Between Amulet and Devotion: Islamic Miniature Books in the Lilly Library

Scholarship on the book as a vehicle of Islamic culture has traditionally been preoccupied with the study of large-scale Qur’anic fragments, scientific treatises, luxury editions of epic narratives, and poetic compilations traceable to courtly ateliers. This preference for the monumental has occluded an entire class of production on a more modest scale: miniature Islamic books, often a mere four to five centimeters in diameter. Despite their reduced size, these minute volumes often retain the elegance, complexity, and craftsmanship accorded to those of conventional dimensions.

The sparse yet dominant interpretation of such small, handwritten codices classifies them as sancaq (banner) Qur’ans, an Ottoman Turkish tradition in which miniature manuscripts were encased in metal boxes or pouches of fabric, affixed to military standards, and carried into battle. Beyond this general rubric, these diminutive texts have not received in-depth attention: exhibition catalogues present terse entries that consistently fail to provide detailed discussions of the material evidence. Thus far there has been no systematic study of these miniaturized texts or, when appropriate, of the cases created to contain them. Indeed, the prevalence of this interpretive paradigm has inhibited the exploration of alternate or complementary motivations for the micro-fabrication of religious texts within Islamic traditions and the various functions that the practice sustained.

The Lilly Library’s Ruth E. Adomeit collection provides an opportunity to examine twelve miniature Islamic books in greater detail (see Figure 1.13). These manuscripts admittedly represent a minute portion of the total number of miniature books that Adomeit amassed over her many decades of collecting, yet the variegation within this subsection of her collection—in particular, the chronological and geographical diversity of her samples—challenges the monolithic characterization of miniatures within scholarship addressing Islamic book arts. Although few of these texts contain colophons recording precise dates and places of production, inspection of Adomeit’s personal records, combined with a detailed analysis of the pieces themselves, reveals a rich array of manuscripts created from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century and within such diverse locales as India, Iran, Morocco, and sub-Saharan Africa. The twelve manuscripts range in size from a minute 3.3 × 3.2 centimeters to a slightly less minuscule 6.9 × 7.9 centimeters, and are constructed from 98 to 287 folios, averaging twelve lines of text per folio. Four volumes are preserved inside protective cases made of metal or leather. In addition to one miniature Qur’anic scroll, six manuscripts are
octagonal, two are square, two are rectangular, and one is circular. Two of the manuscripts feature wallet bindings while one small-scale African manuscript is composed of unbound folios. While some specimens appear to have a courtly provenance, others clearly speak to humbler origins. Such diversity evidently cannot be satisfied by the term "sancak Qur’an" and its attendant rubric, yet neither are "miniature Qur’an" nor "miniature book" fully adequate descriptors. These specimens do not necessarily contain all or parts of the Qur’an; some contain chapters extracted from the Qur’an while others transcribe the hadiths (the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), selections of prayers, or some combination thereof. Nor are all texts complete, discrete literary works, as the term "book" suggests, although, in a material sense, they are books indeed—the retention of the codex format on a small scale remains the salient and unifying quality of the collection, and the indisputable motivation behind its initial assembly.

A more productive interpretative paradigm is one that recognizes the amuletic function of miniscule text. Physical evidence on the contents of some Amorite specimens suggests that these little books were worn close to the body—either on waistbands, contained on armbands, or suspended around the neck—or perhaps affixed to the surface of a weapon or other ceremonial object. Other codices convey amuletic motives through the nature and arrangement of the very texts that are recorded in the manuscripts—for instance, several volumes contain Qur’anic verses renowned for their apotropaic properties or include an extra-Qur’anic text in support of overtly magico-religious applications.

The present investigation will rely upon select examples from the Lilly Library to posit that it was precisely the amuletic capacity accorded to Qur’anic and other devotional texts that oftentimes prompted their miniaturization. The reduction of the text in diminutive form intensified this capacity, and fulfilled a desire for what I will call "textual intimacy." This I define as a pious urge to keep close to the text out of devotion to it, facilitated by a drastic reduction in scale, which offered the owner the twin advantages of portability and proximity. Suspension from or adhesion to the body of the owner ensured that a direct, physical intimacy was maintained between the owner and his or her miniature book. Yet even those codices not customarily fastened to the body demanded intimate interactions between the reader and the miniscule text: by virtue of their miniature size, these little books easily nestled within the palm of the hand and must be lifted close to the eyes while perused, if not held level to the chest or heart, effecting a similarly corporeal propinquity.

The present chapter does not wish to dispense with the sancak tradition but rather to warn against its application to newly discovered specimens as a predetermined explanation. That the sancak Qur’an remains a viable interpretation for certain objects is indicated by the numerous surviving standards within the Topkapı Palace collections, which affirm the Ottoman practice of carrying miniature books onto the battlefield. Upon assuming power a new sultan customarily ordered the manufacture of elaborate flags embroidered with his titularite to replace those flown on imperial standards by his predecessor, and it is possible that these patronal directives also instigated the production of additional sancak Qur’ans. In 1526, Suleyman the Magnificent formally increased the number of imperial standards from four to seven, in accordance with the rapid expansion of the Ottoman Empire through critical victories along various fronts. Each of the seven imperial standards symbolized a distinct realm within the empire, suggesting that, on one level, the suspension of sancak Qur’ans from imperial standards communicated the divine sanction of such territorial acquisition.

An Ottoman military standard (alem) is typically divided into three parts: a long pole or shaft (sap) to which is affixed the silk banner (sancak), terminating in an elaborate finial (saif). Diminutive volumes of the Qur’an are contained within metal protective cases or boxes (muhafazas), which are secured below the metal finial by a cord wound tightly around its circumference or a long metal chain. Typically the metal used for the case accords with that used for the finial and hilt. These containers may assume one of several geometrical shapes (including cylindrical, cubic, triangular, rectangular, hexagonal, or, most commonly, octagonal forms) and are generally riveted shut to protect the manuscript within.

Several muhafazas may be affixed to a single standard, as can be seen on a standard (Figure 3.1) dating from the reign of Sultan Selim I (r. 1512–1520). Here, the saif is in the shape of a scalloped leaf, which has been filled with a series of Qur’anic verses written in repoussé using a very thin-tipped jewelers’ pen. All of the chosen verses assure the worshipper of a speedy victory through God’s munificence. The verses include selections from Surat Al-Fath (“The Victory,” 481-3), Surat Al-Nasr (“The Conquest,” 103-1), and Surat Al-Saff (“The Battle Array,” 61-3). The sultan’s titles run from the front to the back, and select Qur’anic verses continue on the reverse side of the finial. Here one finds laudatory phrases from Surat Al ’Imran (“The Family of ’Imran,” 31-2) and the Throne Verse (ayat al-kursi) from Surat Al-Baqara (“The Cow,” 2:255). At least four miniature Qur’ans are encased in individual containers of varying sizes: two triangular cases of equal size and two square examples, one very small indeed.

A later seventeenth-century Ottoman standard shows an evolution in the complexity and ornamentation of the protective case (Figure 3.2). Its octagonal shape is consonant with the majority of published examples of miniature Qur’an cases. The delicate floral and vegetal designs that embellish the cover indicate that it may date slightly later than the finial itself. The sides of the octagonal case are similarly decorated with a verse from Surat Al-Saff (61:3), reinforcing the notion of an operative vocabulary of verses considered beneficial in war, while the bottom of the case bears the proclamation of unity with God. Here, the case is fixed to one face of the finial and also secured with a chain. On other surviving standards, similarly magnificent octagonal cases
are also preserved—often tied to the shaft in the manner of those less ornamented examples discussed above. 27

This practice of suspending encased miniature Qur'ans is captured at least once in pictorial form in a double-page illustration included in the Eğri Fatihnamesi, a "Book of Conquest" or military chronicle written by the Ottoman chronicler Talikizade (Figure 3.3). This work celebrates

the Ottoman conquest of the castle of Eğri in Hungary under Sultan Mehmed III (r. 1595–1603). 28 Although the manuscript is undated, it is likely a product of the early seventeenth century. Completed by the artist Nalçak Hasan Paşa, the image depicts the victorious return of the sultan, who, in a return to tradition, accompanied the army on its campaign—something neither his father Murad III nor his grandfather Selim III had done. Seven standards are clearly visible behind the sultan's retinue, each bearing a telltale gilt case dangling from the base of its finial.

This rare painted evidence confirms the observations made by the sixteenth-century Turkish historian Celâlzade Mustafa, who notes that "each of the seven sultan's flags had at the top a Koran" and that these small codices were termed samçak Qur'ans. 29 Andrew Taranowski, Polish envoy to the court of Sultan Selim II, is more verbose in his description, noting the presence of miniature Qur'ans upon standards representing the sultan as well as the entourage of the Kafar samçakbeyi. 30 In a 1570 report to King Sigismund Augustus, Taranowski conveyed that, "these

FIG. 3.2. Ottoman alem, Ottoman Turkey, 17th century (silver Qur'an case possibly later), 44 cm, gilt silver or gilt copper, Topkapı Palace Museum, Inv. no. 1014, Terken and Terken, Timár Şafak Afendileri, fig. 22.
flags are wound around the pole and never undone until the battle starts. Their shafts are surmounted by big golden hearts from which are suspended large sacks of brocade with a parchment book enclosing the Muhammadan Creed. When fighting, every soldier has in front his Holy Scripture and is ready to die for it.24 Within the context of a triumphal return or ceremonial display of the sort captured in the illustration to the Eger Fethinamesi, sancaq Qur'ans would have functioned as metonymic substitutes for the sultan—he is the protector of the Qur'an, dispenser of its wisdom, and a warrior for its dissemination. Within the immediate arena of the battlefield, however, these codices would have been endowed with a declarative faculty, embodying the devotion of the troops and thereby issuing an explicit challenge to the enemy. Yet they also acted for the Ottoman troops as critical agents of corporate protection through the presence of the divine word. That a military standard functioned as a "mobile amulet"25 also is demonstrated by the presence of a small projecting spherical ring, called boncuk or moncuk, at the base of the metal finial, near where sancaq Qur'ans were customarily affixed (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2).26 The Ottoman Turkish terms boncuk or moncuk, both meaning "bead," continue to be used today: one finds them most closely associated with the blue bead (nativ boncuk) and the "eye" bead (nazar boncuga) that are thought to protect a person against the evil eye and other malign forces.27

The origins of this Ottoman practice are unknown, and to measure the extent of its dissemination is difficult. Certainly the Qur'an was a literal presence in the earliest battles of the Arab conquest. Some scholars have argued that the broad term for a Qur'an reciter, qari' (pl. qurra), may have indicated a special contingent of the standing army in the early period, or else that qurra were directly involved in military operations.28 The early historian al-Tabari (d. 923) writes that Sa'id b. Abi Waqqas ordered the qari' whom the Caliph 'Umar had assigned to him to recite Surat al-Anfal ("The Spoils," 81-75), to motivate the troops, who themselves used to study the sura.29 G. H. A. Juynboll has speculated that, during the earliest centuries of Islam, the phrase hamalat al-qur'an (bearers of the Qur'an) indicated "those people who carried high on spearheads, or wore on cords around their necks, fragments of the Revelation written down on materials such as animal bones or pieces of parchment."30 One well-documented occurrence of the Qur'an as a material presence was during the confrontation at Siffin in 676/657 between the forces of 'Ali and Mu'awiya. The fighting was inconclusive, forcing Mu'awiya to order "a mushaf, or a number of musalsaf to be raised up on the points of spears"31 in order to enter into arbitration. Here the Qur'an was used not as a stimulus on the battlefield but rather as an instigator of resolution.

Various specimens and their cases in the Lilly Library challenge the paradigm of the sancaq Qur'an both geographically and functionally. The first is a round metal case measuring approximately eight centimeters in diameter and attached to a complex looped chain of extraordinary metalwork (Figure 3.4). One face of the container bears an oddly shaped architectural scene in relief while the back is decorated with the six-sided seal of Solomon, a common apotropaic motif. The metal sides of the case and the overhanging lip of its lid have both been perforated by three small circular holes, each measuring 0.3 centimeters wide. When the lid of the case rests upon the base, these holes align perfectly, suggesting that these openings were once used to rivet the case shut in order to protect its contents. The loop of the chain affixed to the lid of the container measures approximately 13.5 centimeters in length and is comparably shorter than those on other surviving sancaq cases. Yet the chain's durability and thickness—a sturdy one centimeter of heavy, interlocking links—indicate concern for the object's fixture to or suspension from a secondary item, itself possibly mobile. Indeed, the material specifications of this container are not well suited to personal adornment: the chain is not long enough to encircle one's neck, and is too large to comfortably encircle a wrist or forearm. Theoretically the chain could have been affixed to the waist by a belt loop or tie, but both the size and weight of the container are rather cumbersome. A more practical conclusion is that this case was intended for suspension from a ceremonial object. For these reasons, a military standard is an elegant candidate.
The metal case houses an octagonal manuscript approximately six centimeters in diameter and produced with a degree of luxury indicative of a courtly provenance. Its 280 folios contain the full Qur'anic text, which terminates in a ā'la, a prayer to be read upon completion, and a fa'ilna (Book of Divination).

These two terminal, extra-Qur'anic texts are written in crisp cursive (naskh) script so minute that each alif extends a mere two millimeters, offset by sumptuous bands of illumination displaying liberal amounts of gold and lapis lazuli. Elaborate full-page illuminated designs provide a lush armature for the first verses of Surat al-Fatihah ("The Opening," Qur'an 1:1–6, Figure 5.3). The colophon gracing the bottom of folio 737v securely dates the manuscript to 20 Jumada I, 958/H May 26, 1551. The stamped and tooled leather binding, naskh script, illumination, and the presence of a fa'ilna confirm that the manuscript is a product of Safavid Iran, which would place its manufacture within the reign of Shah Tahmasp (r. 1524–1576). This provenance coincides with the shah's documented interest in divination and his commissioning of at least one illustrated fa'ilna sometime around 1550. This attribution locates the phenomenon of the sancaq Qur'an in Persian rather than Ottoman realms, extending the practice beyond the boundaries of the Sublime Porte. Thus, while the suspension of sancaq Qur'ans was a predominantly Ottoman practice, it seems not to have been exclusively so.

An equally arresting specimen is not from Adomeit's collection, but from that of William Edward David Allen (1901–1973), an octagonal metal box measuring five centimeters in diameter (Figure 5.6). The box, painted black, is liberally decorated with gold-painted inscriptions and invocations to God. The most prominent of these is the opening phrase of Surat al-Fatihah that appears on the lid, "Verily We have granted you a manifest victory" (Qur'an 46:24). Crumbling folios of an undated Qur'anic manuscript are preserved inside. The original binding of the codex does not survive, although clusters of folios remain sewn together. The quality of the rag paper and of the revival naskh script used to transcribe the Qur'anic text suggests that the specimen dates to the late eighteenth or nineteenth century.

That a miniature Qur'an is encased in an octagonal case is clearly related to the sancaq tradition. Two small holes, each approximately 0.7 centimeters wide, have been punched partially through two parallel sides of the container. A visible groove along the inside edge of one opening suggests that projecting brackets may originally have been screwed into these openings, facilitating the case's fixture against the surface of an olen or other object. Yet the material of its manufacture—thick metal with considerable heft—requires that any projections display considerable strength and durability. No clear evidence remains of a mechanism for securing the Qur'an within its case to ready it for a
opening phrase of Surat al-Falaq ("The Daybreak," Qur'an 113:1), "I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak . . . ", the first of the final two chapters of the Qur'an, which together compose al-mu'awwidhatan, the so-called "suras of refuge" commonly recited as consecutive short prayers. Below this, four of the octagon's eight sides are ornamented with invocations to God such as "O God!" and "O Merciful!"

The design of this box clearly reflects its original function: its two heart-shaped eyelets were clearly once part of a larger chain, now removed, or threaded with a cord that fixed the case flatly against the surface of a weapon or other object, if not around the circumference of an arm, ankle, wrist, waist, or other part of the body. It is not hard to imagine the case, bearing its earnest supplications to God, resting against the stretched fabric of a waistband (kamarband) common to Safavid, Mughal, and Qajar military and ceremonial costume, if not concealed discretely within one. Indeed, miniature calligraphic script was regularly placed against the body through its inscription on talismanic shirts common throughout the pre-modern Turko-Persian world. Typically such garments were made of cotton, linen, or silk and crowded with a plethora of prayers, Qur'anic verses, names of God, magical squares composed of numbers and letters, and onomastic numeric formulas, which were woven into (or painted or written upon) their entire surface with polychrome paints and inks by courtly artisans and calligraphers. Such garments demonstrate that extensive use of miniature script ensured optimal benefit for the wearer through the inclusion of a large quantity of content, attesting to the perceived value of diminutive writing. Warfare seems not to have been the sole venue in which these inscribed shirts were deployed—many specimens bear Qur'anic verses useful in various trials (including disease, enemies, childbirth, and travel) in addition to or instead of those pertinent to battle and victory—yet military protection was a key motivation for their manufacture. For example, a letter penned sometime in the 1730s by Hürem Sultan to Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) was dispatched to his military camp accompanied by a shirt "which had been brought to Istanbul from Mecca by a holy man" who had been guided by the Prophet (appearing to him in a vision) to decorate the garment with efficacious names for use in war. Through these graphic additions, Hürem Sultan assured her husband that the shirt could "turn aside bullets." An eighteen-century talismanic shirt of Persian origin bearing multiple Qur'anic verses speaks to its apotropaic use in war (Figure 3.8). The promise of divine intercession in battle contained in the thirteenth verse of Surat al-Saff ("The Battle Array," Qur'an 6:13) is prominently inscribed across each shoulder, supplemented by two vertical inscriptions containing the first and third verses of Surat al-Fath ("Victory," Qur'an 48) which offer further assurances of victory. The bottom calligraphic panel contains striking verses from Surat al-Baqara ("The Constellations," Qur'an 85:21–22) that read, "Surely this is a glorious Qur'an,
it is a well-guarded tablet." Aside from these large-scale inscriptions, the surface of the fabric is completely saturated with miniature Qur'anic text. Amidst this inundation of sacred text, the inscription is self-referential, and seems to affirm the protective efficacy of the garment.

Whether worn directly against the skin or as an outer layer, talismanic shirts therefore facilitated the dispersal of sacred text over the body, with the intent to bestow invulnerability upon it. A seventeenth-century Safavid chain mail shirt features the names of God, Muhammad, and the 
ahl al-kisa (the people of the cloak) stamped onto each of its interlocking steel rings, intimating that protection may have been amplified exponentially through the multiple layers required by military costume. Thus the appendage of a small Qur'an case (such as Adomeit C9) to the self is merely a logical—and codicological—extension of this prodigivity to enrobe the body in protective garb. Several surviving talismanic shirts are themselves deeply creased, indicating that they were continually folded and tucked inside amuletic containers.

The overall design of Adomeit C9 is absolutely typical of a class of amuletic silver Qur'an cases from Iran, predominantly dating to the Qajar period (1785–1925), to which this specimen very likely belongs. Usually octagonal, though sometimes round, these cases generally measure five to six centimeters in diameter and one centimeter deep, and are heavily inscribed on the metal lid and sides with Qur'anic verses and invocations or other religious or devotional texts deemed beneficial to their wearers and owners. While there are numerous Arabic and Persian terms for an amulet within Islam, the most common is bazuband, a Persian word that designates an amulet often affixed to the upper arm with a thong or tie. Wearing the texts in this manner was not, however, the works' exclusive application. For instance, a number of similarly miniature amuletic Qur'an boxes are preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, and the earliest of these, dated to 1162/1263 by an inscription on its side, includes a metal loop or grommet along its upper edge, indicating that it was originally hung around the neck. Indeed, the seventeenth-century jeweler and traveler Jean Chardin recorded the widespread use in Persia of amulets worn on the body, in little bags of silk or brocade hung around the neck, at the waist, or affixed to the upper arm. His wonder at the pervasiveness of this tendency is evident:

Others carry different kinds of superstitious papers in little boxes or small cases like those for toothpicks made of gold or silver in order to keep them better and also so as not to be forced to take them off day or night even in taking a bath. I have seen others carrying a complete Qur'an. Amulets with prayers written on paper or stone were attached to many objects and parts of the body.

Thus Adomeit C9 is representative of a class of cases worn on the body that customarily contain full or partial miniature Qur'ans, in effect extending a relational vector between miniature texts affixed to military standards and those affixed to the self. As such this Adomeit example is demonstrative of the widespread use of miniature Qur'ans and Qur'anic phrases for individual rather than corporate protection both within a military context (as evidenced by the martial inscriptions it supports) and far removed from the battlefield. The pervasiveness of this practice attests to a popular desire for textual intimacy and a wish to clothe the self symbolically in the divine text, drawing blessing or baraka of the codex inward.

The critical nexus of this functional continuum is the amuletic capacity sustained by Qur'anic or devotional text in miniature form. The personal use of miniature Qur'ans within the Ottoman milieu is hinted at through the survival of an octagonal Qur'an in a gold metal case in the Islamic Arts Museum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The lid of the case
bears a provocative handwritten note: “The Koran taken from a Turk on the field of battle after his death. Given to K. George the 4th by Monsieur de Narishkian.” The note not only provides a terminus ante quem for the manuscript’s production (British King George IV ruled from 1820 to 1830), it suggests that an Ottoman soldier intentionally brought the object to the battlefield as an individual apotropaic device. Upon a visit to Ottoman Egypt between 1825 and 1828, Edward Lane commented that a “respectable Turk in military dress” commonly wore a leather or velvet case intended for a hijab (written charm) or miniature copy of the Qur’an. At times the case was empty—a detail that, we can speculate, was perhaps an economical nod to convention. Lane further reports that “it was the custom of Turks of the middle and higher classes, as well as of many other Muslims, to wear a small mушах in an embroidered leather or velvet case hung upon the right side by a silk string which passed over the left shoulder.” The intrepid traveler Richard Burton (1821-1890) records that this custom was widespread among pilgrims undertaking the hajj to Mecca, particularly among those from Ottoman Turkey. Burton, however, employs specific terminology, noting that pilgrims often wore “a ‘Hamail’ to denote their holy errand. This is a pocket Koran in a gold embroidered crimson velvet or red morocco case, held by silk cords placed over the left shoulder. The Koran was supposed to hang on the right side of the body and was never placed below the waist.” The term hamail very likely derives from the Arabic root “ح-م-ال” meaning “to carry.” Among his surreptitious annotations concerning pilgrimage culture, Burton therefore recorded the plural of a word that may be roughly translated as “things that are carried,” “carriables,” or “suspendables.” The entry of the term into common parlance captures the degree to which these miniature volumes came to be identified through the physical intimacy with which they supported. Still later in the nineteenth century the scholar Christian Snouck Hurgronje, who lived in the holy city from 1884 to 1885, noted that “when a Meccan stripped to his shirt, and this happens often enough on account of the heat, one sees through the transparent stuff, hinging by a string down from his shoulder on his naked back a row of many coloured little bags.” Although the author calls these items azimas or hijabs—that is, written charms—one or more of them may well have contained a mushah.

In dialectical relationship with individual practice, the official presence of miniaturized Qur’anic manuscripts throughout the hajj was sanctioned by the ceremonial procession to Mecca of the mahlm, a wooden-framed palanquin accompanied by a massive cortège of pilgrims and troops to ensure its safe passage. The camel-borne structure resembled a four-sided tent with a pyramidal top and was covered with richly embroidered brocade. Several mahlms containing various precious objects as gifts were sent, but the mahlm-i serif (the so-called “noble litter”) refers to that palanquin that transported the kiswa, the embroidered drape of the Ka’ba, along with additional door and window hangings and bands. The Mamluk Sultan Baybars (r. 1260-1277) was the first to send presents to the holy city of Mecca in 664/1266; various Muslim sovereigns quickly adopted the practice, which became associated with the Ottomans through their territorial expansion into Egypt and Syria in 1517. Thereafter the Ottoman sultan annually sponsored three mahlms to Mecca from Damascus, Cairo, and Yemen. The Yemeni mahlm was discontinued in the seventeenth century, promoting Damascus and Cairo as key assembly points for vast numbers of pilgrims from across the Muslim world. Would-be pilgrims from throughout Syria, Anatolia, and Persia converged on Damascus, while pilgrims from across north and sub-Saharan Africa gathered in Cairo.

In his description of the arrival of the Egyptian mahlm in Cairo upon the completion of its expedition, Edward Lane specifically records that the palanquin was adorned with two mushahs tied just below its apex, “one on a small scroll, and the other in the form of the book, also small, each enclosed in a case of gilt silver, attached externally at the top.” These two miniature Qur’ans performed numerous functions. On one level, they undoubtedly acted as talismans to protect the litter from various thieves and marauders as it made its long and perilous journey back to Cairo from Mecca after various pilgrimage rites. Within this context of return, their appendage might also convey that the mahlm was a sacralized object in a post-hajj state. The completion of the pilgrimage requires both a geographic and symbolic passage that clearly effects a transformation: the individual may signal this metamorphosis through a change in clothing, the assumption of a new name, or the use of the title hajj. Theoretically, this practice can apply to objects as well as to people, and the fixture of these little books to the apex of the mahlm is one method of providing a visible sign of metamorphosis. Yet it is highly unlikely that these texts did not accompany the palanquin for the entirety of its voyage. If indeed appended for the duration, the presence of these Qur’ans perhaps served to consecrate the structure, imparting an additional veil of protective holiness and dedicating it to its religious purpose.

The procession of the mahlm most likely was also recognized as an elaborate emblem of sovereignty. Consequently, these diminutive mushahs represented through synecdoche the political authority and territorial possessions of the Ottoman sultan. A distinctive group of five standard finials made of silver and stamped with the imperial emblems (tugras) of both Sultan Murad IV (r. 1623-1640) and Sultan Ibrahim (r. 1640-1648) underscores this connection. One of these finials is slightly taller than the others, and rather than displaying the flat, two-sided heads of regular military standards, all are characterized by bulbous, three-dimensional forms indicative of a different purpose. That this group of finials surmounted the poles that were used to erect the baldachin integral to the mahlm is very likely.” This is the first method through
which these two miniature Qur’ans intersect with the sancaq tradition. The second is through the office of the individual who led the entire procession, the amir al-hajj. The amir al-hajj was in part a military commander in charge of the troops escorting the convoy, who were charged with protecting the caravan. He may therefore have carried his own imperial standard, which in all likelihood bore its own sancaq Qur’an.

That the Egyptian mamluk bore a miniature rotulus in addition to a diminutive codex reflects the prevalence of scroll charms within popular Islamic practices. The earliest sancaq Qur’ans likely adhered to the scroll format, only later assuming other geometrical shapes. Historically, scrolls of parchment or paper bearing Qur’anic verses, prayers, or other talismanic inscriptions and markings were also folded or rolled into metal tubes or lozenges and suspended around the neck for personal protection. These could be handwritten but were also commonly printed from engraved blocks (tashqat) onto long, thin strips of paper or parchment. Although most surviving examples date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, textual evidence attests to the early development of the practice. Already in the eighth century, for instance, al-Layth (d. 775/792), an Egyptian student of Malik b. Anas, is recorded as saying, “there is no harm in hanging something from the Qur’an above the bed of a woman in childbirth or a sick person, if it is enclosed in leather or placed in a tube.”

This traditional, talismanic use of the scroll format informs our understanding of a third item in the Adomeit collection. This specimen condenses the entirety of the Qur’an written in minute naskh calligraphy in black ink onto a rotulus measuring 13.68 x 6.8 centimeters and constructed from glazed paper (Figure 3.9). The scroll terminates in a colophon stating that it was copied by one Muhammad b. Muslim. Regrettably the year is not specified, and the accompanying seal is illegible; however, the configuration of the seal and the loops of the calligraphy are typically Qajar.

The Qajar period (1785–1925) is characterized by the encroachment of modern technologies upon calligraphic practices and the written word, namely the advent of printed books through the adoption of typography and lithography within the Islamic world. Tabriz, for example, housed at least two typographic printing presses by 1825, and the first lithographic press in Persia arrived in Tabriz in 1835. By no means did printing techniques entirely supplant manuscript production—indeed, initial forays into lithography in particular retained many conventions of existing manuscripts, such as the inclusion of variant wordings in the margins of the text. While some resistance to printing the Qur’anic text always existed, it is intriguing that Adomeit C5 displays both an antiquarian script—that is, revival naskh calligraphy—and, through its rotulus shape, an archaizing form. In both script and shape the Adomeit scroll therefore sustains an age-old tradition at a moment of technological experimentation.

While red recitation markers appear throughout the various suras, supportive of close personal use, access to any Qur’anic verse is hindered by the scroll’s inherent elongation, which demands that it be painstakingly unrolled to access any distinct portion of text. Significantly, the scroll’s calligraphy is neither faded nor worn, suggesting that, in this instance, readability was of secondary importance to its scroll shape. The initial thirty-two centimeters of this miniature scroll are reinforced with linen and an additional paper backing, painted red. Therefore, when the entire scroll is tightly wound, this reinforced portion forms a protective outer layer around the object, which originally may have been housed in an additional tubular container and perhaps suspended from the body or slipped into the pocket of the owner, akin to an almanac or calendar scroll.

Some of Adomeit’s miniature codices themselves provide physical evidence of being affixed to the body. A small circular Qur’an, likely of Indian origin, features a one-inch loop of green thread around the spine that enables its fixture to an object or person (Adomeit C6). So too does a nineteenth-century sub-Saharan book of Sufi litany (Adomeit C1). The latter manuscript is housed in a leather pouch with straps on either side, characteristic of its use as a portable prayer manual worn around the neck or waist (see Figures 8.1 and 8.2). Third, a modest square codex—a complete Qur’an save for the last and shortest chapters (Qur’an 108–114)—may have been modified to support such a function. The relative simplicity and minuteness of the third book is captured in this image of its opening folios (Figure 3.10). Illumination is confined to a thin circular frame surrounding the written surface on some, but not all, folios, and to the gold paint used for the chapter headings. The spine of the book is gouged fairly deeply in its center, suggesting that it once housed a book or other mechanism so that the manuscript could dangle around a neck or perhaps on a wall. Indeed, the brown leather binding is scuffed as only a well-used book can be.

This desire to bind textual amulets to the body and to keep Qur’anic or other devotional texts close to the self is a materialization of a potent hadith (saying) attributed to Muhammad: “The possessor of the Qur’an is like a tied up camel. If one is fastened tight to it, then one can hold it fast but if one loosens it, then it will go.” Here the physical intimacy of the fastening motif emphasizes the necessity of regular recitation as a mental and spiritual practice; the “fastening” of the self represents the extensive study and ritual use of the Qur’an, honing the mind and spirit, which would otherwise rebel and lose all of the individual’s carefully collected knowledge of the divine. The literal fixture of miniature Qur’ans or other devotional texts to the body functions as a concretization of this deep commitment, continually reinforced through the declarative capacity of close proximity. The physical intimacy of the object worn near or against the owner’s body symbolizes the intimacy between self and God available through the vehicle that is text. Trust in
the efficacious nature of the miniature text, either toward a specific cure or outcome or for general benefit, is merely an extension of this belief in divine power as made manifest in graphic form.

Yet even those codices lacking overt physical evidence of adhesion or suspension fulfilled functions that fall within the purview of the amuletic. Proof of this phenomenon is the presence of auspicious contents, activated when the codex is held close in the hand during recitation. For example, the inclusion of a divination manual (jalalnama) at the end of the Safavid Qur’an discussed earlier is no small detail. Its presence represents both a protective impulse and magico-religious interests as much as an adherence to current fashion. This rarely acknowledged practice attempts to foretell future events and to seek guidance (izkilhama) from God according to the verses and letters of the Qur’an.18

In the Lilly manuscript, the jalalnama consists of a divination grid attributed to Ja’far al-Sadiq (d. 148/769) and comprises the final folios of the codex (279r–280r). The divination grid is preceded by instructions to the reader that outline a short regimen of prayers and suras to be recited prior to seeking guidance from the Qur’an. The reader is then prompted to peruse seven lines of text and to identify the first letter of this seventh line, which may then be compared to the grid in order to reveal the seeker’s fortune (Figure 3.11). Conversely, the reader may verify whether the seventh line begins with an auspicious verse of mercy (ayat-i rahmat) as a sign of affirmation regarding a potential course of action.19

The ensuing predictions cover a variety of situations. The reader is assured that “when a man opens the Book and he encounters alif, this will indeed be a sign of good fortune.” The letter bu indicates “that by doing good deeds, you will find comfort in life, and you will receive rewards from a Mighty Lord”; the letter ta instructs that “repentance guides a man to the right path. Giving alms will protect a man from evil spirits.” An alliterative flourish permeates the outcome of the letter sad, which focuses on sabr (patience), and advises the reader “that to obtain one’s wishes one should exercise patience. If you practice patience, your wishes will be granted.” Through the practice of jild, the reader thus seeks guidance from the Qur’an through two complementary dimensions: as a text, interacting closely with its graphic content, but also as an object that, by virtue of its miniaturization, is inherently prophylactic.

The manuscript that Ruth Adomeit secreted into the silver Qajar amulet case (Figure 3.7) contains a surprising and unprecedented textual form (Figure 3.12). The written surface of each of its folios displays the same striking format: words written in red and black ink are schematically arranged, with no immediately apparent syntactical relation, within and around a five-petaled flower.
The codex is furthermore divided into sections through the repetition of illuminated details at three intervals: folios 17, 60v–61r, and 97v–98r all bear identical blue frames, highlighted with gold-painted leaves, while other folios are bare of any such decoration. Folio 17 contains the second half of Surat al-Fatiha and the phrase “Guide us to the straight path...” Given the absence of in-leaves in this manuscript, presumably the first portion of the sura was originally written on a folio affixed to the doublet. Significantly, folios 97v–98r can be identified as the final chapter of the Qur’an, Surat al-Nas (“Mankind,” Qur’an 11:41–6), known for its protective potency (Figure 3.13). The words composing the sura are present on these two folios; however, they have been scattered across them, requiring the reader to alternate between one folio and the other in order to reconstruct the sura’s six constituent verses. This identification of Qur’anic content suggests that the illuminations in the manuscript are functional divisions and that all or some folios in this small volume contain select Qur’anic verses, possibly three distinct suras, chosen for their apotropaic properties. The fact that some form of instruction or invitation is required is consistent with the esoteric composition repeated on each folio strongly suggests a magico-religious function. The visual rhythm of the words and the centrifugal quality of the design is well suited to cantillation or another manner of focused recitation.

Other diminutive volumes in Adomeit’s collection contain less mystifying (yet no less mystical) content. The thirty-sixth sura of the Qur’an, known simply by the two letters Ya Sin (y-s), provides an auspicious opening for a small rectangular Persian manuscript (Adomeit C4). Although they have been copied according to their proper order within the Qur’anic text, only certain chapters were selected for inclusion in this little book—namely suras that include the name of the mysterious letters (al-huruf al-muqatta’at) in their title or that are initiated by them, or else one of the mysterious letters appears in their opening sentences. The mysterious letters, also called the “disjoined letters” or “openings” (fawwâdh), refer to sequences of one to five letters of the Arabic alphabet that open a sura but carry no literal meaning. Ya Sin is one example: it commences simply with the verse “Ya (y) Sin (s). By the Qur’an full of wisdom...” (Qur’an 36:1–2). While there is no consensus regarding their interpretation, many scholars conclude that these letters represent the inimitable nature of Qur’anic revelation, which renders the divine accessible to human perception “by means of the very sounds (represented by letters) of ordinary human speech.” It is because of this esoteric dimension that these suras sustain magical connotations and are attributed amuletic faculties. This protective agency is reinforced by the appearance of the shahâda on folio 79r and of the Throne Verse (ayat al-kursi, Qur’an 2:255) near the end of the manuscript, extracted from its normal position within surat al-Baqara no doubt due to its beneficial and apotropaic qualities.

Another miniature text, housed in an octagonal nineteenth-century green velvet case (Figure 3.14), ends on folio 239r with Surat al-Nas—a fact unto itself not out of the ordinary. Yet in this particular specimen
the verse is written on a folio conspicuously pasted directly to the doublure. This detail allows easy access to its contents, which are worn from repeated handling. Clearly this final sura was a prized element of the codex, and served as the focus of regular recitation and meditation in response to its protective capacity.

Of course, the amuletic contents detected in the above examples do not signify that the commissioning or purchasing of these little volumes was devoid of other motivating factors, such as aesthetic appreciation or wonder at marvellous craftsmanship at reduced scale. On the contrary, one octagonal nineteenth-century Persian Qurʾan (Figure 3.19) is clearly a luxury object, likely commissioned to be an esteemed collectible. Its brown leather wallet binding is generously decorated with a gold-painted frame and geometric designs. Every folio of this minute manuscript is gold-flecked and smoothly polished to a high sheen. Its opening folios manifest a fantastically intricate double-page illumination. Surat al-Fatihah and the initial words of Surat al-Baqara emerge from a lustrous surface of gold paint accented with blue and pink pigments. Certainly the calligrapher took pride in the extraordinarily high quality of his writing, signing his work on folio 187r with the phrase, "Written by the lowly, the Shaykh 'Umar Dazi, 1274." 23

This deliberate adherence to the codex form and consequent emphasis upon traditional book arts—such as binding, tooling, stamping, and gilded illumination—distinguishes these miniature texts from conventional amulets, distinguishing them as amuletic books rather than bibliophiliac amulets. After all, a binding could be considered little more than a generic repository for a series of folded pieces of paper or parchment. Yet even the most modest of Adomeit’s specimens participate in the esteem of the book. Returning to Adomeit C3, the gilt paint that envelops the edges of all of the constituent folios signals the preciousness of the collective entity despite its extreme miniaturization (Figure 3.16). One final question prompted by these small-scale manuscripts is whether such little codices were used as one would expect a book to be used. In other words, were they read by their owners? By definition an amulet is ascribed inherent power, yet the amuletic use of text, through its graphic nature—its readability—supports a greater degree of intimacy between an object and its owner (or, as the case may be, wearer), who, if fully or partially literate, would be very likely to fix his or her eyes closely on the text, move his or her fingers over letters, and recite the words contained on any one folio. 24 Of course, literacy is not required for benefit to be accrued, and, theoretically, neither is legibility, although the latter may have been assured by the propriety inherent in the distortion of the Qurʾanic text. Even if miniaturization were to compromise the legibility of a divine text, a reduction in scale serves to further concentrate or distill its power. The attempt to read a text written in a smaller, "cover," scale, almost hidden or obscured from the eye, reenacts the process of revelation, of which the divine truth contained within the text is both product and proof. 25

While the legibility of any text is at serious risk upon its miniaturization, none of Adomeit’s specimens display script that may be deemed completely illegible. Legibility is compromised only in one specimen (Adomeit C6) due to the crepe-like translucency of the paper, which is not substantial enough to inhibit the words on the alternate side of a folio being visible when perusing the other. In other specimens, accessibility is limited to those with an intimate knowledge of the Qurʾan due
to the lack of main headings to guide the worshipper through the text. Despite their reduced scale, many specimens display red recitation and diacritical marks above and below the letters, and for marginal notations in different hands and inks than those of the calligraphers, thus attesting to the readers' close interaction with and annotation of the texts.

It must be recalled, however, that the worshipper's experience of the Qur'an is primarily oral, auditory, and improvisatory. As a devotional text, the Qur'an is always recited aloud, and depending on the style of recitation, its cantillation may mimic the cadence of normal speech or comprise highly musical textual-melodic phrases. The noun al-Qur'an is derived from the verb qara'a, meaning "to read" or "to recite," signaling both oral recitation and reading from a written text. That the recurring imperative "Qul!" ("Say!") introduces more than three hundred Qur'anic passages is a striking reminder of the oral/aural character of this sacred text. With the exception of the earliest specimens, written manuscripts of the Qur'an are littered with marginal and interlinear markings indicative of mandatory and permissible stops, places of required prostration, and other necessary information for correct recitation. Indeed,

...there is an ever-present, orally heard, and memorized Qur'an in addition to the written version of the Sacred Text, an auditory reality which touches the deepest chords in the souls of the faithful, even if they are unable to read the Arabic text.  

Because of this emphasis upon memorization of the Qur'an within religious education—in both Arabic-speaking and non-Arabic-speaking regions of the Muslim world—a mental text will always precede and surpass the written text; the latter technically acting only as an aide-memoire to what is already known within the heart. On a theological level, any Qur'anic manuscript (masab'ah) is simply a material manifestation of an earthly exemplar derived from an ultimate celestial scripture (the so-called al-Kitab or Umm al-Kitab). Because a written holy text's relationship with this prototype invests it with perceived sanctity and power, even the sheer physical presence of a Qur'an may be said to bestow blessing, or baraka.  

The present chapter does not aim to insist that all diminutive Islamic texts are exclusively amuletic. To do so would merely substitute one monolithic interpretation for another. Yet it is critical to emphasize that all small manuscripts have the potential to be amuletic, and that this potential is intrinsically linked to devotion, which renders the numinous accessible through close use. Such small volumes thus exist on a continuum between amulet and devotion, supporting both faculties, which themselves need not be mutually exclusive. Familial parallels exist between these volumes and small portable prayer books in Medieval Europe, which were similarly intimate objects. When not being used, Books of Hours could be secreted up a sleeve or protected in pouches suspended from a belt, or else stowed in small boxes (cair bâlî or cair cisele) carried on the shoulder or slung around the neck. Like miniature Qur'anic codices versus Christian prayer books is not wholly commensurate. Although oftentimes buttressed by luxurious illumination and painted detail, the Qur'an is customarily devoid of figural and narrative imagery. In contrast, partial or full-page illustrations commonly appear within Books of Hours (at least in those enjoyed by elite Christian audiences) in addition to text; therefore, rather than supporting a purely textual intimacy, perhaps Books of Hours sustain what may be better termed a "devotional intimacy."  

In conclusion, it has become clear that the study of miniature books involves fairly monumental complexities. The deployment of miniature Qur'anic manuscripts in warfare cannot be considered a solely Ottoman-Turkish phenomenon. Not only are these miniature manuscripts more widespread throughout the Islamic world than has been previously proposed, but when diminutive books participated in the theater of war, they were fastened not only to the shaft of standards held aloft by the
troops but also intimately on the bodies of the soldiers themselves, including within a Persian context. The diminutive size of these little volumes sustains a markedly corporeal dimension. Their miniature scale not only facilitated their adhesion to and suspension from the body but also demanded they be kept close to the body when used. This keeping of the text physically proximate, or interacting intimately with the text—that is, the maintenance of a sort of "textual intimacy"—should itself be recognized as an externalization of the desire for spiritual intimacy with the divine and the pious urge to interiorize, to embody, or to concretize the tenets of the sacred text. The differentiating factor of the amuletic capacity of these little books, as compared to amulets of a more conventional form (made of stone, wood, or leather), is the primacy of the codex form and the overt retention of legibility even in its miniature manifestation.

APPENDIX 3.1
All manuscripts' dimensions are supplied with measurements recording length by width (and by thickness, as needed). Abbreviations include: "Union cat. no."
(Union List of Arabic Manuscripts) and "Adornice Inventory no." (Adornice Personal Inventory Sheet). For a more detailed description of each manuscript, also see the Islamic book arts Web module at: www.americanmusuem.org/blogs.

Title: Selected Qur’anic Chapters
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th or early 20th century
- Shape: octagonal
- Paper: polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding; spine is reinforced with brown leather
- Dimensions of folios: 3.8 x 5.3 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 3.5 x 5.3 cm
- No. of folios: 18
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 10
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Colophon: (illegible)
- Union cat. no. 12
- Adornice Inventory no. 17

Title: Miniature Qur’an
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th century
- Shape: elongated octagon
- Paper: highly polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding made of brown leather
- Dimensions of folios: 5.8 x 5.7 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 3.5 x 5.3 cm
- No. of folios: 18
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 10
- Script: maghribi
- Color of ink: black, select letters in purple, pink, light blue
- Union cat. no.: no obvious concordance
- Adornice Inventory no. 18

Title: Miniature Qur’an
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th century
- Shape: scroll
- Paper: glued beige rag
- Dimensions of scroll: 2.58 x 8.6 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 6.3 cm wide
- Average no. of lines of text per inch: 4
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Colophon: (illegible)
- Union cat. no. 17
- Adornice Inventory no. 19

Title: Select Qur’anic Chapters
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th or early 20th century
- Shape: octagonal
- Paper: polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding made of brown leather
- Dimensions of folios: 4.0 x 5.8 cm
- No. of folios: 23
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 17
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Union cat. no. 17
- Adornice Inventory no. 27

Title: Miniature Qur’an
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th century
- Shape: square
- Paper: highly polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding made of brown leather
- Dimensions of folios: 4.0 x 5.8 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 3.6 x 5.3 cm
- No. of folios: 20
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 17
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Union cat. no.: no obvious concordance
- Adornice Inventory no. 18

Title: Miniature Qur’an
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th century
- Shape: scroll
- Paper: glued beige rag
- Dimensions of scroll: 2.58 x 8.6 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 6.3 cm wide
- Average no. of lines of text per inch: 4
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Colophon: (illegible)
- Union cat. no.: no obvious concordance
- Adornice Inventory no. 19

Title: Miniature Qur’an (nearly complete)
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: Iran, late 19th century
- Shape: square
- Paper: polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding made of brown leather
- Dimensions of folios: 4.0 x 5.8 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 3.6 x 5.3 cm
- No. of folios: 20
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 17
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: black
- Union cat. no.: no obvious concordance
- Adornice Inventory no. 18

Title: Al-Jazuli’s Dal’al-ul-Khayrati
- Acc. no. Lilly Library, Adornice Miniature Islamic ms. C5
- Location and date: sub-Saharan Africa, probably northern Nigeria, 19th or 20th century
- Shape: rectangular
- Container: 10.5 x 9.4 x 4.8 cm
- Paper: beige rag
- Dimensions of folios: 6.9 x 8.6 cm
- Dimensions of written surface: 5.8 x 6.5 cm
- No. of folios: 12
- Average no. of lines of text per folio: 17
- Script: naskhi
- Color of ink: brown, black, and red
- Union cat. no.: no obvious concordance
- Adornice Inventory no. 19
Title: Miniature Qur'an
- Acc. no: 1; Lilly Library, Adorno Miniature Islamic Ms. 124.
- Location and date: Safavid (Iran), 16 May 1532.
- Shape: octagonal
- Container: 4.3 cm x 3.3 cm (core); 3.7 x 1 cm (chain)
- Paper: highly polished beige rag
- Binding: regular binding made from brown leather
- Dimensions of folio: 6.3 x 5.2 x 0.8 cm
- Dimensions of visible text: 5.6 x 4.1 cm
- No. of folios: 250
- Average no. of lines per folio: 15
- Script: naskh
- Color of ink: black
- Colophon: (c. 1535) "On Thursday, the 20th of the month of Jumāla, 1, the year 958.

English Translation

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

In my faith, prayers and peace be upon him, says that whoever desires to know the future of his affairs through divination by the Qur'an should first perform omens. He should then read this text of the Qur'an and the surah that follows it. After that, he should read the following prayer (dhā'ah) while having pure and sincere thoughts and thinking of God. As he opens the Book, the prayer is:

O Lord, I have trusted in You and have made divination by Your Book, as shown in the reconciliation in Your hidden mysteries and in what You have made known. Your knowledge is hidden, and no one can know all that is on land and sea; and no one can know all that is in the darkness of the earth, nor anything living or dead that is not recorded in (this) clear decree.

And when the Qur'an is open, the reader should count seven pages further and look on the right side of the page. He should count seven lines down and examine the beginning of the seventh line to see if the first letter of the line is, because this letter describes his state (affairs) and possessions. According to another tradition, after he opens the Book he should count seven lines down and see if the beginning of the seventh line starts with a verse of mercy (bayāniyyah). If so, then he can proceed with his requested action; but if not, then he should renounce (carrying it out).

Allāh willed that by doing good deeds, you will find comfort in life, and you will receive rewards from a Mighty Lord. To means that repentance guides a man to the right path. Giving alms will protect a man from evil spirits. See if appears in your fortune, you will earn a good name in religious and state affairs. If appears in your fortune, this means that a tzimzum (reduction) will occur in your affairs and you will find unexpected fortune. He means that you will be stronger when you are surrounded by enemies, and thus you will be free from grief and sorrow.

Quraḍ: Men are always affected by fear and danger, he who is always mindful of God need not worry. Dāl: When you obtain your wish, you will gain power, epiphany, and glory. Zal: Don't be sorrowful and worry, you rejoice for the enemy will be destroyed. Re: (Jaf) appears in your fortune, this is a sign of grandeur; you will have a long and good fortune as well.

Zaː means that you will face difficulties in your affairs, but (God) in the end will rescue you from troubles.

Quraḍ: You will have happiness in both places (in this world and in the next), and God will grant you a victorious victory.

Quraḍ: If you come up in the Book, this means that you will abstain from evil-doing for the sake of the Creator.

Quraḍ: Since you are accused of doing wrong, your enemy will eventually pay for his evil-doing.

Quraḍ: Since he who suffers in his endeavors will eventually reap rewards for his hardships.

Quraḍ: Since you have no need of mankind, the Creator will assist you in both worlds.

Quraḍ: (Jaf) appears in your fortune, your enemy will be destroyed, and you will be free from bad-mouthing and gossip.

Dāl: For whoever encounters the letter in his fortune, his affairs will turn to problems.

Re: Means that eventually your affairs will be successful, and like the sun you will be delivered from harm and destruction.

May all who read these versified words rejoice.
چه خواهیم می‌بایست از آن ترا بهدیش امان
س عادت داشته‌ام در هر دو جای
ش، از دماغ آیت‌الدین ترس و بیم
می‌بایست هر چه می‌ترسد، به راد
بزنم از حضور حرف‌های شوی
ف طیف آیت باز می‌گذارد
ظرفی از زنگ زم و زنجر
در دستان روی سیر یکی
م بیاید آن همکار این مرد
آشکار گردیدن احلال کار
چون یک دانستگاه آرام می‌باشد
مبین این شوی بی‌زمینه
در صدای دهانهٔ خواسته
ف، از آن دو دستگاه راه‌نفر
باید از من، خویش و خواب
ینگ از زمین، زیر بینه
مگر در خلاق غرایت‌دار
ر، باز ترک می‌کنم بی ند
ف از آن در خون، بی رنگ
ه، خاک‌شات سرکار
را بی‌زمینه، باز ترک
مانند شوی بی‌زمینه
در من مگر به خیال کار
بانک‌ها خون آمیز ما کاه
شاد است هر که هم‌خوان السال

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NOTES

I am sincerely grateful to Christiane J. Bayehre for introducing me to this material and for her helpful guidance through my research. I am also grateful to the staff of the Lüly Library of Rare Books and Manuscripts at Indiana University for their enthusiastic support of this project.

1. Desperated fragments of a "maghi" Qur'an have garnered scholarly attention. Although the manuscript is often attributed to the 13th-century Persia, the style is certainly that of a manuscript of the 13th century, and the attribution suggests that the manuscript was indeed made for its precursor, Timur. See: Timur (1360–1405). Ahmad recounts that "the calligrapher in a 'tiqah' came to him and showed him the 'i'tat' that he had written and that it was written in a small seal, that it could fit in a green ring, but, when he showed it to the king, it was not accepted, and Timur went away and wrote a Qur'an so large that it had to be brought to Timur on a car." See: Quor Ahmad, Calligraphers and Painters: A Treatise by Quor Ahmad, Son of Mir-Mohamad, 1976.


4. Among these twelve manuscripts compose the Adenian Miniature (Islamic Manuscripts: Herefore simply "Adenian"). For a summary of the artistic details of these miniature manuscripts, see Appendix 5. Transition to these information on the presentation of these manuscripts, see Appendix 5. Further information on these manuscripts may also be accessed through an online web module at www.museum.ca. 5. Bath E. Adenman's account of the collection of the Lüly Library resulted in the transfer of approximately thirty thousand rare books and other items, of which approximately fifty thousand are miniature manuscripts of all manner of texts, from philosophical treatises to biblical verses for children. For further information on this project, see Bath E. Adenman, and her colleagues, see the chapter in this volume on Janet Raukman. This chapter will focus locally on the presentation of the Adenian manuscripts within the collection. The Adenian collection also includes approximately thirty-five uncatalogued examples of printed miniature Qurans. The majority of these dates to the late 14th or 15th century, and deserve further study. Due to limited space, this chapter will only address the miniature Islamic manuscripts and not the miniature Islamic printed books in the Adenian collection.

6. The library also houses a private personal papers, including inventories of his collection draft by a self-made numbering system, along with his extensive correspondence with curators, scholars, and other bibliophiles. See Bath E. Adenman, Personal Inventory Sheets, Box 10, 11, 15; Adenman, Islamic Manuscripts Department, The Lüly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington. The terms "amulet" and "jalabini" are used interchangeably in common parlance, yet for the purpose of this chapter preference is given to the former, in accordance with the distinctions made by Elisa Attili, the Magnificent (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art; New York: Abrams, 1975), 16, 19, and 20; 67–68; J. M. Rogers and R. M. Ward, Seljuks of the Magnificent (Seattle: Seagull Books, 1948), 25; and Nabil F. Shafar, The Art of the Pen: Calligraphy of the 12th and 13th Centuries, The Nasir al-Din Khalil Collection of Islamic Art. Vol. 4 (London: Nour Foundation in association with Ashmolean Museum and Oxford University Press, 1991), 23, 48–49; C. Creighton Black and Nabil Sadik, Islamic Manuscripts: London: Sam Fogg Rare Books and Manuscripts, London, 1990, 19, 40–51 and 111; and James, After Timur, nos. 17, 70. 3. Sheâla Blair is one of the few to break with scholarly prejudice in her assertion that a small number of scribes Qurans were made as presentation pieces to the Ottoman court. See her discussion of a miniature Qur'an transcribed by Halil Muhammed Zahir in 1790–1791 and its accompanying illuminated double folio in Blair, Islamic Calligraphy, 484–485.

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HEATHER COFFEY
adopted the usage of Hûshî Tercan and Turgut Tekcan. A detail of this illustration (those two names and the author's name) appears in the catalog of Unger, Kermit Yelemas, 1991, 79. I am also grateful to Yasemin Gençer for her translation of portions of the Tercan's catalogue.

12. Tercan and Tercan, Türk Sanat Arşivi, 74. Currently there is no satisfactory explanation of the prominence of the octagonal shape among surviving specimens. A speculative link may be made with the pre-Christian, octagonal shape of the Dome of the Rock, completed by the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd al-Malik in 691.


15. Sanät-ı Fahr (448) reads: "We have granted you a manifest victory: That God may forgive thee thy faults of the past and those to follow, fulfill thy favor to you and guide you on the straight way." Sanät-ı Nazir (1113) reads: "When God’s help and victory come, and you see men honor His faith in multitudes, give glory to your Lord and seek His pardon. He is ever disposed to mercy.

Sanät-ı Sefi (893) reads: "And He will bestow upon you other blessings which you desire: help from God and a speedy victory. Proclaim the good tidings to the faithful.

16. Sanät-ı Tercan (51–2) reads: "Abd al-Malik, my God, there is no god but Him, the Living, the Eternal One. Ayaş al-kursi (2255) reads: "God, there is no god but He, the Living, the Eternal One. Neither sight nor ear nor sleep overmasters Him. Is it what the heavens and the earth contain. Who can intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before and behind men. They can grasp only that of His knowledge which He wills. His throne is as vast as the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of both does not weary Him. He is the Easel, the Immutable One."

17. Tercan and Tercan note the existence of a double pair or double for this of this (Topkapı Palace Museum, Inv. nos. 101, 102, Türk Sanat Arşivi, 86). This is a good void of inscriptions and titles but is attributed to Seldin and Seldin's reign due to the similarity in style of its script. It bears one Qur'an container tied to the lid.


19. Tercan and Tercan, Türk Sanat Arşivi, 86.

20. For example, Topkapı Palace Museum, Inv. no. 2075/1, dated 859/1458, is attributed by subsequent owners to the 14th century.

21. Bir Kütüphanebeli, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1609, folios 6iv–8v, I am grateful to Emine Fersan for information about this manuscript. A detail of this illustration (those two names and the author's name) appears in the catalog of Unger, Kermit Yelemas, 1991, 79. I am also grateful to Yasemin Gençer for her translation of portions of the Tercan's catalogue.

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the suspension of these cases is provided by a similar specimen illustrated in a recent cata-
logue of miniature books; here a cord has been tied to the metal hinges on either side of the
case. See Anna C. Bremer and Julian E. Iddes, "Miniature Books: 4000 Years of Tiny Treasures

49. Chardin writes extensively on the use of amulettes. "Je ne sai pas d'homme de Persie, que
posant sur lui des amulettes à ses pieds, ou en les tenant sous les bras et pendus au cou, il en retirent aussi une paire de serpents et autres corolaires.

50. Stephen Vermeul, Orientalism: Islamic Art in the 19th Century, ed. Iuliet Naky, ND,

51. Ibid.

52. Richard Francis Burton, Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah &

53. Christian Siwicki Hutzglocke, Mecca in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life,


55. Ibid.-small Qura'an were included among the panoply of valuable objects sent in the
annual imperial curiosities. The official dispatch of such Qura'ans to Mecca attends to the
 customary use of small scale or miniature Qura'an by pilgrims processing along the hajj
route. See another account of two strange Qura'ans for Qura'an in Eltmann Bilgelen, "Precious Objects in the Imperial Treasury Related with
Other Countries in the East, Performed by M. Neky, Newc a Captain in the Engineers of the
Two Factories, 114.

56. An exhibition plaza accompanying a miniature Qura'an written by the calligrapher
Karim b. Ibrahim Shahrur in 1410/1893 preserved within the Sisak-Saborska Museum in
Mitrovica confirms this assertion. The manuscript is written in minute cursive script and
measures 5.9 x 2.2 x 1.8 centimeters. In its folio each two lines fill two lines of script. No
accession number was provided by the plaque, which I viewed on March 15, 2005. For an
example of a probable similar Qura'an in scroll form, see Topkapı Palace Museum, E. H. 485,
reproduced as nos. 295 and 296 on page 392 and discussed on pages 401-415 in Timothy Brown,
Topkapi, 2005. Its octagonal cylindrical silver gilt cover measures 17 x 15 centimeters and is
featuring on its suspension below the finial of a military standard by its silk cord. The Qura'an
within measures a w x 15 cm dimensions and is dated to ca. 1500-1550. The complex design of
the scroll shares similar features with exact tenamentals, showing that the artist(s)
responsible practiced both arts.

57. Some of these objects are preserved in modern collections. See, for example, the
group of these koinakes discussed by Madi-
cos and Savage Smith, Science, Tools and Magic, vol. 1, 142-143.

58. For a comprehensive examination of block printing throughout the medieval Islamic
world (specifically ca. 900-1450), including
the illustration of fifty-five extant Arabic
block-printed amulettes, see Karl R. Schaefer, Cultural Crossroads: Medieval Arabic Block
Schaefer includes an undated block-printed paper amulet preserved in the Lilly Library,

59. R. Marston Speight, "Muslim Attitudes towards Christians in the Maghrib during
cylindrical specimens of Surat al-Fatiha ("The Purify of Faith," Qur’an 11:1) among others.
favour of heaven, or for direction in the right course. Repeated, these three, the opening chapter, the call, and, and the verse above quoted, they let the book fill open, or open it to random, and, from the seventh line of the right-hand page, draw their answer. The words often will not convey a direct answer; but are taken as affirmative or negative according as their general tenor is good or bad promising a blessing, or denouncing a threat, etc. Instead of reading the seventh line of the page, some count the number of the letters 'kha' and 'shin' which occur in the whole page and if the 'shin' predominates, the inference is favorable: 'kha' represents 'shvet', or 'god'; 'shin', 'space', or 'evil.' See Lane, An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, 260-261.

76. Notably, pages 198-199 are blank. The text resumes on page 201 and continues uninterrupted to page 219, the final folios in the volume. The presence of blank folios suggests that the manuscript is either unfinished or that they were added when the manuscript was rebound due to fragility or overuse. That there has been some sort of interference to the manuscript is indicated by the fact that the binding is very loose throughout the first portion of the codex but very tight throughout the later folios.


81. A colophon on folio 208 bears the signature "Muhammad Huseyn, son of Muhammad Riza," although the full date is not legible. The calligraphy, quality of the paper, and the cardboard reinforcing the binding suggest the item dates to the late 19th or early 20th century.

82. The curved metal book that secures the redbert container closed to identical to that on the other Qumran amulet case (Adanini Cag). This detail, combined with the crisscross calligraphy and quality of the paper reinforcing the binding, suggests a 19th-century Persian provenance.

83. The last name is barely legible, "Dzaw" or "Dawr" are also possibilities. The manuscript may be of Qajar provenance; however, the argument could be made that the use of red washes and detailing in the frontispiece indicates an Ottoman workshop.

84. An example of a series of miniature hexagonal folios evidently used interactively is preserved in a unique specimen housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. See ms. arabe 1940 in Annie Berthier and Anne Zak, Livres de Parures: Tissus, Bible, Cetme (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2015), 184. Several contiguous hexagonal folios bearing extracts from the Qur'an and prayers in Arabic and Turkish have been inscribed on the cover of a small codex dated to 1312 and likely of Ottoman origin. This arrangement would have allowed the owner to consult and read the folios before and after prayer.

85. Nahid F. Safvat attributes a revelatory capacity to talismanic scrolls written in the Mamluk and Ilkhanid periods. These were written using a confusion of scripts, one of which was ghubar ("dust-like"), as called because its minute letters resemble particles of dust on the page. Perhaps developed from rija' and naskh, ghubar was reportedly used to allow messages to be sent by pigeon post (that is, tied to a bird's wing or leg), which required the compression of written information onto very small pieces of paper. Scrolls bearing verses believed to have particular protective powers were often written in an enlarged script. The enlarged letters were themselves subsequently filled with the entire text of the Qur'an written in ghubar. The ensuing contrast between monumental and minute scales was highly charged, for it was through the recitation the larger inscription that one "transmitted the power of the "hidden" text in ghubar." (Ghurar, The Art of the Pen, 84).


93. Skemer, Binding Words, 310.

94. This term appears, for example, in the title of the chapter in Eamon Duffy's Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers 1250-1750 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006). Duffy's use of the term encompasses both the nature of Books of Hours as "intensely personal objects" capable of being personalized through the inclusion of coats of arms, the owner's name in written prayers, etc. but also for the "formal exchange of intimacy," either through the addition to their fellow of signatures, personalized messages, oaths, debts, and records of deaths, births, marriages, and burial book itself as a gift or bequest that cemented familial or social ties. See Duffy, Marking the Hours, chapters 2 and 3.

95. More recent evidence of this desire for books on the battlefield survives from the First World War, when Muslims fighting in the British army were issued small metal lockets, each containing approximately an inch tall, containing a tiny printed Qur'an inscribed magically. See an image of one of these Qur'ans, printed by David Bryce, see Beemer and Eddison, Miniature Books, 87.

96. The expression [it is] clear decrees or the book that makes clear" (kitab al-mutah) is a reference to the Qur'an proper (see, e.g., Qur'an 6:26, 106, and 27:53).

97. The positive verses of mercy and forgiveness (as opposed to the negative verses of torment and killing) are those 344 in the Qur'an that herald a positive state of affairs.