Ibrahim Müteferrika and the Age of the Printed Manuscript

Ibrahim Müteferrika (ca. 1674-1745), an Ottoman imperial court steward, founded the first officially sanctioned Ottoman Turkish printing press in Istanbul in 1727. Active under his supervision between the years of 1729 and 1742, the press produced seventeen works in twenty-two volumes. Müteferrika's press printed between five hundred and twelve hundred copies of each book—this output of 12,200-13,700 printed books was a relatively small yield for a printing press of the eighteenth century.

Following several years of inactivity, the press fell into disuse indefinitely after Müteferrika's death in 1745 but was used once again in 1756 by his successors, Ibrahim Efendi and Ahmed Efendi, to issue the second edition of an Arabic-Turkish dictionary, Lugat-i Vànkûstu, first published in 1729. After this time, the printing press was once again abandoned until it was bought from Müteferrika's heirs by two court secretaries—Vak'ânâvis Ahmed Vâsîf Efendi and Beyhûcî Rajîd Efendi—in 1785-1784, at which time it was used to print six more titles.

The Lilly Library at Indiana University, Bloomington, is the only repository in North America to house the complete collection of printed books produced by Ibrahim Müteferrika's press during his lifetime. The Lilly also owns a copy of the two-volume second edition of the Lugat-i Vànkûstu (1756), as well as two books printed in 1783-1784. All volumes were purchased in 1976 from the estate of William Edward David Allen (1901-1973) of Waterford, Ireland. A few of the library's holdings thus provide a fitting opportunity to examine Ibrahim Müteferrika and his press both during and after his lifetime, a period of rapid change and innovation in the Ottoman Empire.

The Müteferrika press was preceded by a number of presses established in Istanbul by non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. The very first printing house was established in Istanbul in 1493 by two Jewish brothers, David and Samuel ibn Nahmias, and was permitted to produce works in Hebrew. The Nahmias press was followed by many other presses run by ethnic and religious minorities, principally Armenians and Greeks, in other major cities of the empire. Despite such precedents, the Müteferrika press holds a significant place in the history of printing for Muslims; it was the first Islamic press in the Islamic world established with the approval of a Muslim ruler to produce works that catered primarily to a Muslim audience (using the local language, Turkish, and printed in Arabic script) and, more often than not, written from a Muslim author's perspective. The Islamic world—in which book arts were deeply immersed in the traditions of the written word, calligraphy, and the aesthetics of the Arabic script—was unhurried in adopting the technology...
of printing, lagging three centuries behind Europe. The Mütrefikra press thus was by no means the first printing press established in Ottoman lands; rather, it was the first to receive royal sanction to produce Islamic printed works.27

The products of the Mütrefikra press embody the period of change between 1727 and 1745 in Ottoman Turkish printing technology. Mütrefikra’s printed books in fact constitute the incubula28 period of printing in the Islamic world, and thus bear witness to the beginning of the gradual abandoning of the manuscript format in favor of the printed book, a phenomenon with similarities to European incubula.29 Emerging during the eighteenth century, these Ottoman Turkish printed books still preserved the appearance of traditional manuscripts, although they were produced in mass quantities (relative to the manuscript industry) and by movable type rather than by hand. Thus, the Mütrefikra press’s books deserve the more descriptive name of “printed manuscripts,”30 a term that suggests the production method of the printed book while connoting the appearance of the “manually” produced manuscript through the preservation and appropriation of a variety of elements typical of the Islamic manuscript tradition.

The books of the Mütrefikra press were also produced during a critical period in Ottoman history. The eighteenth century started with the Tulip Period (1718–1730),31 marked by leisure and conspicuous consumption, while the remainder of the eighteenth century was plagued by attempts to revise the existing administrative system, an endeavor further complicated by the general corruption that had made its way into the ruling class.32 After the so-called classical period of the sixteenth century, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries represented an era of change.33 Military defeats, a poor economy, growing internal corruption, and an increasingly diminishing and decentralizing empire brought to the fore this old establishment’s essential need for reform. The founding of the first Ottoman printing press thus was a much-needed change in eighteenth-century Ottoman society, with the potential to spark hope for scientific and educational advances and to move the empire out of its stagnant spell and into the modern age.

In 1726, Ibrahim Mütrefikra wrote a pamphlet titled Veslevlî-t-tib’a (The Usefulness of Printing), which he presented to the Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Paşa, who in turn forward it to Sultan Ahmed III (r. 1703–1730).34 Mütrefikra’s tract, which was included at the beginning of his first printed book, Lughat-i Vankula (Figure 5.1), lists ten reasons why the printing press was necessary for bettering the Ottoman Empire and its people. These ten benefits of the printing press included educational advantages; the retrieval of lost and/or destroyed manuscripts; longer lasting ink; errorless and easily legible publications; the inexpensive production of books in large quantities; the addition of indices and tables of contents to assist with the retrieval of information; the eventual elimination of ignorance through the mass production of printed material; the strengthening of the empire through learning; the removal of the Islamic book trade from Christian hands; and increasing the glory of the empire as the leading Islamic state.35 Mütrefikra also reassured the grand vizier that he would not print books on Islamic law or any other works of a religious nature, due either to Mütrefikra’s own interest in the non-religious sciences or perhaps his desire to appease the scribes who held a monopoly on the book production trade at this time.36

In this Veslevlî-t-tib’a, Mütrefikra also argues that proofreaders must be employed to check the accuracy of the texts and thereby ensure the superiority of a printed product over a manuscript, whose text can be corrupted by scribal error. Sultan Ahmed III responded to the petition with a ferman (imperial edict) expressing his support for the establishment of Mütrefikra’s press, another document that the printer included as preliminary material in a number of his earlier printed books (Figure 5.2).37 Echoing the suggestions listed by Ibrahim Mütrefikra in his Veslevlî-t-tib’a and basing his argument on the official opinion of the şeyhülislam,38 Mevlana Abdullah, Sultan Ahmed III
opined that printing was permissible so long as the selected works were secular in character. The "ferman"s regulation entailed a strict prohibition on the printing of Qur'ans, collections of hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), and religious works on law and theology. For these reasons, dictionaries and books on secular subjects such as history, logic, astronomy, and geography would form the core of Muteferrika's printing efforts.

The "ferman" also appointed a handful of individual members of the 'ulema' (an administrative group of religious scholars)—whose names were suggested by Muteferrika in his "Vesileti-i tıba'a"—to proofread works in their pre-publication phase. The careful selection of this "editorial board" shows that a great deal of emphasis was laid upon the correct and accurate transfer of knowledge within the format of the printed book—a perceived benefit of the printing press as argued by Muteferrika in his "Vesileti-i tıba'a." In his "ferman," Sultan Ahmed III elaborates upon and reemphasizes the importance of precision in the transmission of knowledge, made all the more critical due to mass production.

Threatened by the printing press and its potential to replace the demand for their profession, scribes and calligraphers strongly (and strategically) opposed the establishment of Muteferrika's press. On the other hand, only a few conservative individuals from the 'ulema' showed any opposition to this new technological venture. The calligraphers and copyists' concerns were somewhat alleviated by the condition that only secular works were to be issued by the press, making the printing of religious works off-limits, a proviso established by Muteferrika in the first place. Those who remained in opposition to the printing press in general do not appear to have expressed any further disinterest, probably due to the reality that secular works made up a small portion of their commissions.

Although Muteferrika began his printing activities in earnest only after having obtained the official clearance to establish his press, it is clear that his experimentation with this art form preceded his securing of the sultan's permission. In 1720-1720 a woodblock print of a map of the Sea of Marmara was produced and appears to have been presented to the Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Paşa, as the lower right corner of the map has an inscription that reads: "My illustrious master, if you wish, larger ones can be made, year 1135 (1720-21))." This venture was followed by another map, this time of the Black Sea, produced in 1724-1725 from four engraved copper plates. These two maps, produced before Muteferrika's imperial permission to print was granted in 1727, also predate the redaction of his "Vesileti-i tıba'a," which he presented to the grand vizier in 1726. The maps present clear proof that Muteferrika possessed printing materials before he received official permission to print, suggesting that he was either fairly confident that he would be granted imperial permission to run his press or that he knew he would have to show his printing abilities to the vizier—a man open to innovation—in order to secure his support for this venture. The first map—produced by means of the simplest and oldest method of printing, block printing—must have made an impression on the vizier, as Muteferrika moved on to produce more technically complex and intricate maps afterward.

Muteferrika's own home in the quarter of Fatih, specifically the neighborhood of Sultan Selim, is the recorded place of his printing activities throughout his career. His press comprised six printing machines, two of which were allocated exclusively for the production of maps. Many of the works that Muteferrika published were geographies, histories, and dictionaries; thus, maps, diagrams, and other kinds of illustrations formed essential pictorial components to his printed texts. Based on the above information, it is clear that Muteferrika had somehow acquired a printing machine by the mid-1720s; prior to that date he had experimented with woodblock printing. As noted in the sultan's "ferman" of 1725, Muteferrika was not the only person granted official permission to print: Sa'id Efendi, who had returned in October of 1721 from a diplomatic trip to Paris with his father Yirmiszikiz Mehmed Çelebi, also is listed as a beneficiary of the imperial decree. This date is a few years after Muteferrika's first woodblock print map and a few years before his first copper plate printed map, suggesting that Sa'd Efendi may have brought printing machines to Istanbul after his return from Paris. Besides Sa'd's potential role in securing printing materials from Europe, press equipment could have been imported from Holland, France, or Germany at this time. Importing press machinery and related materials was not uncommon for printing houses in Istanbul during the eighteenth century. To the contrary, it was mostly the norm in the case of minority presses based in the imperial capital.

Printing machines were not the only printing necessities imported from western Europe. Paper, the raw material needed for the production of a book, was also in high demand. The paper mills in Istanbul and Amasya that produced paper for the manuscript industry had long since been unable to compete with the European market and were no longer in use by the eighteenth century; thus, European merchants provided much of the paper necessary for the Ottoman manuscript and book market. Perhaps troubled by this situation, in 1741, Muteferrika established a paper mill in Yalova, a town outside of Istanbul. Muteferrika's mill only operated for ten to fifteen years, during a period (ca. 1741-1755) when virtually no books were printed by his press. Since the early years of printing in Europe, presses often were established close to paper mills and in large cities (where city dwellers readily provided used rags—i.e., the raw material for Islamic paper). Printers thus could obtain affordable local paper and secure a literate audience from within their urban milieu. The practice of producing paper close to major cities was not foreign to the Islamic lands, either, as the manuscript market needed a steady flow of paper to accommodate demand; indeed, the paper industry was no stranger to major cities such as Samarqand, Baghdad, and Damascus. As Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin note, "contact between the papermaking industry and the book trade...
was always close; the prosperity of either trade depended upon that of the other.68 Although the Ottomans at first failed to conceive of paper and press as two inseparable ingredients essential for producing a book, Mütteferrika eventually realized that they went hand in hand. Unfortunately, however, neither of the two establishments managed to enjoy the instant success expected of them, due perhaps to poor timing and/or the mistake of founding these two businesses in the reverse sequence one would expect.

Unfortunately, specific details about the production of books at the Mütteferrika press are unavailable. Despite this dearth of information, the books themselves and their prices do provide some insight regarding the ways in which they were produced and received. Binding and illumination increased the market value of any book, regardless of whether it was produced by hand or printing press. For instance, a copy of Katib Çelebi’s Cihanname (Book of the View of the World)69 with hand-painted maps and a binding sold for forty-four kuruş,70 while an unbound and unpainted copy of the same work cost thirty kuruş.71 In this particular case, the combined price of painting and binding amounts to almost one-third of the book’s final price. This price discrepancy also raises the question of whether painters and binders were on permanent staff at Mütteferrika’s printing house or if such costly services were executed only upon demand. One example of the price of a binding alone can be observed through the content of a fermán dated 1741, which mentions single unbound volumes of Mehmed Raşid’s Tarhi-i Raşid (History of Raşid) and Kâzım of Asm’s Tarhi-i Çelebi-zade Efendi (The History of Çelebi-zade Efendi) priced at thirty kuruş, while the works’ bound counterparts fetched the higher sum of forty kuruş.72 In this case, the binding accounts for one-fourth of the book’s total price. This substantial price increase helps explain why a fermán73 issued in 1741/1239 by Sultan Ahmed III ordered Mütteferrika to produce an unbound copy of Jawhari’s Lugat-i Vankulu priced at thirty-five kuruş so that students could afford to buy it.74

This brings us to the issue of the relative affordability of printed books in the early decades of the eighteenth century. How expensive would a thirty-five-kuruş book have been for an average client? While working for Rakoczí Ferenc II, a Hungarian king, in 1739, Mütteferrika was paid fifty aszkis per day,75 meaning that an unbound copy of the Lugat-i Vankulu would have cost him about eighty-four days’ salary. Another interesting observation comes from Mütteferrika’s tereke defteri (a book that lists a deceased person’s belongings), in which his horse is listed at the same value as a single copy of the Lugat-i Vankulu.76 This comparison raises the question, how many people could in fact afford to purchase these printed books? Not many, is the obvious answer.

As a result, Mütteferrika’s efforts to create a printing revolution that would fulfill the benefits he listed in his Velayet-i-tîbâ’i were overshadowed by the realities and difficulties of this new trade in the Ottoman Empire. Importing the technology and paper to produce printed books was a necessary measure taken by Mütteferrika; however, the high cost of printing eventually undermined his sales as well as his main goal of producing affordable books.

The collection of books printed by the Mütteferrika press in the Lilly Library can shed light about the period in which they were printed, perhaps more so than the historical evidence can tell us about the circumstances in which the tomes were produced. Although in appearance these printed books resemble manuscripts belonging to the tradition of Islamic book arts,77 their production methods distance them from their handwritten peers. Mütteferrika’s books were printed through typography or movable type rather than lithography (invented much later, in 1796).78 A printing method that retains the traces of the calligrapher’s or artist’s hand.79 Unlike lithography, typography and the movable type involve a different kind of handwork in the production process, one that is somewhat more detached than in the production of manuscripts.80 Instead, the written word emerges from the proper alignment of letter blocks.81 Despite this fundamental difference, manuscripts and printed books of this same time period nevertheless shared a number of basic visual and functional characteristics, including illuminated title pages (serlevha),82 terminal signature panels (kolophon), and catchwords83 to facilitate foliation. Interestingly, printed books and manuscripts even sold at comparable prices. There is little doubt that the decorative programs of these books were inspired by a long-standing tradition of Islamic manuscript production. As a result, they are printed books that retain an array of visual forms specific to the traditional Islamic manuscript.

Works printed by Mütteferrika were largely previously written texts by authors of certain renown, such as Katib Çelebi (d. 1657) and Na’îma (d. 1716). That Mütteferrika preferred Ottoman and other dynastic histories, dictionaries and lexica, and treatises on scientific matters is clear. Mütteferrika authored some of the texts that he published—such as Füyuat-i Miktatsîye (The Science of Magnets)—and also edited many others, one of which he translated completely from Latin (Krussiniski’s Tarih-i Seyyub, The History of the Traveler: The Afghan Invasion of the Safavid State). Despite this broad range of activity, the large majority of books issued by Mütteferrika’s press were texts printed in their original form and languages, mainly Ottoman Turkish. Mütteferrika augmented each one of these original texts with a variety of front and/or back matter, such as tables of contents, indices, forewords, postscripts, and even lists of errata.

Mütteferrika’s printed books, while varying in size—ranging between twenty-two and thirty-three centimeters in height and between twelve and seventeen centimeters in width—are coherent with regards to the letter types and paper used. Most noticeable is the consistent use
of a round and clear cursive font inspired by the recently perfected Ottoman cursive naskh (or nesih) script. Additionally, like most of the manuscripts produced in Istanbul at the time, Muteferrika's printed books are made from watermarked paper imported from Europe, especially from the cities of Paris and Venice. Aside from these, we will see that there appears to have been unspoken aesthetic guidelines for Muteferrika's printed books, and these were most likely linked to the visual expectations of a manuscript.

The bindings of the printed books in the Lilly collection vary widely, from low quality and prosaic to elaborate and high end. Early eighteenth-century bindings made to accompany the original books are most interesting, although we do not know whether the books were bound at the printing house or elsewhere (at each individual book owner's discretion). Nevertheless, several books retain splendid original bindings, the most elaborate among them belonging to the twelfth book produced by Muteferrika, Katib Celebi's Takvim-i-Tevahir (Figures 5.3 and 5.4). The book's front and back covers are decorated with a painted gold double frame over the dark brown leather (Figure 5.3). At the center is a stamped cartouche (çengse) with smaller medallions above and below, all painted in gold. The cover's four corners are ornamented with gold quarter cartouches (köşebends). The book's doublures are as splendid as its binding; they are decorated with meticulous multicolored filigree work, which fills in the central cartouche as well as the four köşebends (Figure 5.4). These artistic elements of bookbinding are long-established "classical" features used in manuscript bindings since the fifteenth century in Ottoman lands. It is no wonder that books clad in such bindings appear much like manuscripts at first glance, reminding the reader that a book cannot be judged by its cover.

Another decorative original binding protects a copy of Tarhu-i-Hindi'l-Garbi (History of the West Indies). The book's covers are decorated with blue-and-white marbled paper (ebra) and a leather stamped cartouche in the center of the front cover and at the edge of its envelope flap (Figure 5.5). In Ottoman lands, marbled papers had always been popular alternatives to other kinds of decorated papers. This particular binding constitutes an example of somaki-style marbling. Although ebra is more commonly seen covering the doublures of Ottoman books, it is also found on outer bindings as well, sometimes with a leather çengse in the center, as seen on the binding of this example of Tarhu-i-Hindi'l-Garbi. In Muteferrika's printed books, leaves are numbered either by folio number or by page number. Regardless of whether folio or page numbers are used in any given work, front and back matter (if present), such as tables of contents and prefaces, are always left unnumbered. In some cases, folios and pages are not provided with text frames until after the front matter has drawn to a close. The title page is always placed on the back side (verso) of a folio, which appears on the right, and is left
unnumbered. The first printed page or folio number is almost always "s" (1). The number "2" appears on the page or folio on the left, which faces the title page. In the printed books bearing folio numbers, folio numbers are always printed in the upper left corner of the folio's front side (recto).

Müteferrika frequently used catchwords at the bottom of his books' pages or folios, even those that are numbered. Although quite unnecessary in the presence of numbered pages and folios, this organizational method is common in the manuscript tradition. Catchwords can be found in all seventeen works that Müteferrika's press produced. At first the catchwords appear in the form of a single word in the lower left corner of the verso side of each page or folio, visually singled out from the main text and reflecting the first word of the following page or folio. However, by the fourteenth work, Tarih-i Râsid, catchwords are incorporated into the main text block rather than relegated to the page or folio's margins, thereby creating a transition between the old catchword system and the newly inserted page numbers.

In books issued by the Müteferrika press, front matter is more common than back matter. The two most consistent elements featured in the front matter are forewords written by Müteferrika himself, featured in all but five works, usually followed by a fiirst (table of contents), also featured in all but five works. In his Vesletil't-tiba', this author-cum-printer lists printing's fifth benefit as the adding of indices and tables of contents to printed books, in this way assuring an enjoyable and efficient experience for the reader. Müteferrika followed his own dictum, as evidenced by his printed books, most of which contain tables of contents (Figure 5.6) that not only direct the reader to themes, but also record the pages on which these themes occur, in numerical order. However, Müteferrika failed to include any indices in works after the first publication, Lugat-i Vankulu.

The forewords featured in many of Müteferrika's printed books are often used to express the importance of printing as well as to introduce the work and to explain its significance. This preliminary section is also used by Müteferrika to list and advertise books previously printed by his press. In the foreword of Ta'kunm't-Tevârîh he lists for the first time the books he plans to publish next. In this case, rather than attempting to sell his backlist of books, he alerts his reading audience to his forthcoming projects. He repeatedly declines to mention his eighth publication, the Turkish grammar and lexicon for French speakers, Grammaire Turque (Figure 5.12). Each time Müteferrika listed his published books (each followed by a short descriptive blurb), he skipped the Grammaire Turque, proceeding directly from his seventh publication to his ninth book. This blatant omission might be explained by the fact that this book was not directed toward the local Turkish audience of his other sixteen books. Instead, two hundred copies of this book were sent to Paris to be distributed among Jesuit school students, while the remaining copies were targeted toward French-speaking foreign merchants and religious personnel residing in Istanbul. The work thus was produced
for those who needed to learn Turkish in order to carry out their missionary and business activities in Ottoman lands.

All of Muteferrika's printed works include a colophon at the end. Visually, as well as in terms of their content, the colophons are much in line with the Islamic manuscript tradition. They often are set off from the end of the main text by a space, and the colophon's text itself tucks down to a V-shaped tip. Sometimes the text comes to a close in a downward, stepped pattern as well, followed by a colophon, after which Muteferrika adds his own V-shaped postscript, in which he lists his previously printed works (Figure 5.7). Each work's colophon includes pertinent information, including the publisher's name (Muteferrika) as well as the date and place of publication—namely Istanbul (Kostantiniyya).

The recurring inclusion of these formal elements in all of Muteferrika's printed books—which retain and extend the Islamic manuscript tradition into the early modern period—were accompanied by changing trends in book production. Some manuscript and book traits disappeared or fell out of use, while other features began to emerge. Such is the case with the ornamental headpiece (serlevha) on each book's title page. The Muteferrika press did not begin using printed serlevhas until the ninth book, Usulü 'Hikem fi Nizamü'l-Ümum (Fundamentals of the Wisdom in the Organization of Nations); thereafter they are featured consistently in each printed work (Figure 5.8). Until the ninth book, Muteferrika's published books occasionally included hand-painted serlevhas, which are frequently distinguishable from those included in manuscripts. For example, the Lilly collection's Tarhihil 'Hindi̇li̇ Garbi (History of the West Indies), the fourth book published by the Muteferrika press, includes an attractive serlevha designed and illuminated by hand rather than mechanically produced (Figure 5.9). A less-inspired hand-painted chapter heading was also added to the library's copy of the Chiyannima, placed before the preface and also before the printed serlevha at the beginning of the original work, following the front matter.

One element that was always present in the works but constantly evolved was the rather mandatory besmele (the formula "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful") featured at the incipit of the preface and the beginning of the original work (usually several pages later). The prominent besmele above the main text of the works was later accompanied by a larger title, itself later crowned with a decorative serlevha. Such additions have the potential to take the attention away from the besmele, which was presumably produced by its own separate woodblock. There are four distinctly different woodblocks that were used. Beginning as an elongated linear inscription in the Thuluth ( sûdlû) script, the woodblock changed with the twelfth publication to a more layered calligraphic stamp containing delightful V-shaped decorative marks. By the fourteenth publication, the besmele is much more two-dimensional, fluid, and artistically pleasing in its calligraphic style. Thus, although the besmele stamp is one that existed from day one, it
اي سي اف: موجه من أمرٍ بإغاثة أمیر الجلسة، بعد أن بيغِت في أمرٍ بالإطاحة به. من أمرٍ بإغاثة أمیر الجلسة، بعد أن بيغِت في أمرٍ بالإطاحة به.
-hostile to the empire. He was a devoted friend of the court in the days of the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty. He was known for his loyalty and his service to the state. His skills and abilities were praised by many, and he was widely respected for his wisdom and his dedication to the empire.

The book under discussion is titled "Aneqqa" and is written in Persian. It is a historical account of the events that took place during the time of the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty. The author, who is unknown, provides a detailed account of the political and military situation of the time. The book is divided into several sections, each focusing on a different aspect of the era. The sections include accounts of battles, diplomatic missions, and political maneuvers.

The book is well-researched and provides a wealth of information about the period. It is a valuable resource for those interested in the history of the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty and its role in the larger political landscape of the region.

In conclusion, the book "Aneqqa" is a significant contribution to the study of the Aq Qoyunlu dynasty. It provides a detailed and comprehensive account of the events that took place during this period, and it is a must-read for anyone interested in this aspect of Persian history.

End of the book review.
too evolved with the press—and arguably toward a more calligraphic, and thus manuscript-bound, style (Figures 5.3a–b).

Interestingly, the first three works printed by Müteferrika are rather Spartan in appearance. Much like their manuscript counterparts, they do not even include titles on their first pages after the front matter; rather, they mark the beginning of the main text by the aforementioned solitary besmele printed in a larger font. Titles do not appear in the Müteferrika series until the fourth book, in which the title is followed by a register containing the initiatory besmele (Figure 5.9). Unlike in today’s books, titles and title pages were not printed before the front matter or on a separate page. In all books from the fourth onward published by Müteferrika, titles only appear on the first page of the main text and are always followed by the besmele (Figure 5.11). Once taken into use, however, the styles of the titles move from a rather bland and rigid calligraphic hand (with no diacritical marks) to a more fluid and detailed one, as is the case with the besmeles discussed above. The evolution of titles thus follow the general trend of the press moving toward producing more elaborate and aesthetically pleasing books.

On the other hand, the Grammaire Turque is the only book from the Müteferrika series that actually bears a title page, not surprisingly

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Fig. 5.3a. ‘Two examples of besmeles. The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Fig. 5.3b. (opposite) Title page, Nazimade Mervele b. Ali's Gölgesi (Istanbul, 1432/1516, 26.5 x 21 cm, DR 4728, Mi.28, folio 164v, The Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington.

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because it was a book produced entirely in a western format (Figure 5.12). Published in French and utilizing the Roman script to explain Ottoman Turkish words, this work certainly catered to its foreign audience’s expectations of the European printed book.

Elements of the Islamic manuscript tradition such as colophons, catchwords, serlevhs, and calligraphic styles thus can be seen as not only providing a visual lexicon for these new printed books: they also constitute a high standard to which the printed books could be held and to which Müteferrika aspired (while simultaneously allowing room for various innovations such as the inclusion of titles and page numbers).

Some of Müteferrika’s printed books stand out for a variety of reasons, such as unusual content or structure—for example, the appearance of the serlevhs and title on the opening page of the book, newly developed functional or stylistic elements, and recycled illustrations. For these reasons, a brief discussion of select books and their idiosyncratic elements is offered here.

The first book published by the Müteferrika press, *Lugat-i Vankulu*, is an Arabic to Turkish dictionary that was printed in two volumes at five hundred copies each. This dictionary has the most extensive array of front matter among all of the press’s printed works. The first volume starts with a foreword by Müteferrika (folios 2v–3r), followed by the full text of the official *ferman* (folios 3v–4r) issued by Sultan Ahmed III granting Müteferrika permission to establish his printing press (Figure 5.2). At the close of the *ferman* appear the supporting legal approvals, or fetvas (folios 4r–6r), of leading Ottoman religious scholars and judges, starting with that of the current şeyhülislam, Mevleva ’Abdullah. After these two documents, Müteferrika’s own *Vesiletti-i riba‘a* (Figure 5.1) features on the following four folios (7r–10r). Next is a short biography of Imam Jawhari, the author of the dictionary’s Arabic text (folio 10v), followed by a biographical note on Vankulu, who translated Jawhari’s work into Turkish (folio 11r). A list of missing phrases in the main text is printed on folio 12r, while a rather extensive list of errata takes up the next four folios (13r–17r)—a clear indication of the need for an edict ordering the cessation of this book’s print run due to the excessive number of omissions and misspellings found in the text. Finally, the last section of front matter provides the “keys to what is in the book” (*nesi‘at‘ na‘f‘1-ki‘lib*), along with a table of contents listing alphabetically all of the Arabic triliteral roots in the dictionary and the pages on which they appear (folios 18r–19r).

The front matter included in this publication—and mostly excluded from later books—tells us much about the climate surrounding the printing press. The fetvas and fermand that feature in some of Müteferrika’s early works suggest a need to publicize the legitimacy of the new technology and the activities of the press. Some of the addenda witnessed sustained success: for example, tables of contents were more or less consistent features, whereas tables of errors were later dropped from
the informational vocabulary of these books. The printer's experiment with form and content was thus an ongoing process.

The second book issued by the Müteferrika press, Tuhfat’-i Kibar fi Esfari’l Bihar (The Gift of the Elders to Naval Campaigns), is the first to include a series of maps (Figure 5.13) and a diagram of a compass, both useful graphic elements found in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century manuscripts depicting Ottoman military campaigns. The volume's front matter includes a foreword by Müteferrika, the above-mentioned farsa, a table of contents, and a section called "the Addendum on the Explanation of Comparison." At the very back of the book appear three pages of errata, a noteworthy addition since only two other printed books include this particular addendum. The other works that feature errata are Lügat-i Vanâkulu (the first book printed) and Grammaire Turque (the eighth book printed). It appears that the first few books were carefully scrutinized by the editing team assigned to the task by the sultan. But as time went by, either editorial oversight tightened in the pre-publication phase, making the necessity for errata unwarranted, or, more likely, the task of compiling lists of errata proved too time-consuming an endeavor.

An exciting work, the Tuhfat’-i Hindî’-Garbi el-Müsemma bi Hadis-i Nev, was the fourth book produced by the Müteferrika press. The
book describes the newly discovered “West Indies” (North America) and is provided with thirteen illustrations, some of which are quite fantastic in character (Figure 5.4). These illustrations are accompanied by two world maps and two diagrams, one of which consists of an oversized, foldout cosmological diagram of the seven celestial spheres (qiblah). With its handwritten and illuminated serlevha (Figure 5.9) and its cycle of illustrations, this printed book recalls most closely the format of the traditional illustrated manuscript. The work also incorporates some orange, pink, and green dyed folios (Figure 5.4A) as well as an attractive ebru and stamped leather binding (Figure 5.5). Moreover, each page’s written surface is provided with a double frame painted in gold. So here is truly a luxury copy of a printed text, whose owner spared no expenses in beautifying his prized possession.

The Tarihi’l-Hindi’l-Garbı is also the first printed book of the Mütuferrika press to include its title printed on the first page, immediately following the front matter. All books printed afterward feature their titles in a similar manner, suggesting that examples such as the present book may have spurred this noticeable change in the format of Mütuferrika’s printed books. This is certainly one of the most significant books in the Lilly Library’s collection, a clear exemplum of the combined elements of the manuscript and printed book.

Many scholars consider Mütuferrika’s eleventh book, Çihamnım, to be the chef d’oeuvre of his press, and for good reason. This world geography is very large and elaborate: at a total of 698 pages, it includes twenty-seven maps and thirteen diagrams, some of which are signed by the artists, Ibrahim Mütuferrika, Mucerrid Galatavi, Tophani Ibrahim, and Ahmed Kirimi. Aware that Çelebi had wished to include more maps in his original work, Mütuferrika made his wish a reality with his own publication and thus first printed edition of Çelebi’s Çihamıma. Maps and diagrams used in previously published books—such as the maps of the Mediterranean and Black seas, and the map of the islands of the Mediterranean Sea (originally included in his copy of the Tuhfaatul-Kibar, Figures 5.3 and 5.15)—along with the diagram of a compass, which appeared in the Fıyuzat-ı Mekteb-ı Seviyeye (The Science of Magnets) of 1144/1732—were reused in Çelebi’s Çihamıma. Mütuferrika often saw fit to recycle maps and diagrams, adding them to a variety of relevant works, thus saving labor time while creating more comprehensive publications.

When viewed in chronological order, the books produced by Mütuferrika’s press follow a shaky yet clear path not away from the manuscript form but toward it. One can see that this was a trial-and-error learning experience for the printer as well, as he gradually created “printed manuscripts” by adding and deleting elements with each new book depending on aesthetic qualities, practicality, and experience. The prominent, isolated title (quite uncommon in the Ottoman manuscript tradition until this time) that did not appear until the fourth publication was crowned with a serlevha several publications later, in the ninth printed work. However, Mütuferrika never went so far as to adopt the full title page featured at the front of European printed books. Aware of this particular element, he included it in his Grammara Türkoe (Figure 5.12)—but never in books that were intended for an Ottoman audience. The Ottoman printed manuscript thus forms a continuation of an established and colorful manuscript tradition, albeit with a different production method and innovative elements. Consequently, Mütuferrika’s printed book was essentially a “new and improved” manuscript.

The Lilly Library’s collection of incunabula printed by this early Ottoman press demonstrates that, at this incipient period, the line between a manuscript and a printed book could be very thin. It is often noted that early European printed books looked much like their manuscript counterparts, and in the case of the Mütuferrika press we see a similar trend. Mütuferrika was a learned man who owned many European printed books and manuscripts from the Islamic world. Familiar with both formats and their individual elements, Mütuferrika decidedly fused these two book forms together. Sometimes the combined elements worked well together with no problems of incompatibility (e.g., the printed serlevha and the book title), while in other cases the synthesis could look
works, but appears to have been consistent only in the assembly of tables of contents and not indices, most probably because creating an index was (and remains) a tedious task. Nevertheless, Mütteferrika’s intention to make his reader’s experience more efficient appears to have been relatively successful, as there are no accounts of criticism or discontent recorded by his contemporaries.  

The development and widespread use of printing is often considered one of the greatest technological developments in human history.  

When scholars discuss the Mütteferrika press, they tend to try to determine its larger historic and social impact in Ottoman lands. Often, the press is assessed based on improved literacy rates or educational reforms, criteria typically used in gauging the advances made in Renaissance and Reformation Europe. However, a “revolution” in human knowledge and its transmission or expansion is not detectable in the case of this printer’s experiment. There are a number of reasons such a revolution did not and could not have come about in Ottoman Istanbul. Economic and social obstacles forcibly slowed Mütteferrika’s momentum, and the products and activities of his press in turn bear witness to a gradual transition—rather than an instant conversion—to modern technology.

In the case of Ottoman Turkey, three phases in the establishment of the Islamic printing press can be detected. The first can be defined as a rejection or apathy toward the technology (ca. 1450–1727), when the advantages of the press were ignored for nearly three hundred years, until an Ottoman Turkish press was finally established.  

The second phase (ca. 1727–1797) is characterized by a fragmented series of individual printing efforts, spearheaded by Mütteferrika and his colleagues, followed by substantial intervals of inactivity. The third and last phase (ca. 1797 and onward) can be considered the beginning of a more stable establishment of the printing press, characterized by a relatively steady production, and its longer-lasting effects on literacy and education. Mütteferrika fits in the second and intermediate phase of transition from a non-existent Islamic printing culture to a consistent one. Naturally, this intermediate phase is of immense importance, setting the stage for the third and final chapter of the Ottoman venture in printing.

There are various reasons why the printing press took so long to be adopted by the Ottoman Turks. These reasons remain in the realm of the speculative, and usually revolve around a few recurring themes, specifically the Ottomans’ excessive self-confidence, which led to an attitude of arrogance toward and dismissal of European technology, as well as religious figures’ discontent with “Christian” innovations.

To add to such problems, further complications explain why the printing press did not gain immediate acceptance once established by Mütteferrika. The first question, namely why the Ottoman press lingered so far behind European advances, cannot be resolved here, as Ottoman attitudes toward the printing press remain largely undocumented. However, the
second question—regarding the problems, aftermath, and impact of the Müteferrika press—can be traced and, as a result, is of interest to the present investigation.

One of the major differences between manuscript production and the printing industry is the need for fungible capital, not only to launch a business but also to keep it afloat and eventually turn it into a profitable business. This long-term investment is absolutely necessary for the success of a printing house, whereas the production of manuscripts relied on immediate patronage and required little upfront investment other than enough ink and paper for each individual piece. In the case of the early Ottoman printing activities, both press and paper were imported from Europe, making the acquisition of basic equipment and materials a costly one. Ironically, the printed book was supposed to introduce a cheaper and thus more accessible product to a broader public. However, due to a dependence on foreign technology and materials, this ideally economical object became quite expensive, with prices rivaling those of handwritten manuscripts. Consequently, many printed books remained unsold during the early years of the Ottoman printing press.14

Another cause for unsold books may have been Müteferrika’s lack of experience in creating business ties. As a first-time printer and entrepreneur, he did not have the accumulated experience and financial network that would have come with years of activity within the trade. European printers, on the other hand, were much more organized: they were able to determine how many copies of a given book needed to be printed, thus minimizing their financial losses due to overprinting. They also had steady patrons, deals with booksellers and merchants, and predetermined outlets where they sold their books.21 In essence, successful European publishers were savvy businessmen first and craftsmen second. Müteferrika—although ambitious and educated—had little to no practice and know-how in running a printing business, two likely reasons why his press did not prosper.

Müteferrika also may have failed to realize the importance of advertising his products. Although from time to time he included a list of his printed or forthcoming books in a published tome, he does not seem to have printed catalogues of his existing books or advertisements for his forthcoming projects: he thus relied on a preexisting clientele within a rather restricted circle of buyers. He sold his books directly from his printing house, which was by no means a “bookstore” per se, as this venue doubled as his personal residence.22 Although some libraries outside Istanbul, in cities such as Amasya, Samarkand, and Sofia, possessed copies of Müteferrika’s books,23 it is hard to track accounts of individuals outside of Istanbul who owned a book printed by his press. As a consequence, distribution and marketing problems played their fair share in stalling the printer’s success.

The competition between early printed books and handwritten manuscripts must have been substantial for both economic and social reasons. The high prices of printed books may have led consumers to choose to pay a bit more to acquire a handwritten book, since a printed copy would not necessarily be a more affordable product. Also, the value attached to the manuscript tradition and an appreciation for the handmade would have made it difficult for Müteferrika’s printed books to compete with manuscripts.24 Perhaps his efforts to produce books that resembled manuscripts can be explained as not only a means by which to create an innovative new form by synthesizing traditional Islamic elements with European ones, but also as a way to appeal to the market and compete with existing scribal spheres. Calligraphers and scribes possessed the upper hand in the trade because they already had established business networks, including their own organized guild.

The early Ottoman press also had to function despite the stipulation that it was banned from printing religious works, especially copies of the Qur’an.25 This prohibition can be flagged as a major obstacle preventing Müteferrika’s press from turning a profit, as religious works most certainly would have been purchased more eagerly than secular works.26 Once again we turn to western Europe for comparison: the majority of early printed works were religious in nature, and they included Psalms, Books of Hours, Books of Days, and so forth.27 These kinds of religious texts, whether Christian or Muslim, were in high demand, even by the illiterate classes who felt compelled to own pietistic works.

Religious scholars of the Ottoman court actually supported Müteferrika’s press and approved of it. In fact, later operators of the Müteferrika press (Ibrahim Efendi and Ahmed Efendi) were high-ranking members of the ‘ulama’. The adverse affect of the initial clause prohibiting the publication of religious texts was more substantial than the press’s subsequent reception and patronage among the religious classes. Thus, its inability to issue pious works such as the Qur’an, or even single-page calligraphic panels, crippled it at a time when the European printed book market flourished through the production of religious works.

With regards to the ever-important issues of patronage and support, Ibrahim Müteferrika’s press was established as the official press to the sultan and his government. Ahmed III and later Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754) were supporters of the printing press in their capital city, but they failed to utilize it for their own ends28 or toward larger educational goals. Furthermore, there is no evidence suggesting that they provided any financial support of Müteferrika’s efforts.29 It was not until Sultan Selim III (r. 1789–1807) personally took interest in the printing press in 1797, purchasing it from its previous owners (Vakîînâvis Ahmed Vosof Efendi and Beylikçi Raşid Efendi) for use at the newly established military school in Istanbul, the Mühendishanâ-i Berri-i Hümayun, that the press and printing culture began to stabilize.30 However, before the turn of the nineteenth century, Müteferrika’s endeavors of the 1720–1730s faced a lack of imperial benefaction and educational applicability, as well as significant economic and social obstacles.
The first officially sanctioned Ottoman press outlived its founder and continued to print works into the next century, although with much interruption. This shaky start was the result of a number of factors that are mostly linked to an incomplete importation of technology and materials, as well as poor trade foundations for the printed book in Turkish lands. Most importantly, though, the printed book's slow acceptance was a result of the pernicious of the manuscript tradition so highly valued in Ottoman society.

First this Ottoman printing effort was not only about making books more available; it was also about making knowledge more accessible. Müteferrika's efforts to make books, and by extension knowledge, more obtainable may not have materialized during his own lifetime for reasons beyond his control. However, his combination of old and new book forms enabled him to create a familiar, yet new and user-friendly, book for his audience. Manuscript elements made printed books more attractive and less intimidating, while the new printing technology used to produce them made their production more efficient. Similarly, added European book conventions such as indices and page numbers made information retrieval less arduous.

Historical, social, and technological changes marked eighteenth-century Ottoman Turkey. These same changes also radiate from the printing activities of İbrahim Müteferrika, themselves manifest on the "micro"-level of the printed book. Much as Islamic traditions held firm and yet entered into contest with modern advances, manuscripts too continued to be produced and challenged printed books. This early coexistence and competition within the book world yielded a hybrid product, namely the printed manuscript. Retaining and gaining elements of the manuscript tradition and moving the book form forward thanks to new technology, the printed manuscripts of Müteferrika's press provide a small but fascinating lens through which to observe the gradual but unsteady emergence of the modern Ottoman world.

The initial printing experience of the Ottomans was not as revolutionary as the European experience; rather, it was a slow and gradual transition from the manuscript to the printed book, with a transition period marked by İbrahim Müteferrika's printed manuscripts. The printer's endeavors mark a conscious effort to modernize the empire, a progression considered vital for the Ottoman realm to stay apace and compete with other world powers. The Ottoman Empire, lagging behind its European counterparts and neighbors in education, technology, and military sciences, was feeling pressure to change. The book, and the knowledge that came embedded within it, was seen as a seed of development and a necessary tool to achieve social, political, and cultural advancement. Müteferrika understood that change could start with knowledge and the prosperity of the printed book. His was a large step to initiate change in the methods of transmitting knowledge in the Islamic world and thus inspire a revolution that would take more than one lifetime to unfold.
APPENDIX 5.2
At right is a list of all the works printed by the kleistermachers in 1525 and 1795 (that is, after Müteferrika's death in 1545). A call number is provided if the Lilly Library owns a copy of the listed work.

1. The New Iaum [I.] and Heimdal [I.], transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Mehmed b. Mustafa el Vani
   - Lugat-i Vanilik (Yavuzluhi Dictionary), a 2 volumes
     - 1620-1621: 2020-2022
   - Kadi Ibrahim Eflendi and Kadi Ahmed Eflendi, press supervisors
     - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11a
   - Estimated at 1450 copies per volume

1. Baha el-Din, Serhaz el-Shakhs (Serihs el-Shakhs Dictionary), a 2 volumes
   - 1620-1621: 2020-2022
   - Kadi Ibrahim Eflendi and Kadi Ahmed Eflendi, press supervisors
     - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11a
   - Estimated at 1450 copies per volume

1. Mustafa Sami, Hisayr el-Saha, and Mehmed Suphi
   - Tafsir-i Sami ve Saha ve Saha (Sami, Saha, and Saha's Dictionary) (1525)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11a

2. Mustafa Sami, Hisayr el-Saha, and Mehmed Suphi
   - Tafsir-i Sami ve Qasir ve Saha (Sami, Saha, and Saha's Dictionary) (1525)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11a

2. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i Tarik (Science of War) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

2. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i Tafik (Science of Mining) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

3. Selim Yaşar
   - Tafsir-i yeser (Yeser's Dictionary) (1525)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

3. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i M saf (Science of the Safa) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

4. Ekrem el-Sehri, transliterated into Turkish
   - Technician's Dictionary (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

5. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i Tarik (Science of War) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

6. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i Tafik (Science of Mining) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

6. Unknown author, transliterated into Turkish from the Arabic original by Konstantin Izpliuti
   - Fonve-i M saf (Science of the Safa) (1577-1579)
   - Lilly Library, DR 440, M11b

NOTES
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1. Ibrahim Müteferrika (b. ca. 1504) was a Hungarian Cabaretir or Unizatian from the town of Kolozsevic. He was taken to Istanbul as a prisoner by the Ottomans (ca. 1544), at which time he converted to Islam and quickly started making himself known in court circles. He became a court steward (mevlevi) around 1548, and for further information about his life and works, see Osman Ersoy, "Türkiye’ye Matematik Giriş ve Rıdvan Barteri: Ankara-Göreme Başmecidi, 16. yüzil Nişhter GETİRGİ, Türkiye Matbaacılığı: Müteferrika Müthnesi (Istanbul: Istanbul Devlet Matbaası, 1970); Omer Sabri, Ibrahim Müteferika ve 12 S Known’s Mathematical Writings (1576-1579) (Istanbul: Yavuz Matbaa Tesciha, 1988); In Sätin’s Marvelous Books, translated by K. K. Faziletten, ed. Serdar Rado (Istanbul: Yavuz Matbaa Tesciha, 1322). 1548.

2. See Appendix 2 for a complete list of his printed books. There are conflicting views about the total number of books printed by this publisher. The number of copies of only the first thirteen books is recorded, excluding the eight books (Grammata Tarikhe). This information is included on the last page of the second volume of Müteferrika’s book, Turıca Nazâma. The number of printed copies of the remaining four books and Grammata Tarikhe is estimated based on previous trends of this press. Also see Appendix 3 for more details about this press.

3. It is not surprising that by the 17th century, European presses were producing more books more consistently and in larger quantities. Even 16th-century presses of Europe tended to have a much higher output than did the first Islamic presses. For instance, in Venice alone, between the years of 1460 and 1480 at least 156 titles were printed. With at least ten major printing houses, the average press would have thus produced about fifteen titles in two years. For further figures, see Lucien Fabre and Henri-Jean Martin, The Coming of the Press: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800 (London: N. L. B., 1998).

4. The works of Ramela and Ascula, respectively. A kadi is a judge who rules in accordance with Islamic religious law (shari’a) and has jurisdiction over all legal matters involving Muslims (E. Yyan, “Kadi,” Encyclopaedia of Islam, ed. [hereafter E.I.], vol. 4 [1970]. In the Ottoman Empire in particular, a kadi’s responsibilities, in addition to the above description, were actually quite varied. These responsibilities ranged from making sure the local roads were safe to ensuring the fair pricing of certain food products that had fixed prices within the empire. For more on Ottoman kada, see GY, Kiky Kyu, “Kadi: Ottoman Empire,” E.I., vol. 4, 437. 1548.


6. See Appendix 3 for names of post-Müteferrika’s works printed between 1545 and 1745.

7. In his best-kept secret, North American libraries that are one copy of a complete collection of the University of California, Library, London, and McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

8. For further information about Allen, see the chapter by Janet Ranschuck in this volume.


11. For presses established by minorities in the Ottoman Empire, see Kadi, “Matha’ in the Tarke,” 799-800; see also Türkiye, Türkiye’ye Matematik Giriş ve Rıdvan Barteri, 199.

12. For presses established by minorities in the Ottoman Empire, see Kadi, “Matha’ in the Tarke,” 799-800; see also Türkiye, Türkiye’ye Matematik Giriş ve Rıdvan Barteri, 199.

13. The word “incunable” is used to describe early printed books. It more commonly refers to printed books produced before 1500 in the western tradition. See Chappell, A Short History of the Printed World, 7-8.


15. The “printed manuscript” is used in this chapter as a strictly descriptive term. Although the method of reproduction used for printed books is relatively modern, they are the most prominent form of mass communication. In the field of religious education, the printed book was a significant factor in the spread of knowledge and ideas. It helped to bring newfound knowledge to the masses, and it played a crucial role in the development of education and literacy. The printed book was also a powerful tool for the spread of ideas, and it played a significant role in the development of society.

16. Ibrahim Müteferrika and the Age of the Printed Manuscript
17. Although the empire flourished in the areas of the arts and sciences during the Tulip Period and the early 18th century, the state was in fact deteriorating from within. Since the beginning, the Ottoman Empire had harnessed its power from its centralizing ruling system, which, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, became dispersed and weak. High-ranking officials in the capital as well as provincial governors attained more power than ever before. The military, too, was able to take the empire as well as non-desiring individuals (mainly seen by court officials) were being admitted into the highly selective imperial educational system, and more and more intellectuals mingled in the civilian sphere, starting families and getting involved in trades of their own (activities in which they were not traditionally allowed to participate, as ideally their only and one concern was to serve the sultan), while remaining on government payroll. Civil unrest also became an issue toward the end of the Tulip Period as the Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Pasha's racist economic reforms and taxes—used to fund the lavish lifestyle of Sultan Ahmed III and his court—proved the empire's edge to the people. Finally, an unsuccessful military campaign to Iran caused civil wars and soldiers alike to join with the Fatmanis Hazal Berber, and eventually led to the sultan's abdication of the throne and in the execution of Grand Vizier Damad Ibrahim Pasha.


23. The publication is the foremost legal authority in Islamic jurisprudence.

24. The people assigned to this task were the Edal of Ivanos, Mehmet Hakan and the Edal of Ishak Efendi, Mehmet Ali and the Edal of Galata, Mehmet Amin. The overseer of the proofreading process was Melvlne Myra, Soyt of the Kaseim Paşa Medrese.

25. For Saha, İbrahim Metterniçka Từ da İsk Ref Okumaları Serüveni, 143–41.

26. It has been suggested that Müftükerka may have been protecting the job security of scribes by promising that he would not print works of religious content and that he had no intention to steal their existing clientele. See Osman Ersay, "İk Yüzyıl Basıncının Yabancı Kazıkarıf Payı," in Türk Kanuniçelerkileri Dernegi Bası Baskı Yürürlüğümüz 2007, 311–315. Thabiti, 3: 19–21. For a detailed list of the individual books and the European origins of the paper, see Ersay, "Türk Kanuniçelerkileri Payı," 25–27. One curu was equivalent to about 100 akçe at the time. Ersay makes interesting comparisons between contemporary manuscripts and sample wogaks, highlighting the extent to which the books were understandable to the average person. He also points out that handwritten manuscripts were ten times more expensive than their printed counterparts and that making printed books still a cheaper alternative. Nevertheless, these printed books are quite expensive even when compared to the income of court staff such as that of Müftükerka himself. See Saha, İbrahim Metterniçka Từ da İsk Ref Okumaları Serüveni, 291–293, in which the author acknowledges the higher prices of these books; however, based on the prices entered in the title defterinin for İbrahim Metterniçka, Saha suggests that the price of handwritten manuscripts.

26. Saha, İbrahim Metterniçka Từ da İsk Ref Okumaları Serüveni, 291–293, in which the author acknowledges the higher prices of these books; however, based on the prices entered in the title defterinin for İbrahim Metterniçka, Saha suggests that the price of handwritten manuscripts.


27. See Bloom, Paper Before Print, 95–96.

28. Felbrin and Martin, The Coming of the Book, 41. Also see Chappell, 4 Short History of the Printed Word, 9. Here, the author notes that "In Europe the technique of printing had to await the introduction and use of paper." 27.

29. Ersay, "İk Yüzyıl Basıncının Yabancı Kazıkarıf Payı," 25–27. One curu was equivalent to about 100 akçe at the time. Ersay makes interesting comparisons between contemporary manuscripts and sample wogaks, highlighting the extent to which the books were understandable to the average person. He also points out that handwritten manuscripts were ten times more expensive than their printed counterparts and that making printed books still a cheaper alternative. Nevertheless, these printed books are quite expensive even when compared to the income of court staff such as that of Müftükerka himself. See Saha, İbrahim Metterniçka Từ da İsk Ref Okumaları Serüveni, 291–293, in which the author acknowledges the higher prices of these books; however, based on the prices entered in the title defterinin for İbrahim Metterniçka, Saha suggests that the price of handwritten manuscripts.

30. Saha, İbrahim Metterniçka Từ da İsk Ref Okumaları Serüveni, 291–293, in which the author acknowledges the higher prices of these books; however, based on the prices entered in the title defterinin for İbrahim Metterniçka, Saha suggests that the price of handwritten manuscripts.


The Foundation of an Ottoman Court Style (London: Aitken editions on behalf of the Association Internationale de Bibliophilie, 1992).

62. Although the history of marbling is vague and its origins debated, it probably came into the Islamic repertoire of decorative papers from China. Rarest example of Timurid marbling, for instance, date from the mid-15th century. See Moira B. Blais, "Color and Gold: The Decorated Papers Used Initially in Manuscripts in Later Islamic Times," Musqaros 12 (1999): 31.

63. For examples of other obru style, see Henry Glassie, Turkish Traditional Art Today (Blacksburg: Virginia University Press, 1976) 123-25; and Hassan Özlüde, Amsul: Kûrlû Bir Tek BSanâlar Davetimleri, Terimleri ve Satan Çizgileri (Istanbul: Sebat Ofset Matbaacilik, 2000), 42-43.

64. The nomal style of ebru is distinguishable by its close resemblance to actual marble, with prominent veins and irregular blotches that can vary widely in size.


66. The number of folios in a book is called "sifâni." A Sifâni book always has even numbers on every other folio surface (or page), as each folio (front and back) needs to be counted twice. In a Sifâni book, the exterior surface of the folio is called "reci" (r), while the interior surface is "arena" (a). Page numbers is the numbering of pages (not folios). Each folio surface is thus numbered twice through the book. For instance, a book containing thirty folios would have sixty pages.

67. Books that do not contain four words are the following: Usulü Ilimen Fi Nezami-i Ömren, Fârisvâsî Mektubeti, Taziki-i Nâzîr, Gobeyn-i Deyär-i Benin, and Fethbins-i Qârû
d. 68. These book that do not include tables of contents are the following: Tashkâl-i Merâ-i Ghâdî d Ve Mûnâr-i Mûrâ'; Kâdem (Usulü Ilimen Fi Nezami-i Ömren, Fârisvâsî Mektubeti, and Taziki-i Nâzîr).

69. The book that do not include tables of contents are the following: Tashkâl-i Merâ-i Ghâdî d Ve Mûnâr-i Mûrâ'; Kâdem (Usulü Ilimen Fi Nezami-i Ömren, Fârisvâsî Mektubeti, and Taziki-i Nâzîr).

70. Found in the book that Mütteferrika planned to print is located on folio 49, the fifth page of the foreword. He lists three forthcoming publications: a Tâhir-i Sâma, a Mâlik-i Qâdî, and a Tâhir-i Cehâl-i Cevâbi Efeni.

71. See Kâzî and Tâhir, Yecmeden Basmaya, 242 and Uyghur, East European West, 125. The term Cehâl-i Cevâbi Efeni.

72. The name Kastamouni or (Kastanîni) şeyi in Ottoman Turkish documents and literature was adopted from Arabic and Persian, in which the name occurred as a corruption of the city's Eastern Roman (Byzantine) name, "Constantinople." The term Kastamouni is used more frequently in scholarly and educational circles, whereas the various forms of "Istanbul" were used in more popular communication. See Halil Inalcik, "Istanbul," E. I., vol. 4, 334.

73. This particular book contains two title pages: the first appears on folio 5, which is the first page of the foreword, while the second on folio 4 (Figure 5.5) marks the beginning of the main text. Both title pages are not printed designs, but later additions painted by hand.

74. The more linear formats used initially by the press continued to appear above the front matter, particularly above the forewords, even though the Yezârims used stop the first page of the original texts (with the title page) directed through time.

75. The titles of the books can be found in the table of contents (title, Fârisvâsî Cilt-i Fesal names Tâhir-i Qâdî Efeni, "The Table of Contents of the First Volume of the History of Rabîd Efeni"). However, this feature is frequently regular-sized and does not constitute the type of noticeable title one would be accustomed to seeing in a western book.

76. The author has included flyapses (if they appear original) while counting and designating folios within these books.

77. While the list of missing phrases covers both volumes, the list of missing only covers the first volume (a separate list of missing pages in front of the second volume). The New York Section's rare books collection of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., holds a copy of Legat-i Dârâh (both volumes). In the library of Congress volumes, the list of errors for both volumes appears only at the back of the second volume.

78. Time-consuming was this editorial work that the staff of the Mütteferrika press began working on the book's second volume while the first volume was being checked for further mistakes. See ibid., "Türkiye'de Nüfus Harçları" Tekârâsini BitirViewByIdi, in fact an Armenian name, which Galata, Topkapı, and Kırım are all locative names. The identities of these artists raise the question of what their artistic training. It is certain that Aynçagâh Hânimâ and Topkapıshah Dârâh are local artists from Istanbul, as made apparent by their styles. Megriçâh Galataş were both trained from a local Armenian press, whereas Topkapıshah Dârâh and Ahmet Kırım could have learned to draw in a traditional manuscript atelier and then applied their techniques to engraving, as they received formal training in engraving elsewhere. This is certainly an interesting topic that is open to further research.


80. The most noticeable similarity between European manuscripts (and manuscripts) is that they are text-crowded pages, full of abbreviations,
and minimal word and line spacing, which gradually disappeared in post-islamic books. See Febrer and Martin, The Coming of the Book, 85–88. An interesting parallel be-
tween the early ottoman printing experience and the European example is the consistence of the manuscript and printed book for a peri-
odic of time before the printed book emerged victorious. Eisenstein notes that scripts of the late 12/th century in fact often copied entire works from printed books. See Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe, 33. Also, for the change of the colophon page into the title page in European books see ibid., 30.
87. Such a possibility is pointed out in Sabey, Ibrahim Muteferrika ve da lk Osmano Mustafa Serreseni, 30. The author noticed a num-
ber of non-arabic-bearing books from this press as having been adorned with hand-
painted ones. He also notes that this reaction may have prompted Muteferrika to make later decorative additions or that perhaps customers were making such requests.
88. The index would have been especially useful because it would have allowed readers to skim through many books in search of nec-
essary information rather than read through entire books or chapters, as was the common
way of learning in Ottoman scholarly circles.
89. Chappell, A Short History of the Printed World, 66. Also see Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe. Con-
troversial to this day, Eisenstein argues that the effects of the printing press on society were so great that it was more revolutionary than the inver-
tion of writing itself.
90. This is true with the exception of the aforementioned non-Muslim presses.
91. Although the first minority-owned presses established in Ottoman lands date as far back as the 1690s, Ottoman Turks had vir-
ually no access to printed works until 1588, at which time Sultan Mehmed II (1452–1566) is-
sued an official edict allowing Europeans to
sell printed books in Ottoman Turkey (using the Arabic script). This forman was issued after several European merchants were stopped at the Ottoman border. The merchants’ books were confiscated because they were printed using
the Arabic script. See Kreusers, "Causes of the Decrease of Ignorance!", 15. Also see Kus, "Matha in Turkey," 795 and Kar and Tiye, Yermesle Basmak, 4.
92. This coincides with the year Selim III purchased the press for use in the Milletdu-
lan school.
93. The four major reasons commonly offered are: the Ottomans’ excessive self-
confidence, leading to an attitude of arrogance toward European technology; opposition by reli-
gious figures and the scribal classes; no real need for large quantities of books; and the relative strength and efficiency of the manuscript industry. The most comprehensive analysis of all of the above theories is found in Sabey, Ibrahim Muteferrika ve da lk Osmano Mustafa Serreseni, 36–46.
94. Muteferrika reportedly gave a number of his books away as gifts to foreign dignitaries and other officials. He also had about 30% of his books still in his possession at the time of his death. See Sabey, Ibrahim Muteferrika ve da lk Osmano Mustafa Serreseni, 34.
96. See Sabey, Ibrahim Muteferrika ve da lk Osmano Mustafa Serreseni, 288–289. Travellers of the second half of the 18/th century record seeing Muteferrika titles being sold at various subkabir second-hand bookstores around Istanbul. Other than these brief men-
tions, there are no records suggesting any type of business agreement for selling his books in any systematic manner. In his "Book and Newspaper Printing in Turkey, 18th–20th Centuries," in Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution: A Cross-Cultural Encounter, ed. Eva Hanebutt-Beens, Dog-
mar Ghos, and Geoffrey Robes (Wiesbaden: Wuv-Verlag, 2003), 230, Christopher K.
Newman states that many of the publications were apparently distributed to state employees. However, there is no evidence supporting this statement.
97. Newman, "Book and Newspaper Print-
98. Notable areas in which it should have had the upper hand include the height-
ened legibility of the typographical word, the elimination of scribal errors, and other
mistakes due to potential scribal suppression or oversight.
99. The first Qur'an would not be printed in Istanbul until 1782. Prior to that, copies of the Qur'an were printed in a number of European cities as well as cities in the Islamic world such as Cairo in 1714. For a complete list of cities in which Qur'ans were printed prior to Istanbul, see Koksal, "Tarihde de Matha Terazi," 334.
100. Once religious works started being printed, during the 19th century, they domi-
nated the printed book market. See Kreusers, "Causes of the Decrease of Ignorance!", 41.
102. The press was utilized for political reasons immediately after Sultan Mahmut
II (1808–1839) abolished the Janissaries. He ordered the imperial press to print a treatise
called Us-iz Zayer (The Foundations of Vic-
tory) to explain the abolition of the Janissary corps in 1828. See Christopher Murphy, "The Physical Properties of Early Nineteenth Cen-
103. See Kar and Tiye, Yermesle Basmak, 6, and Isik, "Tarihde de Matha Terazi," Basnak A. Hisse, 11–12. Both believe that