Altunbeizer was an illuminator as well as a calligrapher, as his surname meaning 'Illuminator in Gold' indicates. This surname was chosen by his friend Necmeddin Obay when the taking of surnames became mandatory in the early 20th century. In this inscription the calligrapher displays his skill at filing on the writing itself, and the decoration surrounding the Ishl is also in his own distinctive westernized style.
...
Born in Üsküdar, in Istanbul, on Rebiülevel 19, 1300/January 29, 1883, Mehmed Necmeddin Okyay was the son of Mehmed Abdünnabi Efendi, head clerk in the religious court and one of the imams of the Yeni Vâlide Mosque, in Üsküdar. He began committing the Qur'an to memory while still a schoolboy and had learned it by heart by the time he finished his education at the Garden of Progress High School (Ravza-i Terâkki Rüştîyesi), where he studied the variant recitations of the Qur'an. The calligraphy teacher at the school, Hasan Ta'at Bey, taught him nihâ, diwanî, and selî diwanî and granted him the îzet. Aware of the young man's talent, the teacher took him to Filibeli Haci Ârif Efendi (see cat. no. 55), but the Üsküdar Preparatory School where Necmeddin was then enrolled allowed him to attend the Hacı's calligraphy classes no more than once a week, and the young Necmeddin left the school after a year.

Meanwhile, having developed an interest in ahâ paper, he began visiting Ibrahim Edeb Efendi (1245/1829–1321/1904), the şeyh of the Özbekler order of dervishes, to learn this craft. He also learned to make the glossy calligraphy paper known as ahâ paper. At the same time, Necmeddin was learning ta'liq and selî ta'liq from Sami Efendi (see cat. nos. 59–62), from whom he obtained the îzet in ta'liq in 1323/1905. He earned the îzet in nash and sabas from Hacı Ârif Efendi in 1324/1906. Moreover, Vehbi Efendi taught him how to make ink in the traditional manner, and Seyfeddin Bey, who was chief archer at the Ottoman court in the time of Sultan Abdüllâh (c. 1861–76), taught him the sport of classic Ottoman archery. All the while, Necmeddin continued to attend lessons given in the mosque until he obtained a certificate known as an iâmâc iâzadnâme, granting him the rank of âlim, or Islamic scholar. After his father died in 1325/1907, Necmeddin was appointed imam and later khâb (preacher) in the same mosque, a position he held for forty years.
N Okyay

Nûrûz, in Istanbul, on Rüstem Pasha's birthday 29, 1883, Mehmed Necmeddin Efendi, the religious court and one of the imams of the Valide Mosque, in Uskudar. He began the Qur'an to memory while still a child, and soon learned by heart the time he began to learn the Hafiz and the religious court. The qari at the school, Hasan Talat Bey, Kâşif, dâdi, and Haci Ali Efendi and granted him the same name, the him to Filibe Haci Ali Efendi (see note), but the Uskudar Preparatory School had then enrolled the text for facsimile class as no more than 

The inscription on this panel is from a panel of the Qur'an (XL, 57) written in the manner of Sami Efendi by Necmeddin Okyay, and reads: 'If, my Lord is a sign over all things.' The pairs of curving letters (râ, yâ') at the beginning and end of the inscription create a natural balance, while the two linked letters (râ-î) which have been placed above the other in the centre eliminate the crowding which would otherwise spoil the aesthetic appearance of this line.

The marble in the outer header is in the pattern known as 'sûl tâbî' invented by Necmeddin Okyay. The nested pattern of the outer border consists of ornamental motifs on three intertwining lines is the work of his son Sami Necmeddin (1911-1933), who died of pneumonia at a young age.