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The Ottoman Empire as a World Power,
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The visual arts

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Visual articulations of an imperial identity, as well as its dynamic encounters and reformulations beyond the imperial locus, constitute a unifying thread through the century and a half that is examined in this survey. Between the 1450s and the turn of the seventeenth century, the agents of – and the media in which – such articulation occurred changed considerably. Scholarship on Ottoman visual arts has tended to prioritise the “classical era”, particularly the second half of the sixteenth century. The progressive and evolutionary emphases of the art historical discipline on the one hand and the correspondence of this period to the “classicism” of Ottoman institutions on the other have reinforced the characterisation of this period as the unquestionable apex of Ottoman arts towards which all converged and after which there followed an insipid lack of creativity. Rather than the “classicization” of the later sixteenth century, with its connotations of maturation, lucidity and stasis, this chapter seeks to foreground the dynamism embodied in the shifting priorities of artists, patrons and intermediaries over this century and a half and to highlight the plurality of loci and actors that shaped the production and use of artworks. The power of the Ottoman centre as the creator and disseminator of cultural trends and of the Ottoman court as the primary arbiter of taste were unquestionable for the larger part of the spatial and temporal expanse with which this survey is concerned.

At the same time, patterns and mechanisms of patronage and organisation of the arts changed within the courtly context. A multiplicity of other centres and actors within the Ottoman realm, and within larger networks of cultural connection and interaction in which the Ottomans participated, shaped cultural predilections at the court, the capital city and in the provinces. Webs of reciprocity informed exchanges between court and city, between centre and provinces, and between the Ottoman court and its contemporaries.

Section divisions of this chapter, in chronological order and offering a rough periodisation within the century and a half that it focuses on, aim to highlight

the connections of artistic production and consumption in various media to the broader political and cultural matrix, which itself underwent significant transformations. In the first section, covering the period between around 1450 and around 1520, the discussion will focus on patterns of architectural and artistic patronage, production and use in relation to multiple power holders and various centres of cultural production in the region that became the Ottoman central lands. The second section (ca. 1520–ca. 1570) emphasises the articulations of an Ottoman imperial identity and image across diverse media, concomitant to the emergence of the Ottoman Empire as a world power and to the further political and ideological transformation in the mid-1500s that led the polity to reinforce its identity as the foremost Islamic state. In the third section (ca. 1570–1600), the account concentrates particularly on the painting and to a lesser extent the architecture of these decades; the discussion aims to trace Ottoman patrons' and artists' responses to the set of contemporary transformations in the structure of rule and also in the economy and social order. While following major political transformations, this chronological division lacks absolute precision, and where thematic discussions necessitate it, objects and trends will be presented outside of the particular time frames proposed here. This survey does not attempt a comprehensive portrayal of visual culture across the wide geographic, cultural and demographic expanse of the Ottoman domains and of the plural Ottoman society. Rather, it selectively follows patterns in the courtly and urban production and use of buildings, objects and images; where available sources and the scholarship allow, it touches on local practices and on local uses and adaptations of courtly idioms in the ethnically, religiously and linguistically diverse empire.

Multiple centres and a new vantage point, ca. 1450–ca. 1520

Webs of connections, novel encounters, and interactions with cultural worlds within and around the region that would become the core Ottoman domains fed into a visual culture of dynamic variety and remarkable heterogeneity. A multiplicity of visual idioms characterised the art of these decades, when the rising Ottoman polity had to confront other political entities ruling over parts of Anatolia while it also had to reckon with various local power holders within its expanding domains, including frontier warrior lords in the west and hereditary aristocracies in the east. Timurid resonances in Ottoman, Karaman and Dulkadir court arts represented a continuation of cultural trends established in the wake of Timur's invasion of Anatolia (1402). In the southern and eastern parts of Asia Minor, Mamluk political influence was substantial and

imparted high prestige to Syrian and Cairene forms. Ottoman architectural thinking and practice absorbed aspects of the late Roman and Byzantine legacy of Constantinopolitan architecture, continuing a trend that had shaped Ottoman building ventures from their early beginnings in Bithynia.

Emerging supreme within a landscape of multiple and rapidly altering political entities, and driven by the imperial vision of Mehmed II and his successors, the Ottoman polity embraced the high cultural traditions with which it came into contact, absorbing, juxtaposing and at times synthesising models from a broad and diverse array of sources. As a result, extant connections and channels of cultural interaction were expanded and acquired new meaning, while novel connections shaped artistic ventures. Conquest, consolidation and growing political claims led to new encounters and shaped the dynamic cultural eclecticism of the fifteenth-century Ottoman world. In the early 1500s, Ottoman invasions of Mamluk and Safavid territory brought an abundance of artists and objects into Ottoman courtly environments. From a Constantinopolitan vantage point, Iran and central Asia, eastern Anatolia, Mamluk Egypt, Byzantium and Italy were all visible and accessible in a novel manner. Timurid, Mamluk and Renaissance resonances and engagements on the one hand and Ottoman re-workings of late-antique and medieval legacies on the other shaped the visual culture of the era.

Re-formulations in architecture: Istanbul and beyond

Radical changes in the visual domain paralleled the profound political transformations that took place in the wake of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. The domain of architecture offers the most visible expression of this change, for the political reformulations and transformations that characterised this period were most tangibly reflected in the spaces that housed the newly established institutions in the new capital, Istanbul. The architecture of palaces and public structures accommodated and represented socio-political and institutional change; at the same time, these buildings and their urban configurations reflected the burgeoning imperial vision and identity of the Ottoman house.

Architectural projects in Istanbul aimed to introduce Ottoman visual, spatial and institutional order to the newly instituted capital, itself a multi-layered entity bearing the millennial legacy of the eastern Roman Empire. Royal construction, palaces and mosque complexes and military and commercial structures encompassed the wide expanse of Constantinople. The new ruling elite of *devşirme* origin followed a frequently quoted order by Mehmed II to undertake constructions so as to decorate, glorify and order the recently

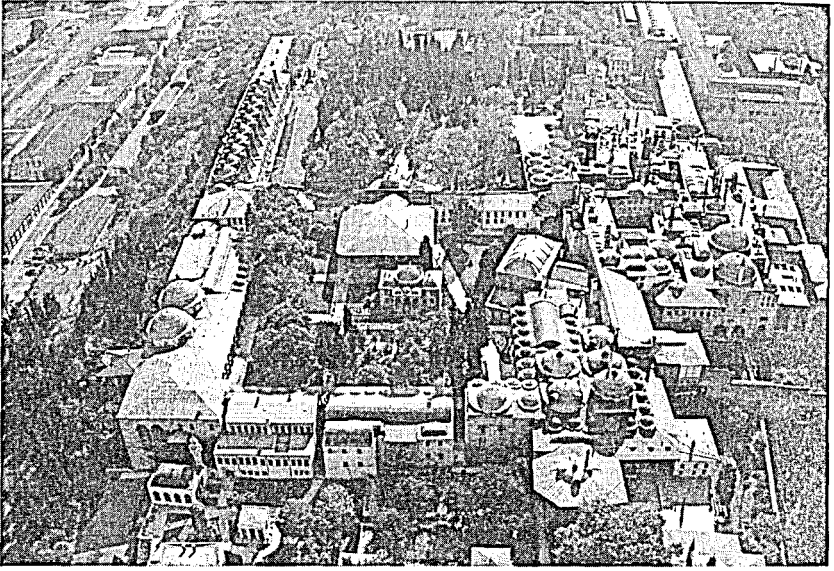


Figure 13.1. The Topkapı Palace, Istanbul, aerial view. (Photograph by Reha Günay)

established capital city. Two major projects by Mehmed II, the construction of the Topkapı Palace (Topkapı Sarayı) and a mosque complex, occupying the sites of the Byzantine acropolis and the Holy Apostles ecclesiastical complex, respectively, were the premier testimonies to Ottoman empire building and state construction.¹

Today a palimpsest of architectural and decorative layers that accumulated over the nearly four hundred years during which it served as the locus of Ottoman rule, the Topkapı Palace nevertheless preserves its original layout to a remarkable degree (Figure 13.1).²

Its three successive enclosures housed a series of public and private functions. Service and administrative spaces filled the first two courtyards; a council hall flanked by a treasury tower constituted the node of the second enclosure. Behind the ceremonial gate separating the second and the third courtyards stood the sultan's audience chamber. The monarch shared the

1 Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991); Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, *Constantinople/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (Philadelphia, 2009).

2 Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*; Sedad Hakkı Eldem and Feridun Akozan, *Topkapı Sarayı: Bir Mimari Araştırma* (Istanbul, 1982).

third courtyard, housing his residence and recreational spaces, with the dormitories of his pages; the small women's section abutted this area. The military appearance of the outer and inner enclosure walls, each marked with numerous towers, and the double-towered entrance to the second courtyard in an idiom newly emerging in contemporary Italy, resonated with a medieval palatial paradigm that conflated the functions and the visual markers of the palatial residence with that of the military stronghold.

Beyond the succession of courtyards, the vast enclosure that encompassed the north-eastern tip of the Constantinopolitan peninsula housed gardens, orchards and game preserves, dotted with kiosks and pavilions. To the west, three such pavilions in Byzantine, Ottoman and Persian styles faced each other, products of multitudinous encounters, metaphors of Mehmed II's universal ambitions. The contemporary Greek chronicler Kritoboulos, underscoring the aesthetic predilections of his patron, wrote:

They were all built with a view to variety, beauty, size, magnificence; shining and scintillating with an abundance of gold and silver, within and without and with precious stones and marbles, with various ornaments and colors, all applied with a brilliance and smoothness and lightness most attractive and worked out with the finest and most complete skill, most ambitiously.³

While in its broad outlines the layout of the palace reflected the Turco-Persian notion of the "outer" and "inner" realms of the ruler's domain (*birun* and *enderun*), emerging protocols and the daily and ceremonial requirements of the Ottoman ruling body shaped individual sections. In comparison to what is known of pre-conquest palatial enclosures, the Topkapı Palace is striking in its highly articulated organisational scheme, which accommodated the newly defined hierarchies of the administrative apparatus and manifested the absolute authority of the sultan. Remaining evidence from Ottoman palaces of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries suggests that they were loosely organised ensembles with a number of pavilions and temporary structures. A multi-functional tower served as the treasury, audience hall and residence of the sultan, thus constituting the symbolic as well as the functional core of the complex.⁴ Through the three-courtyard scheme of the Topkapı Palace, by

3 Kritoboulos, *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, trans. Charles T. Riggs (Westport, Conn., 1954), p. 107.

4 Ayda Arel, 'Cihannüma Kasrı ve Erken Osmanlı Saraylarında Kule Yapıları Hakkında', in Prof. Doğan Kuban'a Armağan, ed. Zeynep Ahunbay, Deniz Mazlum and Kutgün Eyüpgiller (Istanbul, 1996), pp. 99–116; Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, pp. 99–116; Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi'mârisinde Fâtih Devri, 855–886 (1451–1481)*, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1973 and 1974), pp. 712–32.

contrast, the private, residential and recreational spaces reserved for the sovereign and his immediate entourage were clearly distinguished from public and administrative ones. A set of newly designed buildings fulfilled separate functions in the palace's successive courtyards; their location and architectural configuration underlined the inner divisions and differentiations within these separate quarters. While strict geometry or symmetry did not govern the design concept, a tight organisational layout imposed order on everyday as well as ceremonial uses of space. Location, architecture and epigraphy of the Topkapı Palace boldly manifested the imperial claims of the ruler.⁵

The palatial paradigm created by the patron and architects of the Topkapı Sarayı would determine the spatial configuration and symbolic uses of palaces in princely capitals such as Amasya and Manisa, complexes founded during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and expanded later on. As for the Edirne palace, started by Murad II (1421–51, with an interruption) and completed by his successor, Mehmed II, it conformed to the model of the Topkapı. Its continued use as a secondary royal residence informed the reciprocal relationship it had to the Istanbul palace, as both complexes were expanded and refurbished through the following centuries. In the later fifteenth century and beyond, palaces of the grandees within the capital city emulated the royal dwelling, with their succession of two or three courtyards ranging in use from public to private quarters, and with spatial and symbolic distinctions such as an audience hall and, in at least one case, a treasury tower.⁶

In response to changing representational agendas and new cultural connections, the public architecture of the period presents equally bold re-phrasings of extant forms. Mehmed II's main architectural undertaking within Istanbul is the grand complex of socio-religious structures built between 1463 and 1470 known today as Fatih (Figure 13.2).⁷ The project draws upon two distinct types

5 Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*.

6 Petra Kappert, *Die osmanischen Prinzen und ihre Residenz: Amasya im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert* (Leiden, 1976); Çağatay Uluçay, *Manisadaki Saray-ı Amire ve Şehzadeler Türbesi* (Istanbul, 1941); İlhami Bilgin, 'Manisa Sarayı', *Dokuzuncu Milletlerarası Türk Sanatları Kongresi: Bildiriler* (Ankara, 1995), vol. 1, pp. 369–77. On vezirs' palaces, see Nurhan Atasoy, *İbrahim Paşa Sarayı* (Istanbul, 1972); Ebru Turan, 'The Sultan's Favorite: Ibrahim Pasha and the Making of Ottoman Universal Sovereignty in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman (1516–1526)', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago (2007), pp. 142–5; Tülay Artan, 'The Kadirga Palace Shrouded in the Mists of Time', *Turcica* 26 (1994), 55–124; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, pp. 116–7, 201–2.

7 Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London, 2005), pp. 82–6; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, pp. 66–96; Fevzi Güntüç, *Türk Kültür ve Medeniyet Tarihinde Fatih Külliyesi/The Fatih Complex in Turkish History and Civilization* (Istanbul, 2007).



Figure 13.2a. The mosque complex of Mehmed II, Istanbul: (a) aerial view. (Photograph by Reha Günay)

of structures which until then had formed the main objects of Ottoman rulers' architectural patronage. One was the congregational mosque located at the city centre near the commercial core, serving for Friday prayer and sermon. The other object of royal patronage was the socio-religious complex (*imaret* in contemporary texts, *külliye* in modern usage), which often constituted the core of an urban or suburban development through the wide range of services it offered and was thus one of the instruments of Ottoman territorial consolidation. Usually located at the outskirts of a town, such complexes were centred by a multi-functional dervish convent (*zaviye*) cum *mescit* and the founder's mausoleum, surrounded by a range of public structures such as a soup kitchen, *medrese*, public bath and fountain. Designed for social and ritual gathering and for accommodative purposes, the *zaviye-mescit* did not have arrangements for congregational prayer.

Drawing upon former Ottoman practices, Mehmed II's ensemble was at the same time shaped by a set of novelties that were to have a significant impact on Ottoman architectural ventures through the following centuries. The ruler's religious space no longer accommodated the once celebrated dervishes and *gazis*; a congregational mosque replaced the multi-functional *zaviye-mescit* as the visually and spatially dominant building. A plot outside of the main core housed an elaborately designed and furnished hospice, a soup kitchen and a caravansary, emphatically separating the space of prayer from

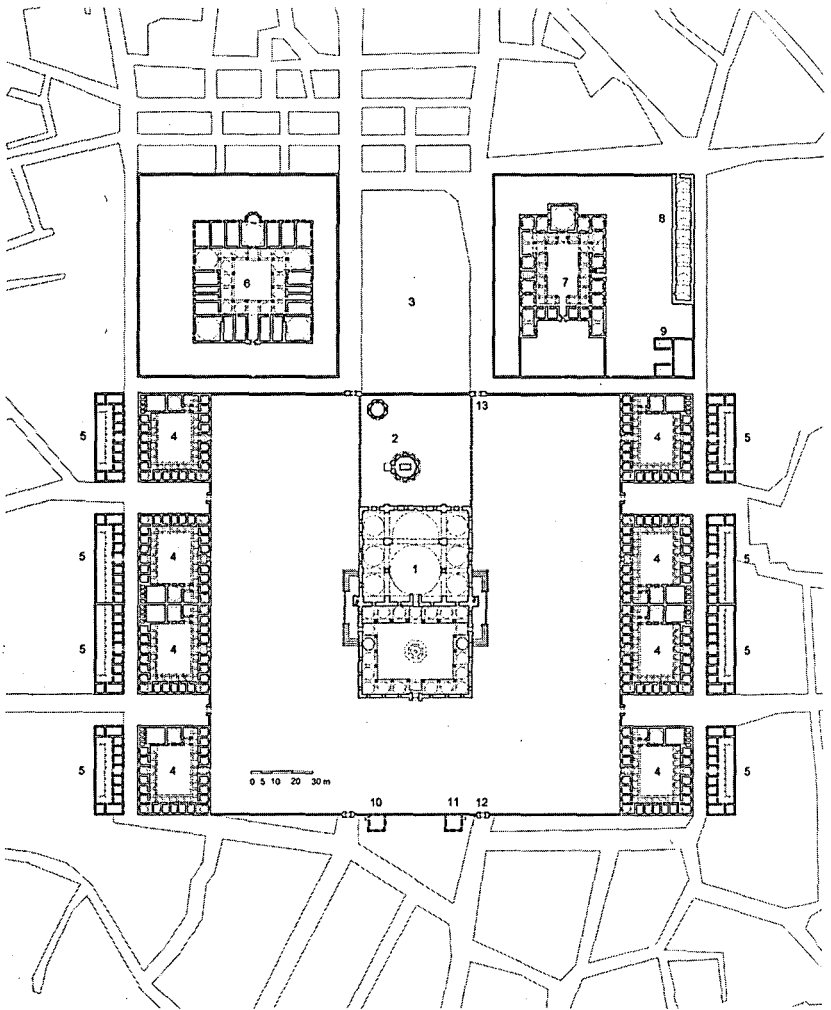


Figure 13.2b. The mosque complex of Mehmed II, Istanbul: (b) plan. (Photograph by Reha Günay)

the space of accommodation. Like the Byzantine church of the Holy Apostles on whose grounds it stood, and similar to the earlier Ottoman complexes at whose centre stood a convent-*mescit*, the complex was conceived as a dynastic funerary monument; shortly after his death, the founder's mausoleum rose behind the qibla (kible) wall of the mosque. The foundation was also to serve as the premier educational institution of the empire, with its eight *medreses*

training the highest-ranking members of the Ottoman learned hierarchy. Finally, echoing earlier Ottoman complexes, it was to function as the centre of a developing residential and commercial area in a district beyond the inhabited core of late medieval Constantinople, housing a primary school and a public bath, and surrounded by commercial establishments.

The completely novel spatial arrangement of the compound powerfully resonated with the emerging configuration of the learned hierarchy and its recently re-defined position vis-à-vis the ruling body. The mosque stood alone at the centre of a vast plaza measuring 210 meters to a side; in uncompromising symmetry, the *medreses* flanked the latter in rows of four, while the siting of the remaining dependencies followed the geometric logic of the layout. The compelling symmetry and axiality of the design centred on a large plaza testifies to the impact of notions of ideal planning newly being elaborated in Renaissance Italy, and circumstantial evidence suggests the possible involvement of the contemporary Florentine architect Filarete in the design process.⁸ This radical re-formulation, which accommodated the absolutist aims of Mehmed II, remained a lasting legacy for Ottoman architectural practice. In strong contrast to earlier royal complexes where the buildings adapted to the topography of the land, their later Ottoman counterparts, with few exceptions, were designed on an orthogonal principle, imposing strict geometric schemes on the urban fabric.

The chronicler Tursun Bey's comments on the mosque of Mehmed II succinctly capture the building's novelty, and its clear reference, through its vaulting structure, to the primary religious monument of Istanbul, the Hagia Sophia: "[H]e built a mosque in the likeness of the Hagia Sophia, which, apart from encompassing all the arts of the Hagia Sophia, was built according to the latest practices in a fresh new idiom and with immeasurable beauty; its miraculous splendor is apparent."⁹ In other respects, the mosque was based on Murad II's Üç Şerefeli Cami, completed in Edirne in 1447. The hemispherical dome that covered the larger part of the prayer hall, the marble-paved courtyard and the multiple minarets signifying royal patronage were references to the Edirne monument, which itself represented a departure from established norms for Ottoman congregational mosques. Merging aspects of these two symbolically significant buildings, the architects created a new iconography for the Ottoman sultanic mosque

⁸ Marcell Restlé, 'Bauplanung und Baugesinnung unter Mehmed II Fatih', *Pantheon* 39 (1981), 361-7; Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, 82-6; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, pp. 73-5.

⁹ Tursun Bey, *Târih-i Ebü'l-Feth*, ed. Mertol Tulum (Istanbul, 1977), p. 70.

that would continue to resonate with Ottoman notions of monumentality through the late eighteenth century.

The three urban projects sponsored by Bayezid II, their construction spread over nearly two decades, embody the diverse cultural currents of the period that followed the demise of Mehmed II. At the centres of the complexes in Amasya, Edirne and Istanbul, completed in 1486, 1487–8 and 1505–6, respectively, there is always a multi-functional *zaviye*-mosque, now appointed for congregational prayer.¹⁰ A bold manifestation of their patron's favourable stance towards the dervish milieu, Bayezid II's mosques feature large and elaborately designed convent sections, presenting a compromise with respect to the radical step taken by his father in the design of his Istanbul foundation. The architect of Bayezid II's Istanbul mosque, Yakub Şah bin Sultan Şah, re-interpreted the layout of Mehmed II's mosque in the capital. With a central dome supported by two half-domes on the qibla axis covering the prayer hall, the building presented a further step in Ottoman responses to the city's primary religious monument, the Hagia Sophia. Convent sections flanked the prayer hall on two sides; like the patron's mosque in Edirne, these lateral wings were each arranged around a domed central hall to which four iwans opened in a cruciform plan. Bayezid's three complexes in princely and sultanic capitals had diverse programmes and layouts, bespeaking the varied priorities of the patron in these cities. Accommodative functions prevailed in Amasya, where the buildings were aligned with the Kızılırmak. Also aligned with a river, the Tunca, but governed by an orthogonal design, the Edirne compound housed an elaborately designed and richly endowed hospital and a *medrese*. In Istanbul, the monumental mosque flanked by the founder's mausoleum was boldly displayed on the crossroads of the city's main ceremonial artery and a main street leading to the harbour area, its dependencies located along these two streets.

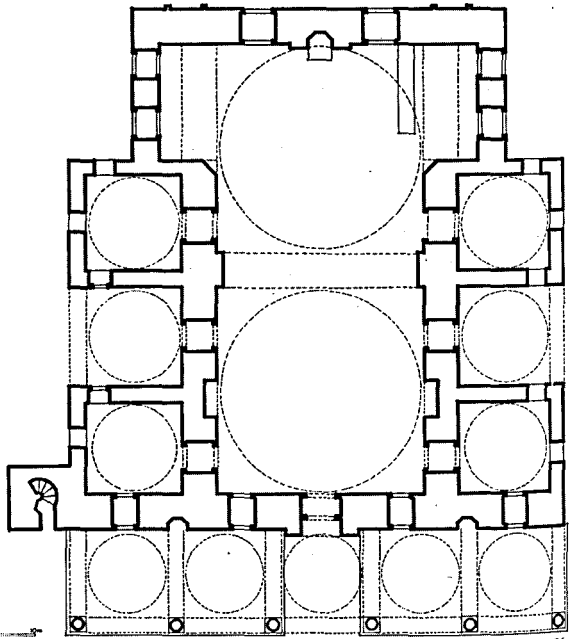
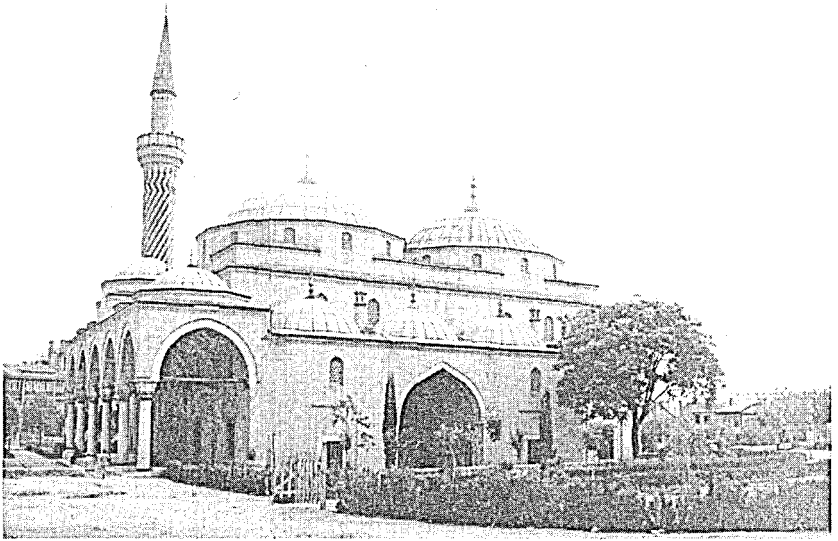
From the 1460s onwards, forms of elite institutional and architectural patronage were transformed as shifting agendas of self-representation dictated changes in particular forms and the rise of others. The most typical of Ottoman public buildings through the 1300s and early 1400s, the T-type convent-*mescit*, underwent a significant adaptation: this multi-functional building featured a central domed hall, which was abutted by an iwan used as a prayer space on the vertical axis, and hospice rooms – at times opening into lateral iwans – to the sides. While such buildings remained the basic form of the

¹⁰ Abdülkadir Dündar, 'Bir Belgeye Göre Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi', *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 44 (2003), 131–72. On Bayezid II's projects, see İ. Aydın Yüksel, *Osmanlı Mi'arisinde II. Bayezid Yavuz Selim Devri* (Istanbul, 1983), pp. 15–30, 103–27, 184–216.

ruling elite's public patronage, they were now designated as congregational mosques, with allocations for Friday prayer and sermon. Architects explored new spatial arrangements to divorce the spaces of worship from the hospice rooms for dervishes and travellers, with their fireplaces and storage facilities. Separate side entrances for the hospice rooms, at times through iwans opening to the building exterior, as in the Gedik Ahmed Paşa mosque in Afyon, or the addition of an internal corridor separating the prayer space from the side rooms, as in the Mahmud Paşa mosque in Istanbul, were among the solutions offered by architects working within this increasingly obsolete typology. The oculus of the central dome and the fountain underneath were eliminated, as the central hall became contiguous with the prayer iwan. Changes in terminology reflected transformations in architectural culture and patronage. While extant foundation deeds define many of the buildings as congregational mosques, their foundation inscriptions most often refer to them as *imaret*, thus continuing an earlier system of references. Catering to the needs of the frontier, instrumental in the creation of a spatial and institutional framework in newly conquered territory and at times in use by *ahi* confraternities, the multi-functional T-type building was a cultural product of the early Ottoman centuries.¹¹ The institutional and architectural transformation outlined here preceded the final obsolescence of this building type in the middle decades of the sixteenth century, when visual manifestations of the Ottoman elite's ethos of provision and accommodation ceded to a strong emphasis on Sunni orthodoxy (Figure 13.3).

Like the convent-*mescit*, the prominently scaled and located public bath was a product of the early Ottoman centuries that continued to have symbolic import until the mid-1500s. Unlike the former, the public bath surely did not become completely obsolete, as its social, religious and hygienic functions remained pertinent. But in contrast to the monumental bath-houses built by the Ottoman elite through the 1540s, at times competing in size and visibility with the mosques in their vicinity, patrons sponsored humbler structures, often tucked away in inconspicuous locations. Once again, we observe the waning of early Ottoman representational priorities, predicated on hospitality and provision of services in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious socio-cultural environment. A comparison between the public bath of Bayezid II, its tepidarium domes facing Istanbul's main thoroughfare and ceremonial

¹¹ Doğan Kuban, *Osmanlı Mimarisi* (Istanbul, 2007), pp. 75–122; Sedat Emir, *Erken Osmanlı Mimarlığında Çok-İşlevli Yapılar: Yapımsal ve İşlevsel Bir Analiz* (Istanbul, 1992); Howard Crane, 'Art and Architecture, 1300–1453', *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. 1: *Byzantium to Turkey, 1071–1453*, ed. Kate Fleet (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 294–7.



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Figure 13.3. Gedik Ahmed Paşa mosque-convent, Afyon, 1477: (a) exterior view with side iwans; (b) plan. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

axis, and that of the Süleymaniye complex, one of the minor buildings of this most expansive of Ottoman architectural ventures, may demonstrate the point. It may be significant that two royal women, Hürrem and Nurbanu, continued to favour public baths for several decades more, commissioning to the chief architect Sinan monumental and elaborately designed bath-houses located on sites of high visibility and prestige within the capital city.

The architecture of the period between the 1480s, from which date the first large-scale urban projects of Bayezid II and his retinue, and the 1520s can be characterised by two diverse currents. On the one hand, buildings sponsored by the Ottoman elite were marked by a standardisation of formal vocabularies and typologies compared to the previous decades, owing in large part to the greater control over the arts through workshops functioning under court patronage. As in the previous centuries, public structures were typically laid out around arcaded courtyards, and particularly from the 1490s onwards, the dome served as the basic vaulting element for rooms, pillared halls and arcades alike.¹² The consistent use of ashlar masonry and monolithic supports, often spoliated columns, in buildings of high prestige marked a departure from the possibilities and the aesthetic of brick or composite construction, bringing the Ottoman architectural idiom closer to the Roman architectural tradition of the Mediterranean.

At the same time, this was a period for exploring novel forms and idioms, owing to the diversity of architects, artists and craftsmen working on projects in various loci: experimentations with polygonal structures, which resonated with contemporary Renaissance searches for centralised geometric schemes elaborating on a set of ideal forms, included the Kapı Ağası *medrese* in Amasya and the hospital of the Bayezid II complex in Edirne (Figure 13.4). The former was laid out around a large octagonal courtyard, the latter around a hexagonal domed hall.¹³ Ottoman expansions into Turkmen, Safavid and Mamluk territory opened another channel of novelty, as they brought to the Ottoman capital scores of artists and objects from courtly centres such as Tabriz, Damascus and Cairo. Due to the presence of these masters and the high prestige of the visual idioms of the eastern Islamic lands for the contemporary Ottoman elites, Timurid-Turkmen and Mamluk forms became ever more visible.

¹² Aptullah Kuran, 'İznik Süleyman Paşa Medresesinin İnşa Tarihi ile Bağdaşmayan Mimari Kuruluşu Üzerine Görüşler', *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları* 27(1989), 175–92; Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi'marisinde Fâtih Devri*; Yüksel, *Osmanlı Mi'marisinde II. Bayezid Yavuz Selim Devri*.

¹³ Albert Gabriel, *Monuments turcs d'Anatolie* (Paris, 1934), vol. 2, p. 56; Semavi Eyice, 'Kapı Ağası Hüseyin Ağa'nın Vakıfları', *Ankara Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Araştırma Dergisi* special issue (1978), 159–66.

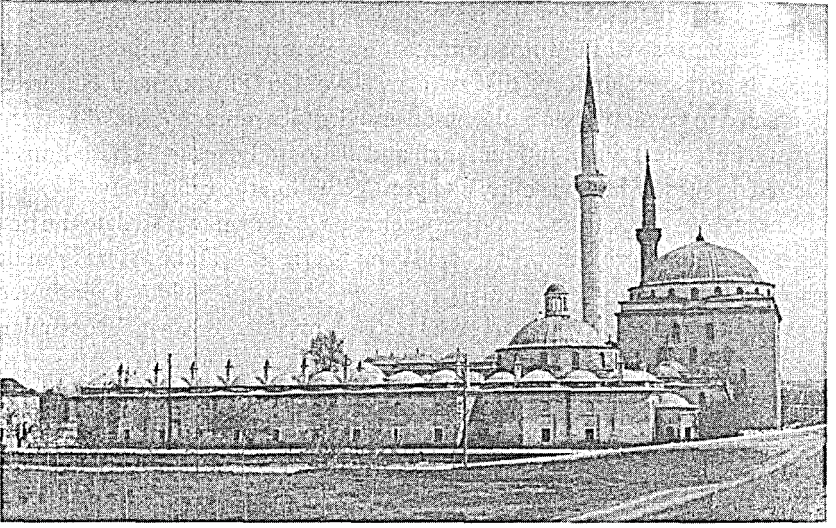


Figure 13.4a. Bayezid II complex, Edirne, 1488 (photograph by the author)

To the extent that they survive, the decorative vocabulary and programmes of public buildings of the period evince the continuation of earlier trends, which were in turn tightly connected to the larger world of the inter-regional Timurid aesthetic. At the same time, particularly in the realm of the court, selective uses of Byzantine, Mamluk and Italian forms expanded the visual vocabulary. As in the prestigious projects of the pre-conquest era, in the later 1400s tile revetments in a range of different techniques, and hence of diverse visual effects, may be found in the same building, where they would be juxtaposed with marble revetments, wall paintings and inlaid and painted woodwork, creating a rich and varied visual effect.

Historians have identified at least two ceramic tile workshops hailing from the larger Timurid-Turkmen world: the “masters of Tabriz”, who had already decorated the Bursa foundation of Mehmed I (r. 1413–21), continued to work in our period, while a Khorasani group was also employed in Bursa and Istanbul. Techniques ranged from mosaic tile, monochrome polygonal tiles at times with gold leaf or relief decoration, to polychrome *cuerda seca* and underglaze tiles, including blues and whites as well as polychrome tiles that imitate the *cuerda seca*. The work of these ateliers survives in the Tiled Pavilion (Çinili Köşk, 1472) in the Topkapı Palace grounds, in Mehmed II’s congregational

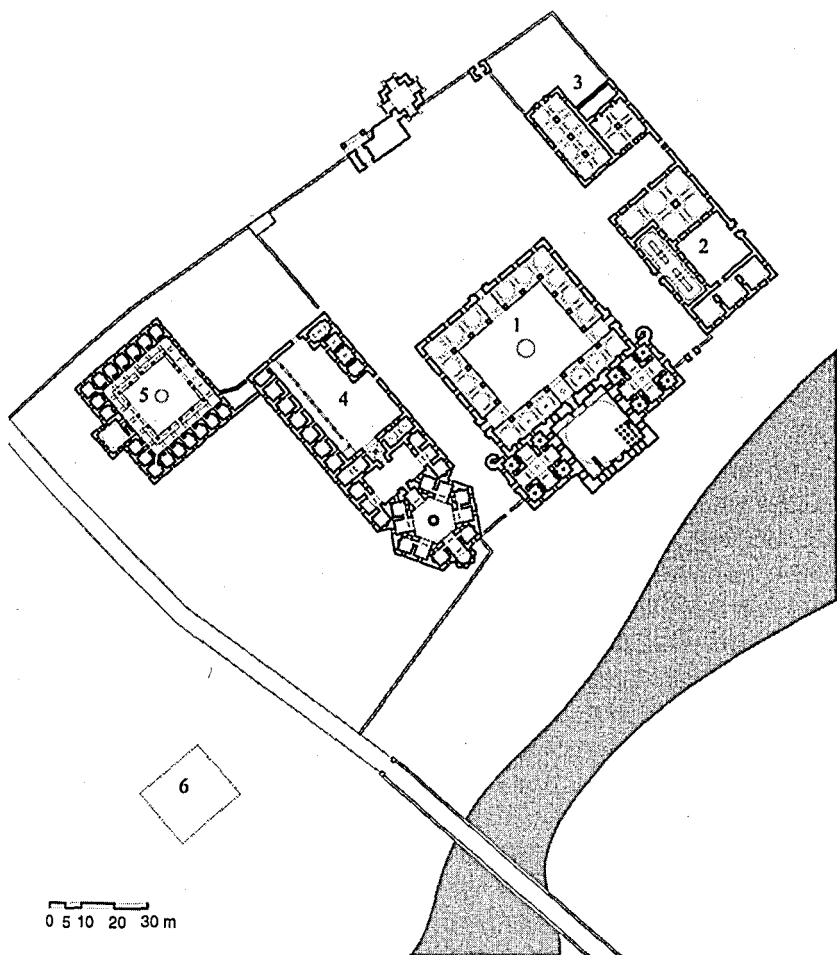


Figure 13.4b. Bayezid II complex, Edirne, 1488: plan of complex (1, mosque; 2, soup kitchen; 3, caravanserai; 4, hospital; 5, medrese). (Plan from Gülru Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, p. 95)

mosque, and on the mausoleum of his one-time grand *vezir* Mahmud Paşa.¹⁴ The mausoleum of Prince Mustafa in Bursa (1479), also home to the tomb of Prince Cem, is the last building to feature a range of tiles produced by the Tabriz workshop. This building also houses the best-preserved programme of

¹⁴ Nurhan Atasoy and Julian Raby, *Iznik: The Pottery of Ottoman Turkey*, ed. Yanni Petsopoulos (London, 1989), pp. 83–9; Gülru Necipoğlu, 'From International Timurid to Ottoman: A Change of Taste in Sixteenth Century Ottoman Tiles', *Muqarnas* 7 (1990), 136–71; Faik Kırmlı, 'İstanbul Çinçiliği', *Sanat Tarihi Yıllığı* 11 (1981), 97–110 at pp. 96–7, 106.

wall painting from the period known to date, which also is marked by a close affinity to Timurid models and the “landscape” features of Murad II’s mosque cum dervish convent in Edirne.¹⁵

In the central cities of the Ottoman realm, the patronage of architecture and urban institutions reflected the political dynamics of the period, unfolding towards the unrivalled predominance of the dynasty and the palace elite. Through the 1540s, only the sultan, the ascendant ruling elite of *devşirme* origins, and servants of the palace built major public structures in the new capital. Mehmed II and the Istanbul-based elite were active sponsors of charities in provincial centres as well, and prospects of economic expansion led *vezirs* of the Imperial Council to invest in commercial infrastructure: in addition to considerable structures in Istanbul, Mahmud Paşa built the covered commercial centre (*bedestan*) of Ankara; in that city and in Bursa, he financed large urban caravansarys (*hans*) to serve the trade in camlet and silk, respectively. In Sofia, Mehmed II’s grand *vezir* also built a congregational mosque, a project that otherwise was often a sultanic prerogative.

Beginning with the reign of Bayezid II, the sultan and grandees turned their attention from the all-devouring new capital to centres of former political and symbolic prominence. Bayezid II allegedly built his royal complex in Amasya because of a promise made to the prominent Halveti *şeyh* Çelebi Halife, who was influential in his victory over Prince Cem during the fratricidal struggle that followed the death of Mehmed II.¹⁶ In that same city, two members of Bayezid’s princely household and at that time *ağas* of the court, namely Firuz and the chief white eunuch Hüseyin, undertook constructions alongside the sultan. Hüseyin Ağa’s *bedestan* (1483) and *medrese* (1489) were parts of a campaign that definitively altered the cityscape of Amasya, as constructions by the sultan and his courtiers endowed the town with buildings in a visual idiom specifically connected to the Ottoman centre. Bayezid II’s foundation in Edirne, the former capital and one of the power bases of the *gazi* constituency, was one of the most expansive and monumental urban ventures to date; within the same years, members of the palace elite also sponsored numerous projects in that city.

While their influence in the sultan’s entourage visibly diminished, the lords (*beys*) of the frontier, established as local dynasts with extensive land holdings and control over entrenched patronage networks, remained highly prominent sponsors of architecture, particularly in the Balkan provinces. In

15 Serpil Bağcı, ‘Painted Decoration in Ottoman Architecture’, in *Ottoman Civilization*, ed. Halil İnalçık and Günsel Renda, 2 vols. (Ankara, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 736–42.

16 Natalie Clayer, *Mystiques, états et société: les Halvetis dans l’aire balkanique de la fin du XVe siècle à nos jours* (Leiden, 1994).

provincial centres such as Skopje and Sarajevo, frontier lords sponsored urban institutions alongside the Istanbul elite. Unlike the latter, their patronage was directed also at smaller towns where their power bases were located, including Iannitsa, Larissa, Veria and Trikkala.¹⁷ In towns the T-type convent-*mescit* and in villages hospices where wayfarers might spend the night were the most visible buildings sponsored by frontier lords; their larger foundations, on the other hand, comprised the whole range of Ottoman public institutions and infrastructural buildings. Their architects adapted sultanic models for urban complexes to current needs and agendas, as in the Skopje foundation of Isa Bey, comprising a convent-*mescit* (according to its foundation deed a *hankah* trusted to an *ahi*) and soup kitchen, *medrese*, double bath, caravansarys and three *mescits* in different neighbourhoods of the town.

In the early decades of the sixteenth century, Balkan-based ghazi families also actively patronised the popular shrine complexes of Seyyid Gazi and Hacı Bektaş in central Anatolia, an indication of their influence far beyond their immediate power bases. Members of the Mihaloğlu family were active in the early sixteenth-century remodelling of the Seyyid Gazi complex; descendants of the Evrenos and Malkoçoğlu families, perhaps alongside Bayezid II himself, participated in the early sixteenth-century expansion of the Hacı Bektaş complex near Kırşehir. We may regard the multiple architectural links of these complexes to local traditions on the one hand and to trends emanating from the centre on the other as reflections of their roles as sites of negotiation in this period that saw the redefinition of religious and cultural identities increasingly determined by Ottoman-Kızılbaş duality and conflict.¹⁸

The Hacı Bektaş complex and its environs were sites of patronage not only for Ottoman central and peripheral power-holders but also for the Dulkadir dynasty, which often was caught up in the struggles between the Ottoman and Mamluk sultanates. Later on, the Dulkadir became major victims of the conflict between the sultan in Istanbul and the shah in Tabriz, for these confrontations precipitated the dynasty's final demise in 1522.¹⁹ The architecture

¹⁷ Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Osmanlı Mi'mârisinde Fâtih Devri*; Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, *Avrupa'da Osmanlı Mimari Eserleri*, 4 vols. (Istanbul, 1977–82); Aydın Yüksel, *Osmanlı Mi'marisinde II. Bayezid Yavuz Selim Devri*; Machiel Kiel, *Studies in the Ottoman Architecture of the Balkans* (Aldershot, 1990); Slobodan Ćurčić and Evangelia Hadjistryphonos (eds.), *Secular Medieval Architecture in the Balkans and Its Preservation* (Thessaloniki, 1997); Heath Lowry, *The Shaping of the Ottoman Balkans, 1350–1500: The Conquest, Settlement, and Infrastructural Development of Northern Greece* (Istanbul, 2008).

¹⁸ Zeynep Yürekli Gökay, 'Legend and Architecture in the Ottoman Empire: The Shrines of Seyyid Gazi and Hacı Bektaş', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University (2005).

¹⁹ Baha Tanman, 'Hacı Bektaş-ı Veli Külliyesi', in *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul, 1997), vol. 14, pp. 459–71; Yürekli Gökay, 'Legend and Architecture', pp. 178–91.

of the Dulkadir dynasty in Maraş and Malatya was a product of the cultural environment of southern and eastern Anatolian crossroads where Rum Seljuk and medieval Armenian forms remained meaningful while currents of Timurid-Turkmen and Mamluk impact shaped various monuments. Public and commemorative structures such as mosques, *medreses* and mausoleums followed medieval prototypes, while Mamluk details marked the stonework. Farther to the south, the Ramazanoğlu of Adana remained largely within the Mamluk orbit, as evinced by the congregational mosque in this town (1513–41), whose immediate visual references were to the late medieval buildings of Aleppo and Damascus and whose later Ottoman additions, including domed aisles, a vestibule and rich tile revetments, complicated its decorative and architectural program.²⁰

Parallel to the rapidly shifting political boundaries in eastern Anatolia under the Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu, a comparable eclecticism emerged in the architecture of this region, as succinctly captured by commemorative structures built for members of these dynasties. Late fifteenth-century Karakoyunlu mausoleums at Van, octagonal baldachins with conical domes built of ashlar masonry, refer at once to the medieval Islamic and Armenian traditions of this area. An Akkoyunlu mausoleum in Ahlat commemorating the emir Bayındır (1491) is a cylindrical building featuring a gallery on round arches and a conical dome, muqarnas capitals and a muqarnas portal with carved floral decoration; this building, too, interprets intertwined medieval Armenian and Rum Seljuk building traditions. Another Akkoyunlu mausoleum in Hisn Kiyfa, commemorating Uzun Hasan's son Zeynel Mirza (ca. 1473), diverges radically from its counterpart in Ahlat: a cylindrical building topped with a bulbous dome, completely covered with glazed brick and tile mosaic, this is a self-consciously Timurid building in design and decoration.²¹

Courts and cities: Baba Nakkaş, urban ateliers, and Ottoman variations on the Timurid-Turkmen decorative aesthetic

The inter-regional aesthetic created under the Timurid and Turkmen dynasties, in wide circulation in the Islamic world at large, remained a primary

²⁰ Hamza Gündoğdu, *Dulkadirli Beyliği Mimarisi* (Ankara, 1986); Ara Altun and Belgin Demirsar-Arlı, *Tiles: Treasures of Anatolian Soil, Ottoman Period* (Istanbul, 2008), pp. 157–63.

²¹ Albert Gabriel, *Voyages archéologiques dans la Turquie orientale* (Paris, 1940), pp. 79–81, 245–6; Oluş Arık, 'Turkish Architecture in Asia Minor in the Period of the Turkish Emirates', in *The Art and Architecture of Turkey*, ed. Ekrem Akurgal (Oxford, 1980), pp. 111–36 at pp. 132–5; Metin Sözen, *Anadolu'da Akkoyunlu Mimarisi* (Istanbul, 1981), pp. 148–52, 155–8; Crane, 'Art and Architecture', pp. 307–8.

and highly prestigious strand within the multiple vocabularies of ornament artists and patrons favoured through these decades. Ornamental idioms elaborated at Timurid, Akkoyunlu and Karakoyunlu courts constituted a basis on which artists of the Ottoman realm built local variants and introduced new vocabularies. Artists and craftsmen schooled in the Timurid tradition arrived at courts beyond the larger Iranian realm as invitees, captives or self-appointed gift-bearers in search of patronage, mediating the arrival of new variants of the already multi-centred Timurid-Turkmen schools. Timur's invasion of 1402 and its aftermath, the Ottoman defeat of the Karaman and Akkoyunlu dynasties in the 1470s, and finally Selim I's victory in Chaldiran (1514) and Ottoman expansion into Safavid territories mark three particular moments when, in the wake of military confrontation and conquest, artists and objects from the Persianate cultural sphere found an enthusiastic welcome in Ottoman courtly environments. Selim I's conquests also resulted in the Ottoman control of two important ports of East Asian trade, Aleppo and Cairo, which facilitated the arrival of objects and ideas of eastern origin into the Ottoman domains.

Referring to ornamental styles, Ottoman commentators by the 1520s distinguished *rumi* and *hatayi* forms as the landmark features of the Ottoman decorative aesthetic.²² Artists often combined these motifs in a variety of dense compositions based either on a geometric order or on a free-flowing scroll. *Rumi* (literally "Roman", which authors in the Persianate world called "islîmi") is an abstract floral ornament featuring palmettes and half-palmettes arranged according to a geometric order. A legacy of the late antique decorative vocabulary of the Near East, it remained resonant through the centuries. The term *hatayi* literally means "of Cathay", pointing to the East Asian origins of this motif; as its distinctive element it featured a stylised lotus blossom on a scroll in combination with other East Asian motifs. In the late 1400s and early 1500s, a new set of motifs expanded the vocabulary of design: cloud scrolls of East Asian inspiration, three-dot and stripe motifs, and peonies were combined in myriad compositions.²³ Together, this group constituted part of the design vocabulary referred to as the "seven modes" (*haft asl*) in Safavid and Ottoman sources of the later 1500s, highlighting the connections upheld between the increasingly distinct visual cultures of the early modern Islamic

22 Cafer Çelebi, *Hevesnâme*, in Asaf Halet Çelebi, *Divan Şiirinde İstanbul* (Istanbul, 1953), pp. 22–3.

23 Bağcı, 'Painted Decoration'; Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 76–7, 94–5; Julian Raby and Zeren Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding in the Fifteenth Century: The Foundation of an Ottoman Court Style* (London, 1993), pp. 49ff.

empires.²⁴ The floral aesthetic with its many variants prevailed; commentators and artists perceived geometric interlace (*giriş*) as an integral part of this visual language, but designers used it more sparingly and even marginally. Inscriptions adorned objects but infrequently.

The emergence of a set of institutional practices that integrated artistic production more tightly into the palace hierarchies marks the turn of the sixteenth century and accounts for the creation of a more unified visual idiom linked to Ottoman elite sponsorship of the arts. In these years, for the first time, payrolls document the existence of groups of architects, builders of watercourses and craftsmen employed by the court; gift registers feature groups of craftsmen or individuals who were either commissioned or else presented works on their own.²⁵ Listing a range of objects of material or symbolic value kept in the various royal treasuries, the earliest comprehensive inventories of the treasury holdings also date from the final years of the fifteenth century.²⁶ Possibly as part of a treasury inventory, palace officials also inventoried the royal manuscript collection and a group of individual designs, drawings and paintings during the first years of Bayezid II's reign. These procedures brought the arts under closer courtly scrutiny and possibly also within easier reach of artists and patrons.²⁷

As part of a ransom he demanded from the Akkoyunlu in 1472, Mehmed II asked for "rare books and *muraqqa*" (collections of calligraphies, images and illuminations in a codex). His move signifies Ottoman participation in collection practices that were part and parcel of Timurid courtly culture, intimately linked to the production and consumption of luxury manuscripts and objects.

24 Gülru Necipoğlu, 'L'idée de décor dans les régimes de visibilité islamiques', in *Pur décor Arts de l'islam, regards du XIXe siècle: collections des Arts Décoratifs*, ed. Rémi Labrusse, Sophie Makariou and Evelyne Possémé (Paris, 2007), pp. 10–23 at p. 13. For the Safavid context and uses of the term, see David Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 142, 150.

25 See the gift registers dated H. 909–917 in Istanbul, Atatürk Kütüphanesi, Muallim Cevdet O71, partially published and studied in Rıfki Melül Meriç, 'Bayezid Camii Mimarları: II. Sultan Bayezid Devri Mimarları ile Bazı Binaları', *Yıllık Araştırmalar Dergisi* 2 (1957), 5–76, and Rıfki Melül Meriç, 'Bayramlarda Padişahlara Hediye Edilen San'at Eserleri ve Karşılıkları', *Türk San'atı Araştırma ve İncelemeleri* 1 (1963), 764–86.

26 For the 1496 inventory TKSA D4, see Julian Raby and Ünsal Yücel, 'The Earliest Treasury Registers', in *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum, Istanbul: A Complete Catalogue*, ed. Regina Krahl, Erbahar Nurdan, John Ayres, Ünsal Yücel and Julian Raby (London, 1986), vol. 1, pp. 77–81; Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, p. 134. For the A.H. 910 (A.D. 1505) inventory, see the facsimile in *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Arşivi Kılavuzu* (Istanbul, 1938–40), doc. 21; J. Michael Rogers, 'An Ottoman Palace Inventory of the Reign of Bayezid II', in *Comité international d'études pré-ottomanes et ottomans, VIth Symposium Cambridge, 1st–4th July 1984: Proceedings*, ed. Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont and Eméri van Donzel (Istanbul and Paris, 1987), pp. 39–53.

27 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 53, 100–1.

From at least the 1480s onwards, several Timurid-Turkmen albums were held in the court treasury. Ottoman court artists partook in the creation and re-creation of albums, as they inserted new material into extant codices or created new ones featuring works of Ottoman, Turkmen and Italian provenance.²⁸

While viewers can distinguish an Ottoman court style of the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, its relations to diverse media were complex. On the one hand, technique and autonomous developments within the context of particular media shaped individual objects, and on the other hand the dynamic nature of relationships between numerous centres producing not only for the court but also for a local or inter-regional market informed design choices and priorities. Visual links, however, spanned different media. Of particular interest in this regard is the "Baba Nakkaş" album, whose designs, characterised by rosettes and bi- or tri-lobed blossoms, in addition to large split palmette, lotus and oak leaf motifs on spirals, occur in the illumination and bindings of manuscripts and also in ceramics, textiles and carpets (Figure 13.5). These recurrent motifs suggest that a design office modelled after Timurid *kitābkhānas* may have been at work already under Mehmed II, and a payroll register from the final years of Mehmed II's reign indeed records a group of painter-illuminators.²⁹ The documents noted, on the other hand, suggest that while the formalisation of court workshop practices began under Mehmed II, a tighter net of organisational and archival practices emerged only around the turn of the sixteenth century.

Under closer courtly scrutiny, the arts of the book, particularly calligraphy, binding and illumination, were areas where from the later decades of the fifteenth century onwards, patrons and artists elaborated a distinctive and relatively unified Ottoman idiom. In contrast to earlier bindings featuring a variety of materials, techniques and tools, the basic composition and techniques of Ottoman bindings were canonised at the turn of the sixteenth century. Pressure moulding and panel stamping, and a composition based on a central medallion with pendants and corner quadrants, persisted well into the 1600s. In illumination as in binding, motifs changed and the vocabulary of ornament expanded in the course of the following decades, but the basic designs

²⁸ Julian Raby, 'Mehmed II Fatih and the Fatih Album', *Islamic Art: Studies on the Art and Culture of the Muslim World* 1 (1981), 42–9; Filiz Çağman, 'On the Contents of the Four Istanbul Albums H. 2152, 2153, 2154, and 2160', *Islamic Art: Studies on the Art and Culture of the Muslim World* 1 (1981), 31–6. On Timurid and Safavid albums, see David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection* (New Haven, Conn., and London, 2005).

²⁹ Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 54–60; Julian Raby, 'Court and Export: Part 2. The Uşak Carpets', *Oriental Carpet and Textile Studies* 2 (1986), 177–88.

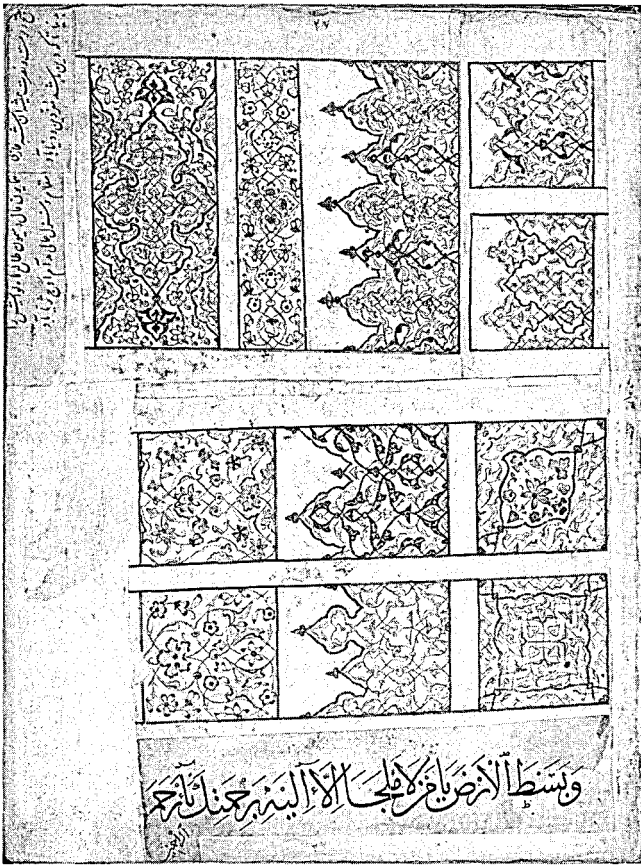


Figure 13.5. Page from the “Baba Nakkaş” album, circa 1470. Istanbul University Library, F 1423, fol. 15r. (By permission of Istanbul University Library)

and compositions, and in illumination the colour scheme dominated by lapis and gold, remained remarkably stable.³⁰

Calligraphy found fertile ground not only in Istanbul, where Mehmed II’s scriptorium produced manuscripts in Turkish, Persian, Arabic and Greek, but also in Amasya, where Bayezid’s princely court and a thriving network of Sufi lodges offered literati a rich cultural environment. Mastership often

30 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 54–60; Zeren Tanındı, ‘An Illuminated Manuscript of the Wandering Scholar Ibn al-Jazari and the Wandering Illuminators between Tabriz, Shiraz, Herat, Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul in the 15th Century’, in *Art Turc/Turkish Art: 100 Congrès international d’art turc/10th International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. François Déroche (Geneva, 1999), pp. 647–55.

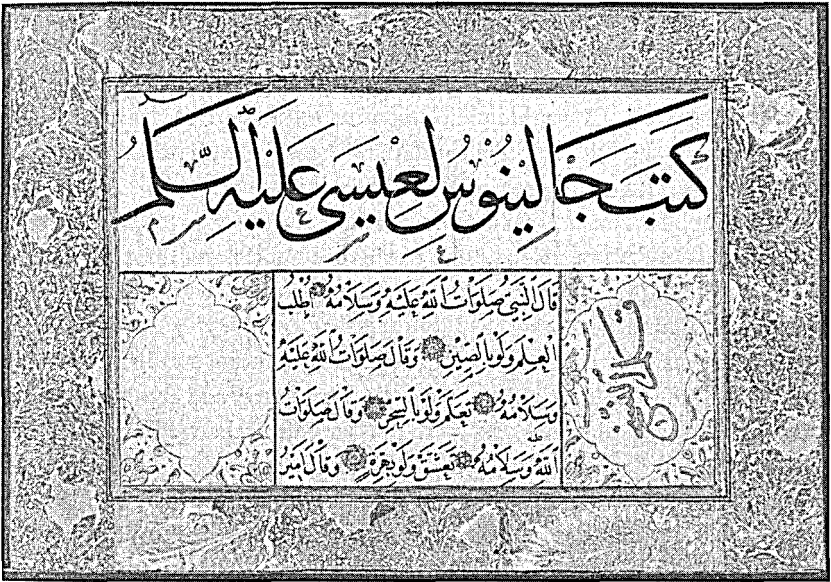


Figure 13.6. Calligraphic album of Şeyh Hamdullah; page with naskh and thuluth scripts. (Topkapı Palace Library EH 2084)

ran within families. In the employment of Ottoman courts, masters of calligraphy re-worked styles widespread in the post-Mongol Iranian world for use in chanceries as well as in literary and artistic production. The six cursive scripts, “hanging” chancery scripts and stylised Kufic all remained popular, as did the juxtaposition of scripts in different styles within a single sheet or in overlapping Kufic and *nesih* compositions. Connections with Shiraz and Tabriz are attested to in the colophons of numerous manuscripts. The legendary Şeyh Hamdullah, an intimate of Bayezid II and the protagonist of tales of calligraphic virtuosity, sportsmanship and divinely inspired wisdom, created an Ottoman interpretation of the six cursive scripts that would remain canonical through the later seventeenth century. To Ottoman authors, Şeyh Hamdullah perfected Yaqut’s *aklam-i sitta*; to Ottoman calligraphers, he remained the master to whom they traced their genealogies (Figure 13.6).³¹

³¹ Muhittin Serin, *Hat Sanatı ve Meşhur Hattatlar* (Istanbul, 2003), pp. 90–9; Muhittin Serin, *Hattat Şeyh Hamdullah: Hayatı, Talebeleri, Eserleri* (Istanbul, 1992); Abdülhamit Tüfekçioğlu, ‘Osmanlı Sanatının Oluşumunda Yazı’, in *Hat ve Tezhip Sanatı*, ed. Ali Rıza Özcan (Ankara, 2009), pp. 59–73. For colophons, see Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, catalogue.

The epigraphic programs of major buildings paved the way for the development of monumental cursive scripts. Royal scribes designed, and at times signed, foundation inscriptions composed by important members of the learned elite and calligraphic panels consisting of Qur'anic verses. Among them were the famed Hamdullah and Ali bin Mezid al-Sufi, who favoured the monumental *sülüs* – called *celi* in modern scholarship – for use in structures of broader public access.³² A calligraphic scroll featuring a huge Qur'anic verse that carries the date of 1458 and the name of a Tabrizi master, probably created as a model for use in a building, testifies to the design process of such monumental inscriptions.³³

Connections between the sultanic and princely courts – and also elite households – fostered a unification of the visual idioms esteemed in this milieu, particularly with regard to the arts of the book. Gift exchange between Prince Cem's court in Konya and that of his father in Istanbul connected the arts of bookbinding, illumination and calligraphy produced in these two centres. Şeyh Hamdullah's early work was found not only in Amasya but also in Mehmed II's collections. Along with their works, calligraphers and painters occasionally moved in person from elite households to the royal scriptorium, as happened at the death of Firuz Ağa in 1526.³⁴ By contrast, products of the industrial arts responded to the ever-changing commercial and social networks in which they were embedded and to varying degrees of government control over urban artisans. Throughout the period and across media, the court ateliers and their design priorities grounded in book culture concurrently impacted urban workshops to different degrees. The result, in the case of luxury textiles, ceramics and carpets, was a turnout that was marked with a visible duality. On the one hand, designs were shaped by earlier encounters between craft industries, courtly tastes and market demands. On the other hand, the decorative idiom favoured at the Ottoman court, derived from the Timurid-Turcoman repertory and under constant revision, informed the work of urban workshops.

The marked distinction between the "Baba Nakkaş" ceramic wares and the contemporaneous "Miletus" type produced at various sites in western

32 Abdülhamit Tüfekçioğlu, 'Amasya'da Sultan II. Bâyezid Câmii Kitâbelerinin Hattatı Hakkında Bir Tespit', in *M. Uğur Derman 65th Birthday Festschrift*, ed. Irvin Cemil Schick (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 554–68.

33 Signed by Ata Allah b. Muhammad al-Tabrizi; Michael J. Rogers, 'cat. no. 90: Calligraphic Scroll', in *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (Washington, D.C., 1991), p. 198.

34 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 86–8, 101; İsmail Hakkı Uzuncarşılı, 'Osmanlı Sarayında Ehl-i Hiref (Sanatkârlar) Defteri', *Belgeler* 11, 15 (1981–6), 23–76 at pp. 2, 28, 70.

Anatolia suggests such a duality between manufacture for the court and for the urban milieu (Figure 13.7a).³⁵

Large-scale objects marked by a high degree of technical sophistication and fine and tightly structured designs are reminiscent of the drawings in the Baba Nakkaş album, which suggest links to the courtly milieu in Istanbul. The popular and mass-produced blue-and-white wares, displaying a wide range of designs of various provenances shared with the “Baba Nakkaş” wares their underglaze painting technique and their porcelain-inspired colour scheme. Pottery forms, compositional choices and the decorative vocabulary of the “Baba Nakkaş” wares drew on contemporary metalwork, court designs and Chinese porcelains. Intense and free-flowing designs typical of the 1480s, often white on a cobalt background, disappeared in the following decades; patrons now preferred relatively sparser compositions favouring chinoiserie patterns alongside the already popular *rumi* elements.

In addition to the inter-relationships between urban and courtly milieus, among luxury textiles Italian imports played a significant role. Velvets, gold brocaded silks and satins were produced in Bursa but also imported particularly from Venice and Florence. Documents also mention Indian and Damascene textiles. At times created in response to specifications from Istanbul, Italian luxury fabrics were in vogue particularly for the imperial wardrobe and palace furnishings. Silks with complex ogival patterns that re-interpreted, and at times Ottomanised, the compositions of highly prestigious Italian velvets soon appealed to wealthy buyers alongside velvets and brocades in traditional “three dot” (*benek*) and “wavy stripe” (*pelenk nakış*) patterns.³⁶

Throughout this period, Venetian textiles remained objects of high prestige in Ottoman, Italian and northern European lands alike. A significant number of extant objects have proven difficult to attribute to the looms of Venice, Florence or else Bursa, demonstrating that the production and use of these conspicuous signifiers of wealth and status were profoundly interconnected

³⁵ Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 82–9; Walter B. Denny, *Iznik: The Artistry of Ottoman Ceramics* (London and New York, 2004), pp. 43–54. For Iznik excavations, see Oktay Aslanapa, Şerare Yetkin and Ara Altun, *Iznik Çini Fırınları Kazısı II. Dönem* (Istanbul, 1989); Ara Altun, ‘Iznik Çini Fırınları Kazısı Çalışmaları’, *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (Ankara, 1997–2002); Ara Altun and Belgin Demirsar-Arılı, ‘Iznik Çini Fırınları Kazısı Çalışmaları’, *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* (Ankara, 2003–7).

³⁶ Fahri Dalsar, *Türk Sanayi ve Ticaret Tarihinde Bursa’da İpekçilik* (Istanbul, 1960), pp. 77–8; Nurhan Atasoy, Walter B. Denny, Louise Mackie and Hülya Tezcan, *İpek: The Crescent and the Rose: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets* (London, 2001), pp. 182–90, 229–30; Suraiya Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople under the Ottomans* (London and New York, 2009), pp. 95–101.

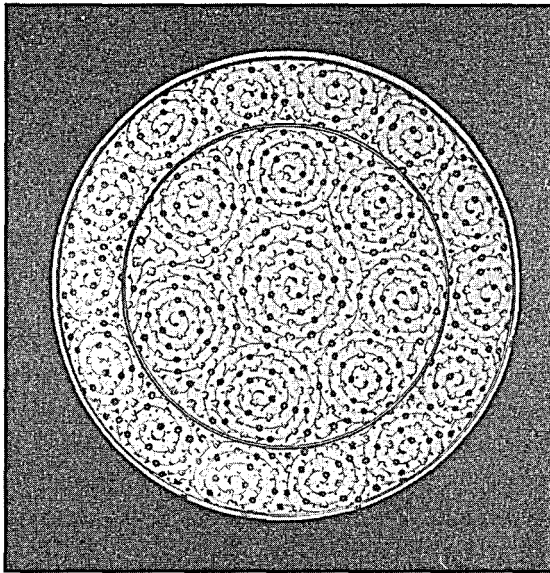
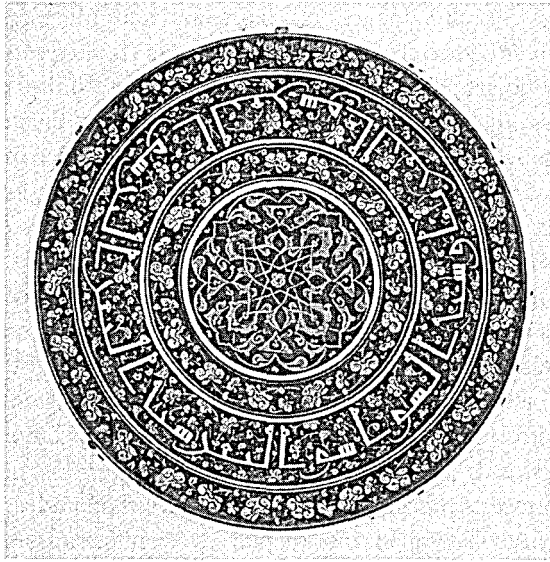


Figure 13.7a and b. Underglaze ceramic plates: (a) dish with *rumi* and Baba Nakkaş-style ornament and pseudo-Kufic inscription, ca. 1480 (Musée du Louvre, DAI, inv. QA 6321); (b) dish with *tuğrakeş* spiral design, ca. 1530–40 (Musée du Louvre, DAI, inv. 5592)



Figure 13.7c and d. Underglaze ceramic plates: (c) dish with rosettes, lotus flowers and *saz* leaves, ca. 1545–50 (Musée du Louvre, DAI, inv. MAO 385); (d): dish with tulips and hyacinths, ca. 1560–75 (Musée du Louvre, DAI, inv. 27715)

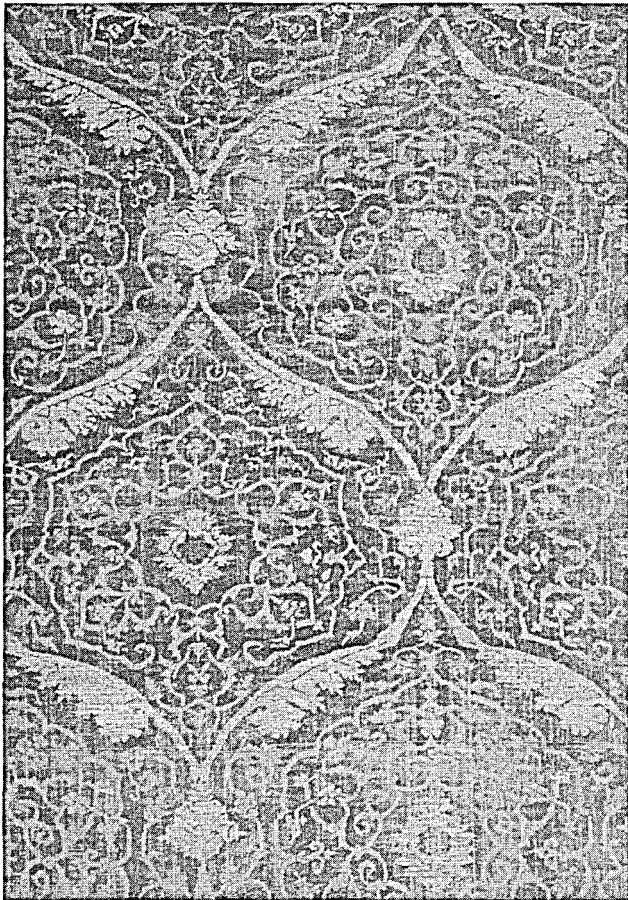


Figure 13.8. Velvet with an ogival pattern, attributed to Bursa or Italy, fifteenth century. (Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul, inv. no. 13/1919)

and textile artists lived in a world that was larger than the frontiers of the expanding empire (Figure 13.8).³⁷

A comparable situation existed in the realm of carpet production: Uşak, Bergama, Konya and possibly other smaller centres continued to provide for the massive European demand for carpets with a range of geometric motifs. Perhaps we also need to factor in an Asian market. Italian trading houses, with their main bases in Constantinople but also maintaining important

³⁷ Walter B. Denny, 'Oriental Carpets and Textiles in Venice' and *Venice and the Islamic World, 828–1797*, ed. Stefano Carboni (New York, 2007), pp. 174–91, 323, catalogue entries 79 and 80.

establishments on the Aegean coast, had long been the principal intermediaries in the carpet trade to western Europe. Actors multiplied while the routes and the volume of trade expanded throughout the period under examination.³⁸ Most common Anatolian exports have been dubbed “Holbein” and “Lotto” rugs by virtue of their ubiquity in Italian and northern Renaissance painting.³⁹ Both feature variations of repetitive geometric compositions: “Holbein” carpets had a design often based on octagon and star patterns, whereas the “Lotto” rugs featured an open repetitive design in which angular *rumi* motifs prevailed. Pseudo-Kufic borders of monumental effect, with geometric knot designs loosely based on this angular Arabic script, were a legacy of medieval carpet weaving in Anatolia. Other fragments, on the other hand, present motifs such as lotus palmettes and multi-lobed leaves and compositions that link them to late fifteenth-century courtly arts in other media, including manuscript illumination and binding, metalwork, woodcarving and tile decoration. Possibly due to the large-scale constructions of the period, these carpets were much larger than the “Konya”, “animal”, and “Holbein” varieties.⁴⁰ The connection between the various centres of carpet manufacture in western Anatolia and court styles continued through the later decades, as weavers incorporated “star” and “medallion” designs that came to dominate compositions. Weavers incorporated into their repertoires the long-favoured three-dot and stripe motifs (*çintamani*) and also motifs and colour combinations reminiscent of later sixteenth-century tile designs.⁴¹ Like İznik and Kütahya ceramics or Bursa silks and velvets, the carpet production of Uşak and Bergama was highly varied in quality, size and dominant decorative aesthetic. These same centres – and different workshops within them – catered both to the local and/or inter-regional market and the sultan’s court. Patterns of courtly commission and supervision over artisanal production during these decades, on the other hand, continue to escape us.

Concomitant to the integration of artistic production and consumption into the increasingly more structured bureaucratic practices and hierarchies

38 Crane, ‘Art and Architecture’, pp. 331–5; Kurt Erdmann, *Der türkische Teppich des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Istanbul, 1957), pp. 71–5; Julian Raby, ‘Court and Export: Part 1. Market Demands in Ottoman Carpets, 1450–1550’, *Oriental Carpet and Textile Studies* 2 (1986), 29–38.

39 John Mills, ‘The Turkish Carpet in the Paintings of Western Europe’, in *Turkish Carpets from the 13th–18th Centuries*, ed. Ahmet Ertuğ (Milan, 1996), pp. xxxix–xliv; Nazan Ölçer, ‘Osmanlı Dönemi Türk Halı Sanatı’, *Osmanlı Uygarlığı*, ed. Halil İnalçık and Günsel Renda, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 2003), vol. 2, pp. 788–823.

40 Raby, ‘Court and Export: Part 2’.

41 Walter B. Denny and Nazan Ölçer, ‘Anatolian Carpets from Uşak Manufactories’, in *Anatolian Carpets: Masterpieces from the Turkish and Islamic Art Museum*, ed. Ahmet Ertuğ (Bern, 1999), pp. 36–45.

of the empire was the articulation of reciprocities at different levels, based on gift exchange between elites from within and outside of the Ottoman realm. Gift-and-reward connections between artists and patrons were also at issue. Whether working within or outside of the court workshops, artists produced through a dual system of commissions and gifts.⁴² The presentation of precious objects became integral to norms and practices of gift-giving embedded within a complex web of courtly patronage, and in fact in the very fabric of courtly social and political interaction. A closely related practice, namely the bestowal of robes of honour (*hilat*) on dignitaries, ambassadors, courtiers and artists, created a considerable demand for luxury textiles. Of varying quality and meaning in different contexts, conferring *hilat* was at all times a means of confirming rank and status.⁴³

Pictorial representation: Eastern and western horizons of Ottoman painting

In contrast to the relatively uniform visual idiom created by calligraphers, binders and manuscript illuminators by about 1500, pictorial representation remained expressly hybrid, varied and multiple well into the mid-sixteenth century. Mehmed II's patronage of Italian art and artists resulted in a number of works with varied resonance. Portrait medals produced throughout his reign attest to the sultan's keen interest in this newly revived medium and his awareness of its possibilities for circulating multiple copies of his mimetic image combined with inscriptions announcing his imperial claims in European courtly circles. Portraits of Mehmed II and his courtiers were created in diverse modes and media: in addition to bronze medals and oils on canvas by Italian residents at court, a set of single-page paintings vividly capture the remarkable cultural wealth, pluralism and cosmopolitanism of Mehmed II's court.⁴⁴ Among the sultan's artists were Costanzo da Ferrara, Sinan Bey, an Ottoman Muslim educated by an Italian master, and Şiblizade Ahmed,

42 Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 89ff.; Meriç, 'Beyazıt Camii Mimarı', pp. 9-14; Uzunçarşılı, 'Osmanlı Sarayında Ehl-i Hıf (Sanatkarlar) Defteri', pp. 65-76.

43 Atasoy et al., *İpek*, pp. 32-5; the In'amat defteri of A.H. 909-917 (A.D.1503-12), Istanbul, Atatürk Library, MC 071; and Ömer Lütfi Barkan, 'İstanbul Saraylarına Ait Muhasebe Defterleri', *Belgeler* 9 (1979), 1-380 at pp. 296-380; Hedda Reindl Kiel, 'East Is East and West Is West, and Sometimes the Twain Did Meet: Diplomatic Gift Exchange in the Ottoman Empire', in *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province, and the West*, ed. Colin Imber, Keiko Kiyotaki and Rhoads Murphey, 2 vols. (London, 2005), vol. 2, pp. 113-23; Julian Raby, 'The Serenissima and the Sublime Porte: Art in the Art of Diplomacy', in Carboni, *Venice and the Islamic World*, pp. 91-119 at pp. 100-13.

44 Julian Raby, 'Opening Gambits', in *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, ed. Selmin Kangal (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 64-95; Gülru Necipoğlu, 'The Serial Portraits of Ottoman Sultans in Comparative Perspective', in Kangal, *The Sultan's Portrait*, pp. 22-31; Caroline Campbell and Alan Chong, *Bellini and the East* (London, 2005).



Figure 13.9. Portrait of Mehmed II, attributed to Sinan Bey. Album, 1460–80. (Topkapı Palace Library, TSM H. 2153, fol. 145v)

the latter's trainee; their diverse representational idioms combined Persianate and Italianate conventions of portraiture (Figure 13.9). Such a predilection for unreserved juxtaposition characterised narrative painting as well. Illustrated literary and historical works from the 1450s through the early decades of the sixteenth century offer a kaleidoscope of visual idioms originating in various Timurid and Turkmen palaces, the Byzantine art of Constantinople and contemporary Italian courts. Different styles and representational conventions may be confined to the individual pages of a manuscript or, more strikingly, visible within a single page.

Mehmed II's scriptorium created works in a broad range of topics in Turkish, Arabic, Persian and Greek, his collection expanding into the Latin realm. Bayezid II's keen interest in book culture expanded the production of illustrated manuscripts of literary and historical subject matter.⁴⁵ Ahmedî's

⁴⁵ Aysin Yoltar Yıldırım, 'The Role of Illustrated Book Manuscripts in Ottoman Luxury Book Production, 1413–1520', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University (2002); Julian

İskendername, a fourteenth-century Turkish epic on the exploits of Iskandar Zulkarnayn of Islamic myth, including also a chronicle of the House of Osman, was produced in multiple copies during the 1460s and 1470s.

Evoking Mehmed the Conqueror's self-image as Alexander the Great, the illustrations of these volumes highlight an interest in historical narrative painting, for they include also images illustrating the Ottoman chronicle inserted into the epic.⁴⁶ The *Şahname-i Melik Umri* (ca. 1495), a chronicle of the Ottoman house up to the early years of Bayezid II's reign, partook in the historiographical reckoning that followed Bayezid's contested succession to the throne of Mehmed II. Its text and images addressed the issue of dynastic descent, a resonant topic during the earlier part of Bayezid's rule (Figure 13.10).⁴⁷

Interest in illustrated manuscripts of Persian literary works continued into the reign of Bayezid II, as demonstrated by multiple copies of *Khusrav va Shirin* manuscripts or the *Hesht Bihisht* of Amir Khusrav Dehlavi, where Persianate iconography and visual norms and representational choices specific to the Ottoman court were often deployed together. Ottoman architectural and sartorial details inserted into the illustration of such popular romances underlined attempts at the creation of a local visual identity inscribed into the inter-regional and highly prestigious world of Timurid visual culture. Distinctions of a more structural nature lay in the uses of optical perspective, often in isolated sections of a given painting, modelling through tonal differences, and landscape features showing a degree of recession into space and thus contrasting with the two-dimensional picture plane in the foreground. The intimate and elaborately decorated interiors depicted in Timurid painting gave way to images of exteriors reflecting contemporary architectural practices and tastes.⁴⁸

Paintings from two manuscripts of this period may provide the most tangible and succinct evidence for the remarkable cultural eclecticism of the

Raby, 'Mehmed the Conqueror's Greek scriptorium', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 37 (1983), 15-34; Raby and Tanındı, *Turkish Bookbinding*, pp. 47-104.

46 Serpil Bağcı, 'Osmanlı Dünyasında Efsanevi Yönetici İmgesi Olarak Büyük İskender ve Osmanlı İskendernamesi', in *Humana: Bozkurt Güvenç'e Armağan* (Ankara, 1994), pp. 111-31; Serpil Bağcı, Filiz Çağman, Günsel Renda and Zeren Tanındı, *Ottoman Painting* (Ankara, 2010), pp. 111-31.

47 Stéphane Yerasimos, *La fondation de Constantinople et de Sainte-Sophie dans les traditions turques: légendes d'empire* (Istanbul and Paris, 1990); Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, 1995); Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 31-4.

48 Ernst J. Grube, 'Notes on Ottoman Painting in the 15th Century', in *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn*, ed. Abbas Daneshvari (Malibu, Calif., 1981), pp. 51-61; Aysin Yoltar Yıldırım, 'A 1498-99 Khusraw ve Shirin: Turning the Pages of an Illustrated Manuscript', *Muqarnas* 22 (2005), 95-109; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 43-8.



Figure 13.10. Bayezid II meeting with *vezirs*, Malik Ummi, *Şehnâme*, ca. 1495. (Topkapı Palace Library H. 1123, fol. 30v)

Ottoman court as reflected in the pictorial arts. An incomplete manuscript of Nizami's *Khamsa* features two paintings, one depicting the *Shahname* hero Bahram-i Gur's struggle with lions and the other portraying Iskandar and his retinue in the land of darkness. Atmospheric perspective, foreshortened figures in dynamic interaction, dark saturated colours and a style of sketching that privileges the modelled figure evince the hands most probably of

Italian painters or their trainees, who were at the same time conversant with the conventions of the Persianate idiom.⁴⁹ The intriguing double-folio frontispiece of Uzun Firdevsi's *Süleymanname*, presented to Bayezid II around 1490, exhibits, in a radically different visual idiom, another instance of stylistic and iconographical juxtapositions from the farthest reaches of Ottoman cultural horizons. The image represents Solomon and Bilqis, the Queen of Saba, enthroned, presiding over their *divan* of fairies, demons, jinns, animals both fantastic and real, and courtiers. It is thematically connected to a set of frontispiece paintings favoured in Shiraz during the late 1400s and the 1500s. Art historians have at the same time linked its unusual registered composition and the shape of its demons to contemporary Spanish painting, samples of which may have arrived in Istanbul with the Sephardic communities after their expulsion from Spain. Venetian sources may also have provided models for particular figural and architectural renderings.⁵⁰ Through the figure of Solomon framed by a towered structure that unmistakably reminds the viewer of the Middle Gate (Orta Kapı) of the Topkapı Palace, this broad range of associations converges at the very heart of Ottoman rule and foreshadows the Ottoman appropriation of the kingly image of Solomon as a just and universal ruler (Figure 13.11).

Richly illustrated and illuminated by artists working in a Khurasani idiom, the Persian *Divan* of Selim I (ca. 1515–20) was modelled after the *Divan* of Husayn Bayqara, and in turn this volume was the earliest of a series of poetry collections of Ottoman sultans, always distinguished by their opulent illumination and luxurious bindings.⁵¹ Production of luxury manuscripts visibly declined during the reign of Bayezid's son Selim I, and the court also employed fewer calligraphers and scribes. At the same time, these years saw the creation of a team of artists that would introduce remarkable vivacity, richness and technical expertise into Ottoman artistic ventures of the following decades.⁵²

49 Zeren Tanındı, 'Additions to Illustrated Manuscripts in Ottoman Workshops', *Muqarnas* 17 (2000), 147–61. For a suggested date from the end of Mehmed II's reign, see Yoltar Yıldırım, 'The Role of Illustrated Book Manuscripts', pp. 509–14, 526–7.

50 Serpil Bağcı, 'A New Theme of the Shirazi Frontispiece Miniatures: The Divan of Solomon', *Muqarnas* 12 (1995), 101–11; Ernst J. Grube, 'Two Paintings in a Copy of the "Süleyman-name" in the Chester Beatty Library', in *Seventh International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. Tadeusz Majda (Warsaw, 1990), pp. 133–40; J. Michael Rogers, 'The Chester Beatty Süleymanname Again', in *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars: Studies in Honour of Basil W. Robinson*, ed. Robert Hillenbrand (London and New York, 2000), pp. 187–200; Yoltar Yıldırım, 'The Role of Illustrated Manuscripts', pp. 440–1.

51 Filiz Çağman, 'The Miniatures of the Divan-ı Hüseyini and Influence of Their Style', in *Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art*, ed. Geza Féher (Budapest, 1978), pp. 231–59; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 61–3.

52 Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 55–67.

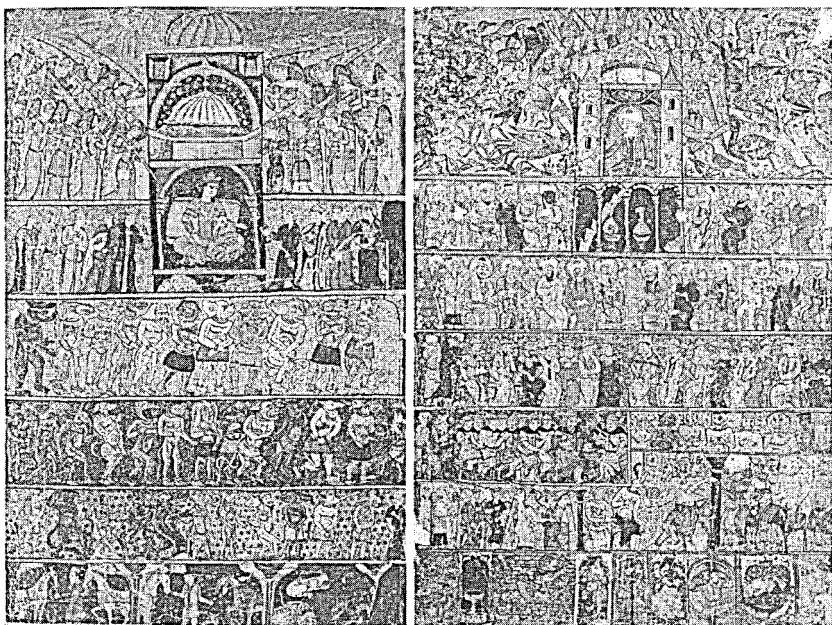


Figure 13.11. The courts of Solomon and Bilqis, Uzun Firdevsi, *Süleymanname*, circa 1480. (Dublin Chester Beatty Library T 406, fols. 2v–3r)

for when Selim I had conquered Tabriz there occurred the most substantial influx of artists, objects and ideas of eastern origin the Ottoman world had ever experienced. Upon Selim's orders, artists and objects from Timurid Herat and the Akkoyunlu court in Tabriz, which had recently fallen to the Safavid Shah Isma'îl I (r. 1500–24), now migrated to Ottoman imperial and princely capitals. The words Şükri-i Bidlisi put into Selim's mouth highlight the actual and perceived dominance of Persianate cultural forms in the Ottoman courtly milieu of these decades: "[A]ll the scholars, artists, merchants, and men of wealth should be taken to Istanbul so that, henceforth, the Ottomans will have no further need of Persians in such matters."⁵³

Articulating a new imperial image, ca. 1520–1570

Both within and beyond the court, the 1520s were a time of new vivacity and explorations in design, reflected in the arts of the book, industrial arts

⁵³ Şükri-i Bidlisi, *Selīm-nāme*, quoted in Yoltar Yıldırım, 'The Role of Illustrated Manuscripts', p. 552.

and architectural decoration. As we have seen, Selim I's eastern conquests and Süleyman's early military ventures brought to Ottoman courts a wealth of objects and artists of diverse cultural traditions. In the form of new or newly perfected techniques in various media and new or newly interpreted forms, particularly in the decorative arts, these acquisitions bore fruit during the 1520s. An explosion of new work resulted from the exuberant lifestyle and tastes of the young Süleyman, bolstered by the ambitious projects at home and abroad of his deputy and confidante the grand *vezir* İbrahim Paşa. During the 1520s, the Topkapı Palace was largely renovated and refurbished, and new interest in cultural patronage brought numerical expansion, further bureaucratisation and professionalisation to communities of court artists and to the court scriptorium. Universalist iconography focused on world domination was articulated in diverse media and objects, such as Süleyman's Venetian helmet crown, modelled on the papal tiara, and Piri Reis's geographic and cartographic works of global expanse.⁵⁴ Embodying the apocalyptic mood of the tenth Muslim century and resonant with the messianic identity and image of Süleyman in the earlier years of his reign, Abd al-Rahman al-Bistami's prognosticative text *Al-miftah al-jafri al-jami* circulated in multiple copies. Against the backdrop of another surge of eschatological expectation, a Turkish translation of this text and its illustrated copies would appear at the end of the 1500s.⁵⁵

In the later decades of Süleyman's reign, when universal aspirations ceded to a focus on the empire as the foremost Islamic state, architectural and institutional patronage of public works became increasingly central to Ottoman elite identity. The ceaseless construction activity of those decades rendered the imperial architectural office and its chief, Sinan, important agents in the representation of elite ideals. This was also when arts of public display and spectacle, particularly architecture and luxury textiles, became loci for articulating modes of visual distinction. The visual idiom created under courtly patronage announced the distinctive imperial identity of the Ottoman house with respect to its Islamic and European counterparts. Arts and architecture partook of the regionalisation that marked Ottoman culture at large.⁵⁶

54 Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Suleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman-Hapsburg-Papal Rivalry', *The Art Bulletin* 71 (1989), 401-27.

55 Cornell H. Fleischer, 'Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences: Prophecies at the Ottoman Court in the Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries', in *Falnama: The Book of Omens*, ed. Massumeh Farhad and Serpil Bağcı (Washington, D.C., 2009), pp. 232-43.

56 Gülru Necipoğlu, 'A Kanun for the State, a Canon for the Arts: Conceptualizing the Classical Synthesis of Ottoman Arts and Architecture', in *Soliman le Magnifique et son temps: actes du colloque de Paris, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 7-10 mars 1990*, ed. Gilles Veinstein

A new aesthetic of ornament

The first extant registers providing ample information on the structure and workings of the court ateliers begin in 1526; at that time, the court workshops included 36 communities of *ehl-i hıref*, or “people of talent”. A document of that date noted the names of several artists, the famous Şahkulu among them, who were resident in Amasya but now employed at the court workshops.⁵⁷ Encompassing handicrafts of a wide variety, the *ehl-i hıref* included the designers and creators of court-sponsored arts. Certain communities (*cemaat*) within this group designed and produced luxury manuscripts and objects of precious materials, while others created designs for the industrial arts, such as ceramics, tiles and textiles. Officially attached to and receiving wages from the imperial treasurer, who was part of the inner palace organisation, the workings of the *ehl-i hıref* evince the dynamic and shifting web of connections between artisanal production, the collection of luxury objects, book culture and palace ceremonial. That all these fields of activity ultimately converged in one locus, the inner treasury (*iç hazine*), within the third, private court of the palace underlines the centrality of the treasury to Ottoman cultural production both as an institution and as a collection of objects. The belvedere kiosk at the north-eastern edge of the palace’s third court served as a storehouse and exhibition space for precious or exotic objects and also as a depot for raw materials to be used by palace craftsmen. The *hazine* was a storehouse of manuscripts but also functioned as a lending library for palace inhabitants, including members of the imperial household.⁵⁸

Throughout the sixteenth century, documents reflect the highly heterogeneous makeup of artisans registered within the “communities of the people of talent” (*cemaat-i ehl-i hıref*), their numbers including craftsmen from the Timurid and Turkmen courts, from the empire’s Anatolian and Rumelian provinces and beyond, and from Austrian and “Frenk” territories. Through the following decades, the organisational structure of the court-employed artisan communities would change little, while the numbers of people

(Paris, 1992), pp. 195–217; Cornell H. Fleischer, ‘The Lawgiver as Messiah: The Making of the Imperial Image in the Reign of Süleyman’, in Veinstein, *Soliman le Magnifique*, pp. 159–74.

57 Rıfki Melûl Meriç, *Türk Nakış Sanatı Tarihi Araştırmaları*, vol. 1: *Vesikalar* (Ankara, 1953), pp. 3–4.

58 On the imperial treasury as a lending library, see Necipoğlu, ‘The Serial Portraits’, p. 44; Emine Fetvacı, ‘Viziers to Eunuchs: Transitions in Ottoman Manuscript Patronage, 1566–1617’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University (2005), pp. 34–48. On the treasury, see Cengiz Köseoğlu, *The Topkapı Sarayı Museum: The Treasury*, ed. and trans. J. Michael Rogers (London, 1987).

practicing different crafts did vary according to the changing priorities and tastes of the elite.⁵⁹

Of increasing prominence for Ottoman court arts through the middle decades of the sixteenth century were the painter-illuminators, who, as members of the *cemaat-i Nakkaşan*, worked in book painting and illumination and in the decoration of buildings, also creating designs for objects across a variety of media. Mid-sixteenth-century expansion and perhaps focus on cultural distinctions led to a short-lived division of the *Nakkaşan* into the *Rumiyan* and the *Aceman*. The first, literally “the people of Rum”, referred to artists who were Ottoman subjects from the central lands of the empire, while the second, literally “the people of Acem”, referred generally but not exclusively to those who hailed from the Persian-speaking world. While primarily artists of the book, Şahkuli (d. 1555–6) in the early decades of the sixteenth century and Nakkaş Osman towards its close produced works across media, decorating ceramic plates or kiosks in addition to the important manuscript commissions they received. Earlier sixteenth-century documents refer to creators of designs and figurative images in pen and ink (*ressam*), specialists in figurative painting (*musavvir*) and illuminators (*müzehhib*). Later on, officialdom frequently replaced these different terms with the all-encompassing *Nakkaş*, while documents pertaining to particular projects, as well as commentaries such as Mustafa Ali’s *Menakıb-ı Hünerveran*, attest to the presence of a rich vocabulary of book arts and artists engaged in various modes of calligraphy, figural representation and ornamentation.⁶⁰ The court *Nakkaşan* formed a composite group employed in a range of projects, including calligraphers (*katiban-ı kütüb*) and binders (*mücellid*). Permanent and temporary workshops within and close to the Topkapı Palace, including the famed Nakkaşhane outside the palace grounds close to the Hippodrome, accommodated the painter-illuminators.⁶¹

With the creation of royal textile workshops, we encounter further differentiation among the designers employed by the court, a process that began

59 Filiz Çağman, ‘Mimar Sinan Döneminde Sarayın Ehl-i Hıref Teşkilatı’, in *Mimar Sinan Döneminde Türk Mimarlığı ve Sanatı*, ed. Zeki Sönmez (Istanbul, 1988), pp. 73–7; Filiz Çağman, ‘Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Yeri Üzerine Düşünceler’, in *Sanat Tarihinde Doğudan Batıya: Ünsal Yücel Anısına Sempozyum Bildirileri* (Istanbul, 1989), pp. 35–46; Uzunçarşılı, ‘Osmanlı Sarayında Ehl-i Hıref’, pp. 66, 68; Gülru Necipoğlu, ‘A Kanun for the State’, Bahattin Yaman, ‘1545 Yılı Osmanlı Saray Sanatkarları’, *Belleter* 72 (2008), 501–34 and facsimile.

60 Banu Mahir, ‘İslamda “Resim” Sözcüğünün Belirlediği Tasvir Geleneği’, in *Sanat Tarihinde Doğudan Batıya*, pp. 59–64; Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *Menakıb-ı Hünerveran* (Istanbul, 1926); Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *Mustafa Âli’s Epic Deeds of Artists, A Critical Edition of the Earliest Ottoman Text about the Calligraphers and Painters of the Islamic World*, ed., trans. and comment. Esra Akın (Leiden, 2011).

61 Çağman, ‘Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Yeri’.

in the 1520s and gathered speed during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. Designers of textiles (*nakşbend*) now featured as part of the *cemaat* of craftsmen producing luxury fabrics; they were at times also lent out as designers to the tile-manufacturing workshops of İznik.⁶² As the *nakşbend* became a separate group, there occurred an increasingly visible differentiation between the public and private visual languages of the Ottoman court. Artists of the book worked in an idiom that remained in closer contact and dialogue with Persianate book culture, while the makers of textile and tile designs broke distinctly free from the conventions and relatively conservative predispositions of their colleagues.

Early in Süleyman's reign, Şahkuli, on record as *ressam* and associated with Baghdad, left a definitive mark on Ottoman design through his works on the "saz" style. *Saz* re-interpreted an earlier group of ink drawings popular in the Persianate world from the fourteenth century onwards which were partly cognate with *hatayi* designs and in part drew on representational themes of Central and East Asian inspiration. Intensely energised compositions of long, feather-like serrated leaves and dramatically bending stems bearing lotus flowers and palmettes, sometimes inhabited by fantastic animals and auspicious figures of Asian inspiration, concurrently entered Ottoman representation and illumination (Figure 13.13, Figure 13.7c). Single-page ink drawings, representing intertwined *saz* leaves and lotus blossoms, whirling compositions of fantastic creatures in combat surrounded by foliage, and images of fairies at times inspired by the conventions of portrait painting adorned albums through the later decades of the sixteenth century.⁶³ Miniaturised in bindings and illumination or boldly magnified in textile and tile designs, *saz* proved to be of remarkable longevity. Its most celebrated application to tile design was the five large underglaze painted tiles in blue and turquoise on white, originally created for a newly built kiosk within the Topkapı Palace's private third court and today adorning the façade of the Circumcision Room. Perhaps designed by Şahkuli, these may have been the work of a group of Tabrizi masters heading the royal ceramics workshop in Istanbul, whose products in diverse techniques would adorn buildings in the capital city into the 1540s.⁶⁴

62 Necipoğlu, 'L'idée de décor', pp. 17–18; Bahattin Yaman, '1557 Tarihli Ehl-i Hîref Defterine Göre Osmanlı Saray Sanatkarları', *Kök Araştırmalar* 8 (2006), 5–38, fol. 8a.

63 Banu Mahir, 'Saray Nakkaşhanesinin Ünlü Ressamı Şah Kulu ve Eserleri', *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıllık* 1 (1986), 113–30; Banu Mahir, 'Osmanlı Sanatında Saz Üslubundan Anlaşılan', *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Yıllık* 2 (1987), 123–40. On *saz* as a form of the "black pen" technique, see Filiz Çağman, 'Muhammad of the Black Pen and His Paintings', in *Turks: A Journey of a Thousand Years*, ed. David J. Roxburgh (London, 2005), pp. 148–56 at pp. 148–53.

64 Kırımlı, 'İstanbul Çiniciliği'; Necipoğlu, 'From International Timurid to Ottoman'; Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 101–4.

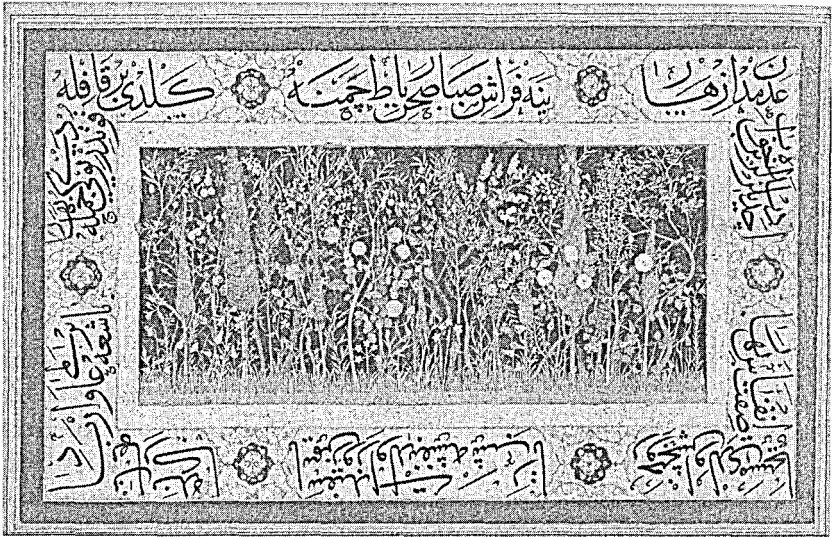


Figure 13.12. Découpage garden from the “Nishaburi” album F. 1426. (Istanbul University Library, ca. 1560)

Court and urban ateliers enriched the Ottoman visual vocabulary by yet other motifs. Variants of the *tuğrakeş* (or Golden Horn) style, invented in the court scriptorium and characterised by finely woven and floriated spirals, soon covered İznik and Kütahya vessels (Figure 13.7b). Within the same years, the ceramics ateliers of these two cities produced wares bearing popular floral designs, at times merging these with motifs of courtly origin.⁶⁵ Due to the larger holdings and greater use of Chinese porcelain at the Ottoman court in the aftermath of the Safavid campaigns, local potters adapted a host of East Asian motifs, expanding their vocabulary of chinoiserie.

A further expansion of the Ottoman vocabulary of ornament is associated with a former student of Şahkuli, Kara Memi (d. ca. 1570). A master specialising in illuminated manuscripts and albums, in the 1540s Kara Memi introduced naturalistic depictions of tulips, hyacinths, carnations, roses, irises, prunus and pomegranate blossoms in vibrant colours to the Ottoman decorative repertoire. The floral style, known as *şükufê* (flower), first appeared in manuscript illumination, bookbinding and album pages featuring the *katt* (découpage) technique, but soon it spread across a variety of media (Figures

65 Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 101–28.

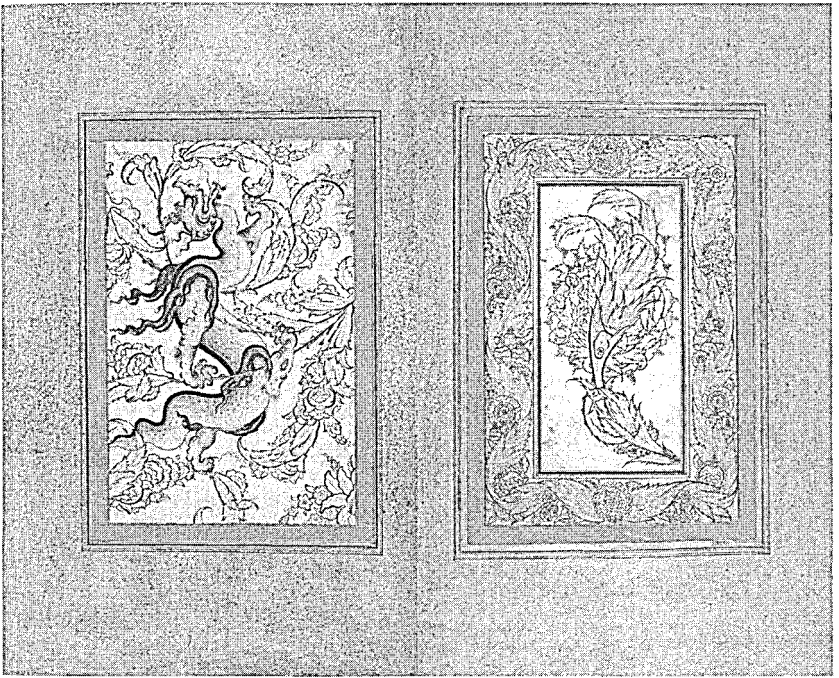


Figure 13.13. The “Nishaburi” album, ink drawings of dragon and lotus blossom in *saz* leaves (Istanbul University Library, F. 1426, fols. 47b, 48a, ca. 1560)

13.7d, 13.12 and 13.14).⁶⁶ Though originating in the work of painter-illuminators, the new motifs were used rather conservatively in luxury manuscripts and the imperial *tuğra*, an elaborate calligraphic composition authenticating documents issued in the sultan’s name. Designers often confined small-scale delicately rendered flowers within compartments whose divisions followed the conventions of earlier sixteenth-century illumination and bookbinding. Less often, they produced floral compositions evoking a paradise-like garden that occupied a complete page or book cover, again underlining the distinctiveness of this particular mode from the remaining abstract or semi-abstract decoration adorning the manuscript.

⁶⁶ Serpil Bağcı and Zeren Tanındı, ‘The Art of the Ottoman Court’, in Roxburgh, *Turks*, p. 268; Esin Atlı, *The Age of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent* (Washington, D.C. and New York, 1987), pp. 68–71, 105–9; Filiz Çağman, ‘The Earliest Known Ottoman “Murakka” Kept in Istanbul University Library’, in Majda, *Seventh International Congress of Turkish Art*, pp. 75–8; Filiz Çağman, ‘L’art du papier découpé et ses représentants à l’époque de Soliman le Magnifique’, in Veinstein, *Soliman le Magnifique*, pp. 249–64; Necipoğlu, ‘L’idée de décor’.

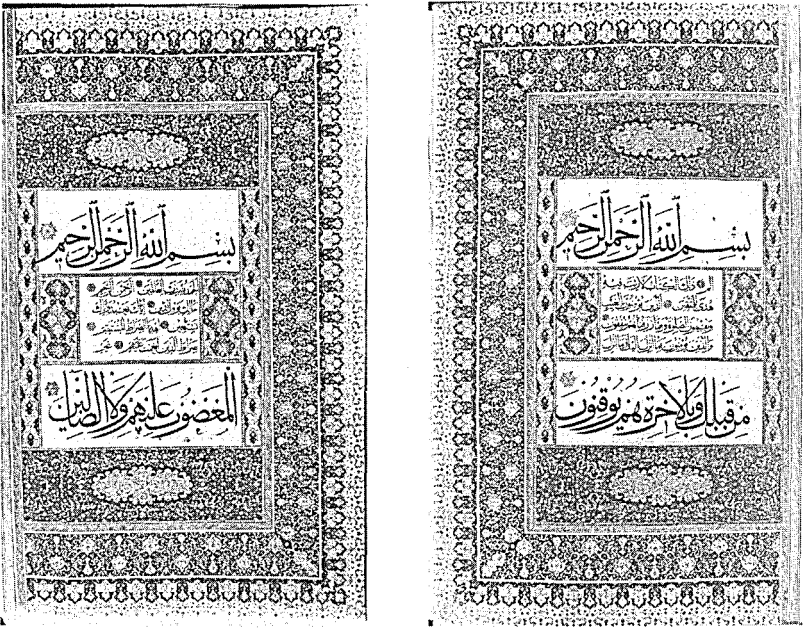


Figure 13.14. Frontispiece of Qur'an transcribed by Ahmed Karahisari, partly attributed to Hasan Çelebi, ca. 1550, 1584, illuminations 1584–96. (Topkapı Palace Library H.S. 5, fols. 2v, 3r)

Presenting the complete range of Ottoman illumination at the time of its compilation in about 1560–5 is the “Nishaburi album”, a collection of mostly Safavid calligraphies of the earlier sixteenth century (including those of Shah Mahmud Nishaburi), black pen paintings possibly by Şahkuli, and a decoupage garden in full bloom (Figure 13.12, Figure 13.13). Possibly the chief *Nakkaş*, Kara Memi, created this manuscript and its binding for presentation to Süleyman: the illuminations surrounding selected examples of Safavid and Ottoman calligraphy as well as figural representation form a sumptuous and elaborately designed Ottoman frame. Thus the manuscript attests to the enthusiastic embrace of the book arts of the Persianate world on the part of Ottoman designers and audiences, who over the decades maintained a dialogue with this tradition. In their visual and literary choices, the makers of another album (*murakka*) from the 1570s, dedicated to Murad III and known by his name, largely followed the same model.⁶⁷ Also completed under courtly

67 Istanbul University Library F 1426; Atıl, *The Age of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent*, pp. 68–71, 105–9; Çağman, ‘The Earliest Known Ottoman “Murakka”’, pp. 75–8; Dorothea Duda, ‘Das

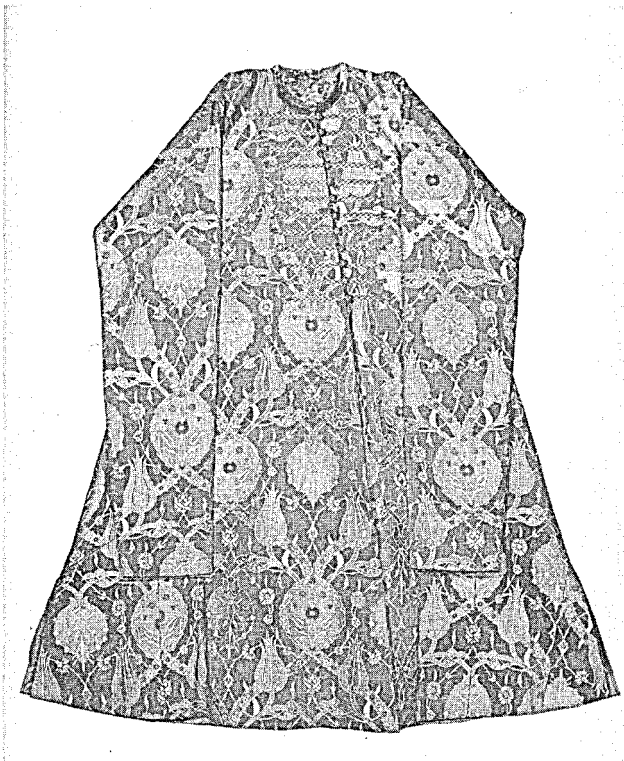


Figure 13.15. Ceremonial kaftan with ogival pattern, featuring tulips and *rumis*, mid-sixteenth century. (Topkapı Palace Museum, 13/932)

patronage during Murad III's reign is the monumental Ahmed Karahisari Qur'an, partly inscribed by this famed calligrapher, whose re-interpretation of the cursive scripts attributed to Yaqut was celebrated by his contemporaries. The manuscript was completed, illuminated, and bound between 1574 and 1595 as a tour de force of Ottoman book arts. Underlining the value ascribed to the work of Karahisari (d. ca. 1555), the rich and varied illumination program encompassed the complete vocabulary of ornament in use by the court *Nakkaşan*, executed in varying scales and compositions, while responding to the work of the calligrapher displayed on the same pages (Figure 13.14).⁶⁸ In

Album Murad III in Wien', in *Ars Turcica: Akten des VI. Internationalen Kongresses für Türkische Kunst München*, ed. Klaus Kreiser et al. (Munich, 1987), vol. 2, pp. 475–89; Aimée Froom, 'A Muraqqa for the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (r. 1574–1595): Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Mixtus 313', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, New York University (2001).

⁶⁸ Filiz Çağman, 'The Ahmed Karahisari Qur'an in the Topkapı Palace Library in Istanbul', in Hillenbrand, *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars*, pp. 57–73.



Figure 13.16. Detail of tile panel from the mihrab, Piyale Paşa mosque, Istanbul, 1573. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

an additive manner, Ottoman ornament successively assimilated variations of the medieval Perso-Islamic decorative vocabulary, the *saz*, and finally the “florist’s idiom”.

While artists of the book often kept these various styles neatly framed and therefore quite distinct, textile and tile designers of the 1550s searched for a novel scale and syntax, creating an uninhibited fusion of magnified motifs rendered in bold outlines, coupled with an explosion of colour.⁶⁹ Textile design was the motor force in the development of new compositional devices

69 Atasoy et al., *İpek*, pp. 155–75.

and bolder uses of recently introduced or older motifs. Basic compositional structures, most commonly staggered ogival medallions and undulating vines, were used as the matrix of myriad motif combinations. Staples of textile design in Italy, Mamluk Egypt and East Asia, these compositions were adapted to the vocabulary of Ottoman ornament, while large asymmetrical *saz* compositions and the long-favoured *çintamani* retained their popularity. Ogival lattices with fine tendrils, finely drawn *rumis* and *hatayis*, and delicate *tuğrakeş* spirals of the earlier sixteenth century receded into the background as bold and radically magnified designs strove for immediate visual effect in the expansive ceremonial spaces of court and city (Figure 13.15, 13.27).⁷⁰

Surely this transformation in visual idiom benefited from the close proximity of artists working in different media, for in response to inadequate supply from Bursa and the high costs of foreign imports, the sultan's court in the 1550s established royal weaving ateliers in Istanbul, with specific spaces for velvet and brocade looms. While Venetian and Florentine velvets remained prestigious, local textile production expanded in the royal *karhane-i kemhacıyan* and in private ateliers active in Istanbul. Due to the growing number of royal and private ateliers, contacts increased between various loci of design and production, while as mentioned court and urban ateliers also interacted more frequently. Court designers (*nakşebendan* or *nakkaşan*) now often supplied models for the weavers to follow, and workshops in İznik, Bursa and Uşak received such designs when courtly commissions were at issue. At times the court demanded that masters from the provinces be sent to Istanbul to assist in the founding or improvement of the royal workshops.⁷¹ Older centres of production came to be part of Ottoman commissioning and consumption networks, as was the case with "Mamluk" carpets produced in Cairo subsequent to Selim I's conquests.⁷²

Ceramic wares, and from the 1540s onwards specifically the architectural tile industry in İznik, profited significantly from such contacts. Towards the late 1520s, potters introduced the first *saz* motifs to İznik as they also expanded their colour range, adding sage green and purple to the formerly

⁷⁰ Necipoğlu, 'A Kanun for the State'; Atasoy et al., *İpek*, pp. 21–35.

⁷¹ Dalsar, *Bursa'da İpekçilik*, pp. 319–20; Necipoğlu, 'A Kanun for the State'. On prestige and use of Italian luxury textiles, see Atasoy et al., *İpek*, pp. 182–90; Raby, 'The Serenissima and the Sublime Porte', pp. 95, 111.

⁷² Ernst Kühnel and Louisa Bellinger, *Cairene Rugs and Others Technically Related: 15th–17th Century* (Washington, D.C., 1957); Robert Irwin, 'Egypt, Syria, and Their Trading Partners', *Oriental Carpet and Textile Studies 2* (1986), 73–82 at pp. 79–81; Oktay Aslanapa, *One Thousand Years of Turkish Carpets*, ed. and trans. William Edmonds (Istanbul, 1988), pp. 137–43; Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire*, pp. 80–2.

dominant blue and turquoise in decorating the “Damascus wares”. Mid-century saw a further sweeping change in the local industries as the court-based “florist’s style” took root and merged with earlier uses of floral vocabulary in the İznik ateliers. Compositional devices of textile design, ogival stacking and undulating vines particularly, now came to be used in tiles as well, alongside the complete range of Ottoman ornamental repertory (Figure 13.14). Artisans expanded their colour scheme yet further to include red and, shortly afterwards, emerald green as well. Court design, elite architectural projects and İznik industries now were linked much more tightly, while the court endeavoured to bring tilemakers under the direct control of the chief architect.⁷³

Objects of this period held today in the Topkapı Palace collections are expressly un-ionic, as is the dominant aesthetic of Ottoman industrial and luxury arts. Yet İznik and Kütahya ateliers, as well as Bursa and Istanbul silk manufacturers, did produce objects bearing figural imagery for local and foreign markets. Liturgical objects with Christian imagery and symbols catered to Ottoman non-Muslims as well as buyers beyond the imperial domains. Particularly in the final decades of the 1500s, İznik potters used, alongside the dominant floral designs, a range of animal figures in compositions derived from the medieval Islamic repertory, from Ottoman and Safavid book painting as well as from Balkan metalwork.⁷⁴

Objects of precious metal or rock crystal, often created for ceremonial or personal use, did not partake of this explosion of new design that revolutionised the ornamentation of tiles and textiles created also, if not exclusively, for public display. Tight interlocking patterns, variations of *rumi-hatayi* or *saz* designs, covered surfaces and provided the frames upon which precious stones might be mounted. The vast collection of Chinese porcelains at the Ottoman court may be mentioned in this regard: Ottoman craftsmen mounted smaller-scale, mostly blue and white objects with precious stones on patterned gold frames, imprinting this distinctive style on porcelains in use at the privy chamber. The diverse and dense designs that characterised the “bejewelled aesthetic” of such metal, crystal and porcelain objects and the courtly decorative idiom of these decades in general co-existed with what scholars have

73 Arthur Lane, *Later Islamic Pottery* (New York, 1957); Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 129–44; Denny, *Iznik*, pp. 59–114.

74 Atasoy et al., *İpek*, pp. 176–81, 331–2, plates 51–7; Faruqi, *Artisans of Empire*, pp. 40–1; Helen Evans (ed.), *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)* (New York, 2004), pp. 444–7, cat. nos. 269–71; Atasoy and Raby, *Iznik*, pp. 254–70; Athanasios A. Karakatsanis (ed.), *The Treasures of Mount Athos* (Thessaloniki, 1997), pp. 374–5.

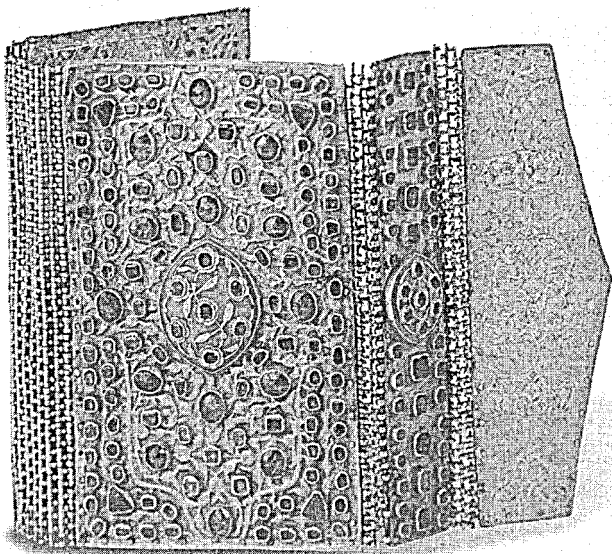


Figure 13.17. Jewelled gold book binding, last quarter of the sixteenth century. (Topkapı Palace Museum, 2/2086)

termed the “plain tradition”, characterised by a minimalist regard for the material and for the object’s sculptural qualities (Figure 13.17).⁷⁵

Intimately connected to elite identity and representation, the Ottoman decorative idiom remained multiple and diverse throughout the “classical” era. Tastes and design priorities differed across media; and a variety of factors created distinctions in visual idiom. Differences between the designs used for architectural tiles and luxury textiles on the one hand and those favoured in book arts on the other underscored preferences predicated on public and private uses. Spatial and visual distinctions and hierarchies ordered the ornamental repertory and relegated the preferred ornamental themes

⁷⁵ James Allan and Julian Raby, ‘Metalwork’, in *Tulips, Arabesques and Turbans: Decorative Arts from the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Yanni Petsopoulos (New York, 1982), pp. 17–48; Julian Raby and Ünsal Yücel, ‘Chinese Porcelains at the Ottoman Court’, in Krahl et al., *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapı Sarayı Museum*, pp. 47–51.

of the medieval era to less visible parts of decorated surfaces or into framing devices. Vocabularies of ornament were also tightly connected to media and technique, as demonstrated by the bounteous use of geometric interlace in woodwork, whether in architecture or in inlaid objects. Such distinctions and divisions notwithstanding, the very characteristic of the emergent aesthetic, with its magnified motifs and unreserved juxtapositions of colour and motif, highlighted the ultimate success of the new, which co-existed with, but often subordinated, a broad and varied range of motifs and patterns formerly absorbed into Ottoman arts.

Illustrated manuscripts: The primacy of geography and history

A group of artists working in an inter-regional visual idiom left their traces in books produced in Herat, Tabriz and Istanbul in the 1520s and 1530s, underlining the interconnected nature of book painting across this wide expanse, particularly in a period of rapidly shifting boundaries. Connected to this group of mostly literary manuscripts illustrated in a Khurasani idiom, and of significant impact, was an illustrated history of Selim's reign completed in 1527. The illustrated *Selimname* of Şükri-i Bidlisi was but one of a series of histories covering the same years and created under courtly auspices in a successful effort to re-write the controversial dynastic struggle that preceded this sultan's rise to power.⁷⁶ Textually based on earlier *gazavatnames*, Bidlisi's *Selimname* in turn informed a host of illustrated dynastic histories of the later sixteenth century.

If the *Selimnames* represent a look inwards, aiming to revise a disturbing episode in Ottoman dynastic history and to demand a more exalted place for Selim in historical consciousness, Piri Reis's contemporaneous *Kitab-ı Bahriye* and world maps represent a look outwards, a reckoning with the new imperial expanse and its widening horizons. In contrast to the *Selimname*, whose illustrated manuscripts are products of the court ateliers, the *Kitab-ı Bahriye* is the work of a naval officer who adapted the well-established *isolario* genre to create an Ottoman image of the Mediterranean coastlines, ports and islands. This was a sea chart to be used by sailors. But, at the same time, particularly the second, visually and textually more lavish, version, initially prepared through the mediation of İbrahim Paşa for presentation to Sultan Süleyman, was conceived as a portrait of the Mediterranean from an Ottoman vantage

⁷⁶ Şehabettin Tekindağ, 'Selim-nameler', *Tarih Enstitüsü Dergisi* 1(1970), 197–230; Erdem Çıpa, 'The Centrality of the Periphery: The Rise to Power of Selim I, 1487–1512', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University (2007); Çağman, 'The Miniatures of the Divan-ı Hüseyinî'.

point. Ottoman cartographic representation of the Mediterranean partook fully of contemporary developments in naval mapping developed simultaneously by Italian, Spanish and Portuguese mapmakers in portolan charts and *isolarios*.⁷⁷

Kitab-ı Bahriye constitutes the earliest example of topographic representation in the Ottoman realm, a genre that by the mid-1500s had become a well-established feature of the Ottoman pictorial repertory. In representing port cities, the mapmakers working for Piri Reis adopted the basic conventions of the schematic “bird’s eye view”: they depicted the layout and boundaries of the urban enclosure and main features of its environment while especially highlighting a number of landmarks within an otherwise uniform urban fabric. While simpler than contemporary Italian views of the same city, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*’s double-folio bird’s eye view of Venice betrayed familiarity with the long-standing Italian tradition of mapping the lagoon. An image of Alexandria captured the town’s layout in relation to the port and highlighted the ancient ruins that marked the cityscape (Figure 13.18). The images of Istanbul inserted into later *Kitab-ı Bahriye* manuscripts partook of the newly emergent perspective view, adapting it to the medium of book painting.⁷⁸

Piri Reis’s book is almost contemporaneous with a major historical project conceived in the 1520s and partially realised through the 1540s, namely Matrakçı Nasuh’s multi-volume history of the Ottoman house, planned as part of a world history and straddling the intertwined genres of history, conquest narrative, geography and itinerary.⁷⁹ The illustrations of Matrakçı’s

77 Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*, ed. Ertuğrul Zekâi Ökte, trans. into modern Turkish Vahit Çabuk and Tülây Duran, trans. into English Robert Bragner, 4 vols. (Ankara, 1988); Svat Soucek, *Piri Reis and Turkish Mapmaking after Columbus: The Khalili Portolan Atlas* (London, 1996); Pinar Emiralioglu, ‘Cognizance of the Ottoman World: Visual and Textual Representations in the Sixteenth Century Ottoman Empire (1514–1596)’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago (2006), pp. 89–138; George Talias, ‘*Isolarii*, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century’, in *The History of Cartography*, vol. III: *Cartography in the European Renaissance*, ed. David Woodward (Chicago, 2007), pp. 269–70.

78 İffet Orbay, ‘Istanbul Viewed : The Representation of the City in Ottoman Maps of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2001), pp. 117–298.

79 Nasuhü’s-Silahi, *Beyân-ı Menâzil-i Sefer-i ‘Irakeyn-i Sultân Süleymân Han*, ed. Hüseyin G. Yurdaydın (Ankara, 1976), pp. 3–25; Sinan Çavuş, *Süleymanname: Tarih-i Feth-i Şikloş, Estergon ve İstol-Belgrad*, ed. Tevfik Temelkuran, trans. Fuat Yavuz and Ayhan Özyurt (Istanbul, 1998); J. Michael Rogers, ‘Itineraries and Town Views in Ottoman Histories’, in *The History of Cartography*, vol. 2, pp. 228–55; Kathryn Ann Ebel, ‘City Views, Imperial Visions: Cartography and the Visual Culture of Urban Space in the Ottoman Empire, 1453–1603’, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin (2002); Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, ‘Osmanlı Şehir Tahayyülünün Görsel ve Edebi İzleri: Onaltıncı ve Onyedinci Yüzyıl Menziline ve Seyahatnamelerinde Şehir İmgeleri’, in *Kültürel Kesişmeler ve Sanat: Günsel Renda Onuruna Sempozyum Bildirileri / Cultural Crossings and Art: Proceedings of a Symposium in Honour of Günsel Renda*, ed. Serpil Bağcı and Zeynep Yasa Yaman (Ankara, 2010).

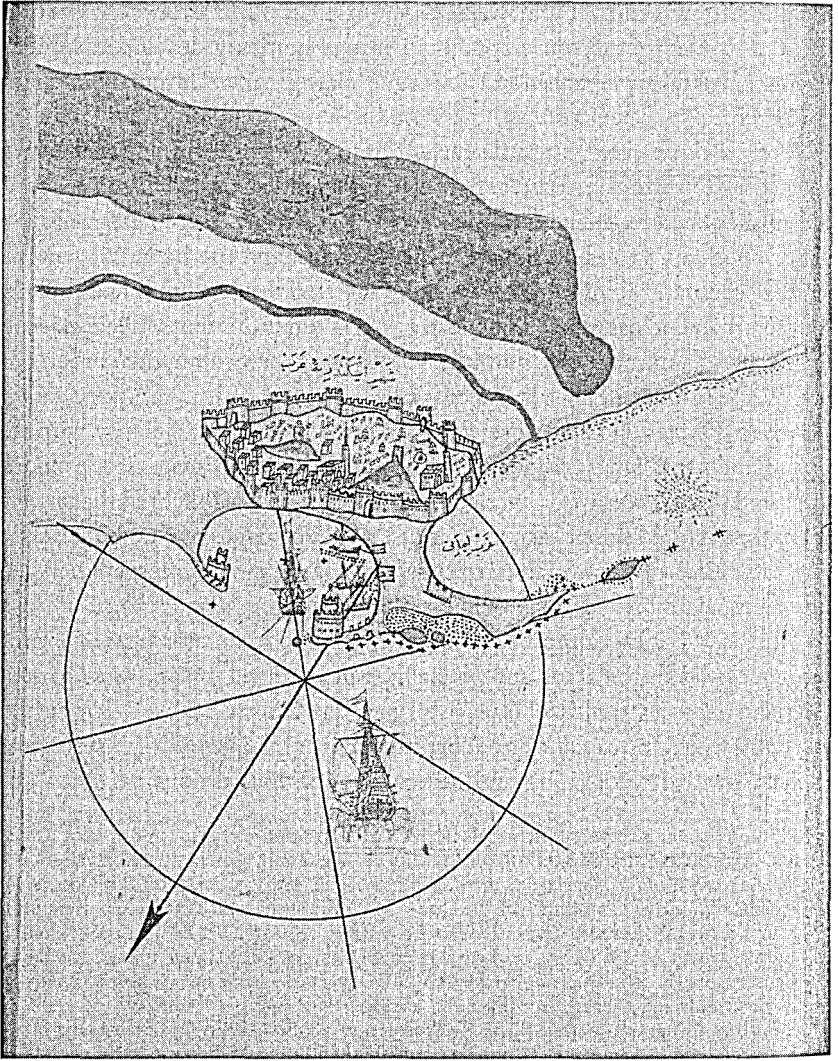


Figure 13.18. *Şehr-i İskenderiyye-i Arab* (Alexandria), in Piri Reis, *Kitab-ı Bahriye*. (Topkapı Palace Library, TSM H. 642, fol. 348v)

ambitious enterprise are exclusively topographic (Figure 13.19). Most notably, these are images of cities but also of the routes followed by the Ottoman armed forces during campaigns and the major landmarks they encountered. The most celebrated of these manuscripts, the *Beyan-ı Menazil-i Sefer-i Irak* or *Mecmua-i Menazil*, narrating Süleyman's Iraqi campaign of 1535–7, marks

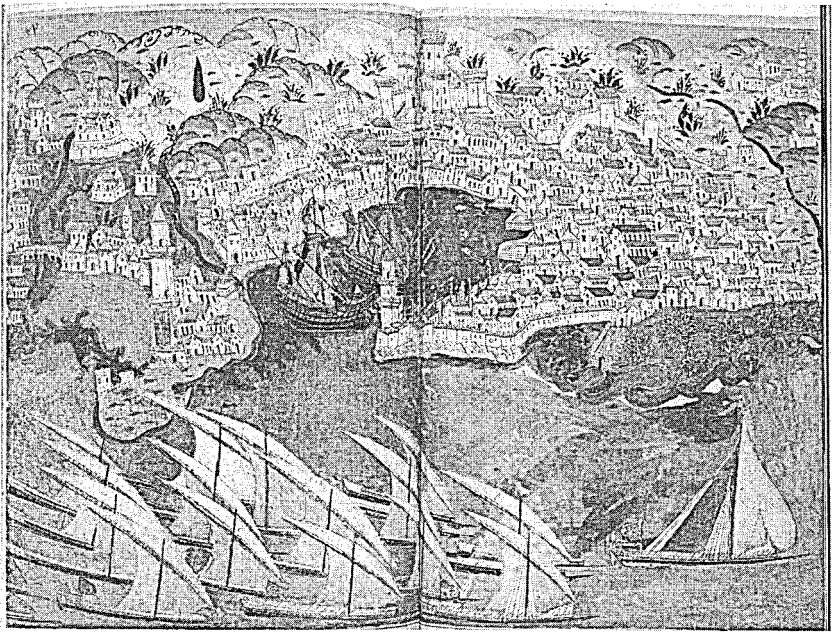


Figure 13.19. View of Genoa, Matrakçı Nasuh, *Tarih-i Feth-i Siklos*, *Estergon, ve İstolbelgrad*, ca. 1545. (Topkapı Palace Library, TSM H. 1608, fols. 32v–33r)

the emergence of a specifically Ottoman mode of topographic representation. The images respond to fifteenth-century Italian city views, but their conventions merge with those of a largely Persianate mode of spatial representation. Hence the draftsmen render urban boundaries in plan, while individual monuments and lesser buildings appear in elevation or bird's eye view. The established Persianate convention of utilising multiple points of view in architectural depictions is thus adapted to the representation of urban space. As opposed to a cartographer's limited colour spectrum, Matrakçı's images often depict towns surrounded by a paradise-like garden. Images of holy sites and shrine complexes allude to the conventions of medieval pilgrimage itineraries. Matrakçı's work was possibly the result of a royal commission; his exact role in the execution of the paintings is unclear. In all, this body of images and their more practical counterparts, namely a set of siege plans, render topographic representation one of the constitutive elements of the Ottoman pictorial repertory. Topographic imagery in turn formed one of the strands that fed into historical narrative painting, the dominant genre of Ottoman pictorial representation through the later 1500s.

Once again, the political conjuncture of the 1550s brought issues of dynastic strife and succession to the fore, and with tragic outcomes. Possibly this situation induced the Ottoman court to launch a new project, a royal commission involving the creation of an official court historiographer (*şehnameci* or “shahnama writer”). Allotted an office within the palace grounds, the *şehnameci* was to collaborate with a team of scribes and painter-illustrators in the production of a work covering imperial history. Arifi, a poet of Azeri origin and thus from the Persian-speaking world, received the commission to write a multi-volume world history, with an entire volume dedicated to Süleyman’s reign. In Persian, the *Süleymanname* was conceptually and formally modelled after Firdausi’s *Shahnama*. In previous decades, Ottoman translations of this epic, whose illustrations subtly highlighted aspects of Istanbul’s courtly culture, had paved the way for local interpretations of this major literary work.⁸⁰ Through the later sixteenth century, the office and the atelier of the *şehnameci* would create a series of Ottoman dynastic histories whose illustration played a major role in shaping Ottoman narrative painting.⁸¹

Illustrated and illuminated by a diverse group of artists, including masters from Timurid-Turkmen or Safavid centres but also the empire’s Balkan provinces, the *Süleymanname* followed its Persian model only in part. In this longest and most lavishly and extensively illustrated manuscript among the extant volumes of Arifi’s series, representations of courtly conduct and military prowess take pride of place, mediating Ottoman assertions of legitimate rule. Its paintings include receptions, battle and siege scenes and the royal hunt, in addition to images of meetings and entertainment in palatial interiors. While a number of the paintings follow Persianate visual norms and iconographic conventions closely, others, notably those illustrating episodes of particular symbolic significance, attest to explorations of novel iconographic formulations and compositional devices. In the double-folio image representing the accession of Süleyman, an event taking place under the portico of the Topkapı’s third gate but involving the palace’s first two courtyards

80 Serpil Bağcı, ‘From Translated Text to Translated Image: The Illustrated *Şehnâme-i Türki* Copies’, *Muqarnas* 17 (2000), 162–76; Serpil Bağcı, ‘An Iranian Epic and an Ottoman Painter: Nakkaş Osman’s “New” Visual Interpretation of the *Shahnamah*’, in *Frauen, Bilder, und Gelehrte: Studien zu Gesellschaft und Künsten im Osmanischen Reich. Festschrift Hans Georg Majer*, ed. Sabine Prätör and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul, 2002), pp. 421–50.

81 Christine Woodhead, ‘An Experiment in Official Historiography: The Post of *Şehnameci* in the Ottoman Empire, c. 1555–1605’, *Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunde des Morgenlandes* 75 (1983), 157–82. On the *Süleymanname* and the remaining volumes of Arifi’s historic work, see Esin Atlı, *Süleymanname: The Illustrated History of Süleyman the Magnificent* (Washington, D.C., 1986).

as well, a topographic image founded on multiple juxtapositions of plan and elevation provides the setting to the narrative representation of this tightly choreographed event. The depiction of a Balkan village during the recruitment of Christian boys (*devşirme*) adroitly captures the importance of this institution in its representation of the levied children, dressed in bright red, in transition between their former and future lives.

Ottoman painters translated the strictly coded conduct and ceremonial of the sultan's court, shaped by notions of the ruler's divine and absolute authority, into stasis, compartmentalisation and hierarchically ordered pictorial space (Figure 13.20). The iconic figures of the Ottoman ruler, dignitaries and attendants rarely venture out of the elongated frames that correspond to their symbolic loci within stringent – and constraining – court protocols. Only their gestures and gazes suggest links and confirm hierarchies across the frames. Their frozen rigidity imparts an iconic presence to figures, and particularly that of the sultan, echoing the godlike image of Süleyman reflected in the solemn ceremonial of the court but also in contemporary letters. Attentive to sartorial and some architectural detail, and to visual distinctions across the wide geographic expanse of the narrative, the painter-illustrators' decorative style remains a defining aspect of most paintings.

Outside the framework of historical painting, which was one of the sites where officials and artists fashioned an imperial Ottoman image, portraiture remained a private affair. The sense of intimacy and spontaneity conveyed in single- or double-page royal portraits of the aged Süleyman in contemplation or of Prince Selim in the company of his boon companions are in striking contrast with the royal imagery in histories and chronicles. These paintings may be the work of Nigari (Haydar Reis), a courtier who practised his art outside the *ehl-i hıref* organisation and who may have also produced a series of royal portraits inspired by later fifteenth-century Ottoman experiments in this genre. The remaining evidence for this latter current, a half-length portrait of Hayreddin Barbarossa, and printed copies preserved among Paolo Giovio's portrait collection, suggest that these images were highly formal, unlike the portraits by Nigari preserved in Ottoman collections. Initially intended for European collectors, this set of "official" images would ultimately inform another series of royal portraits, produced by Ottoman painters beginning in the late 1570s.⁸²

⁸² Jürg Meyer zur Capellen and Serpil Bağcı, 'The Age of Magnificence', in Kangal, *The Sultan's Portrait*, pp. 104–5; Julian Raby, 'From Europe to Istanbul', in *ibid.*, pp. 145–50; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 85–91.

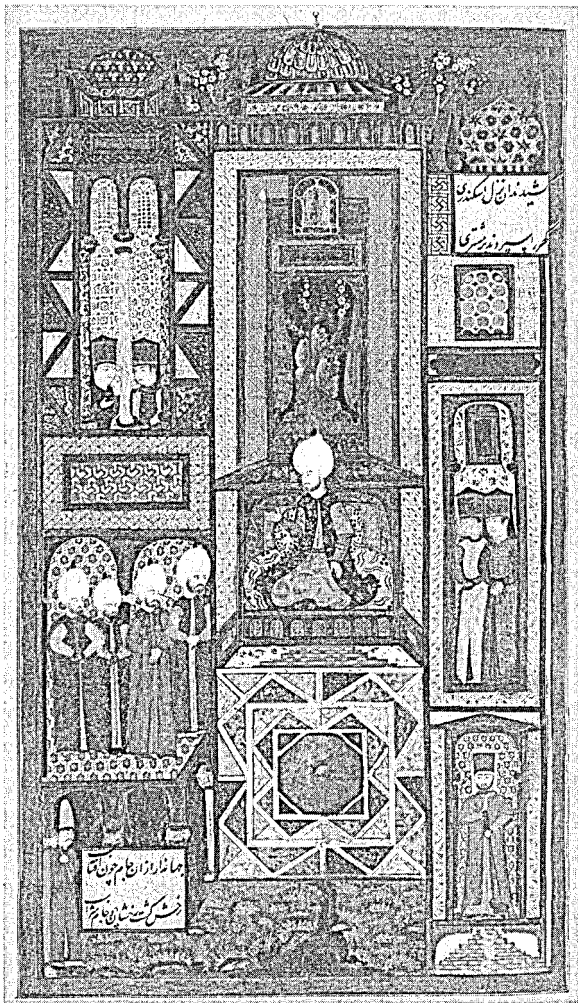


Figure 13.20. Süleyman I presented with the legendary cup of Jamshid, Arifi, *Süleymanname*. (Topkapı Palace Library, H 1517, fol. 557r)

Architecture in the age of empire

Architecture during the early years of Süleyman focused on the private world of palatial constructions, in contrast to the explosion in public works that would mark the middle and later 1500s. After his accession in 1520, Süleyman ordered a number of changes to the Topkapı Palace. Several sections were rebuilt in a more monumental manner and refurbished; polychrome tiles

and Mamluk-style marble revetments dressed a number of buildings in a more lavish idiom. In the 1530s, the women's quarters of the palace were renovated and expanded in preparation for the move of Süleyman's consort Hürrem into the Topkapı Palace along with her children. Numerous pavilions replaced the multiple towers which once had marked the enclosure wall of the private courtyard, underlining an overall departure from the medieval palatial norms that had informed the Topkapı's original plan.⁸³ The creation of suburban palaces and gardens for the Ottoman dynasty and elite along the Bosphorus, particularly on the Asian side, was a new trend in the capital, which would continue into later periods. For the most part, these were informally organised gardens with multiple enclosures. Within them, asymmetrically grouped kiosks, pavilions and belvedere towers, surrounded by a variety of trees and flowers, served as settings for banquets and royal receptions and for hunts and private retreats.⁸⁴

Within the realm of the palace, as in public places, the structures of Süleyman's early years stand out through their decorative programmes rather than through innovations in architectural design. In this field, as in the ornamentation of books and other objects, the cultural impact of Ottoman conquests in the east and south was determinant. Thus Mamluk-style marble revetments decorated the Çoban Mustafa Paşa complex in Gebze, and the polychrome tile revetments of Selim I's mosque and mausoleum were in all probability the work of the Tabrizi masters who had arrived in Istanbul in the wake of the Safavid wars; within the same years, these artists also created the celebrated Sünnet Odası tiles for a Topkapı kiosk. The chief architect, Acem Alisi, or Alaüddin, was the person mainly responsible for this focus on colourful surface revetments. However, in his architectural designs he was more conservative: the works attributed to him closely follow earlier models with regard to planning, the spatial configurations of individual structures and compounds, and building materials and techniques.⁸⁵

Acem Alisi's successor was Sinan, whose appointment as chief architect in the late 1530s coincided with a multivalent transformation in Ottoman political structures and culture. Bureaucratisation and the creation of further

⁸³ Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, pp. 184–97 and *passim*.

⁸⁴ Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Suburban Landscape of Sixteenth-Century Istanbul as a Mirror of Classical Ottoman Garden Culture', in *Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires: Theory and Design*, ed. Attilio Petruccioli (Leiden, 1997), pp. 32–71; Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, 'Das Kavak Sarayı – Ein verlorenes Baudenkmal Istanbul's', *Istanbul Mitteilungen* 38 (1988), 363–76; Nurhan Atasoy, *A Garden for the Sultan: Gardens and Flowers in the Ottoman Culture* (Istanbul, 2002).

⁸⁵ Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 155, 563–4 (Appendix 4).

hierarchical administrative structures accompanied the consolidation of a corporate elite identity; transformations in imperial ideology and iconography paralleled the growing centrality of Sunni orthodoxy in imperial institutions and discourse.⁸⁶ Parallel to the tighter organisation of the *ehl-i hıref* artisans, Sinan's tenure as head of court architects in turn brought further bureaucratisation to the corps, closer connections to and control of building crafts, and an expansion of the functions of the royal architectural office at large. The main provider of architectural services to the sultan and his expanded household at a time when institutional patronage became increasingly central to elite identity and conduct, the corps of architects and its chief often had to negotiate the various and at times conflicting demands of their patrons. Apart from being a site of architectural education, the corps of architects was now a central office of public works. Its responsibilities ranged from the building of waterways and military structures to the supervision of the expansive building industry and related crafts, but also to municipal duties such as the upkeep of streets and the enforcement of building codes regarding the public and private buildings of the city's inhabitants.⁸⁷ Practical considerations apart, codes regulating architecture served to maintain and render visible societal distinctions and ethno-religious hierarchies. The visual configuration of non-Muslim houses of worship was tightly monitored; by contrast, given the largely shared vernacular idiom of various communities in the centre and the provinces, official efforts to impose visual distinctions often focused on the location, size and colour of residences.⁸⁸ The regulations by the corps reflected deeply entrenched visual codes of hierarchy and propriety envisioned by the elite at this time, which sought to order the material environment down to the interior arrangement and furnishings of urban dwellings, as reflected in Mustafa Ali's detailed prescriptions for housing and

86 Fleischer, 'The Lawgiver as Messiah'; Cornell H. Fleischer, 'Preliminaries to the Study of the Ottoman Bureaucracy', *Journal of Turkish Studies* 2 (1987), 135-41; Necipoğlu, 'A Kanun for the State'.

87 Erhan Afyoncu, 'XVI. Yüzyılda Hassa Mimarlar Ocağı', in *İsmail Aka Armağanı*, ed. Nejdett Bilgi et al. (İzmir, 1999), pp. 207-16; Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 153-76 and passim.

88 Information on vernacular architecture of this period is in large part textual rather than material. See Stéphane Yerasimos, 'Dwellings in Sixteenth Century Istanbul', in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg, 2003), pp. 274-300; Uğur Tanyeli, 'Norms of Domestic Comfort and Luxury in Ottoman Metropolises Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries', in Faroqhi and Neumann, *The Illuminated Table*, pp. 301-16; S. Akyazıcı Özkoçak, 'The Evidence of Vakıf-Registers for Residential Dwelling in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in *Afife Batur'a Armağan* (İstanbul, 2005), pp. 253-9; Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, pp. 196-206.

fittings proper to a given person's class and status.⁸⁹ The corps also appointed and supervised "city architects" (*şehir mimarları*), who had similar responsibilities in provincial capitals.

Bureaucratisation was in turn intimately connected to the new architectural ventures of the Ottoman court. An outstanding focus on public building projects within and outside of the capital responded to the articulation of new representational agendas on the one hand and on the other to the rapid increase in urban population, particularly in Istanbul. A new architectural image was formulated to correspond to the new imperial image. It is not coincidental that Sinan's architectural masterpieces are congregational mosques built for Ottoman sultans, members of the dynasty and the political elite. These buildings broke away completely from the multi-functional convent-mosque, an architectural marker of the earlier era of close rapport between centre and frontiers, and a more inclusive notion of religious practice. Endowing Istanbul with a stronger Islamic identity and conveying an image of the Ottoman centre to the provinces, these constructions simultaneously articulated a hegemonic visual regime predicated upon a stratified system of architectural representation.⁹⁰ Hence Sinan and his co-workers articulated an iconography of mosques, highly specific to the period between the 1540s and the 1570s, which visually distinguished sultanic and dynastic structures through a set of architectural markers such as multiple minarets, marble-paved forecourts, half-domes and tympana arches referring to the architecture of the Hagia Sophia. Current socio-political hierarchies determined the locations where individual members of the elite might build their charities, whether in the capital city or across the imperial territories at large.⁹¹ Never before the Süleymanic age or anytime afterwards would such strictly defined codes dictate the forms and limits of architectural patronage with such crystalline clarity (Figures 13.21, 13.22, and 13.23).

Urban, suburban and inter-city complexes sponsored by members of the ruling elite reflected changing dispositions and new agendas of Ottoman rule and the growing funds that patrons were willing to allocate to architectural self-representation. Süleyman's Istanbul complex (1548–59), built on a site

⁸⁹ Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, *The Ottoman Gentleman of the Sixteenth Century: Mustafa Âli's Mevâ'idü'n-Nefâis fi kava'idü'l-mecalis: "Tables of Delicacies Concerning the Rules of Social Gatherings"*, ed. and trans. Douglas Brookes (Cambridge, Mass., 2003); Andreas Tietze, 'Mustafa Ali on Luxury and Status Symbols of Ottoman Gentlemen', in *Studia Turcologica Memoriae Alexii Bombaci Dicata*, ed. Aldo Gallotta and Ugo Marazzi (Naples, 1982), pp. 577–90.

⁹⁰ Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 71–124.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*



Figure 13.21a. Süleymaniye mosque and mausoleum, Istanbul, 1550–7, architect Sinan: aerial view from the south. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

carved out of the Old Palace grounds, responded to and surpassed that of Mehmed II in scale and range of institutions. With the magnified and elaborately designed volumes and facades of its mosque and the expansive composition of its dependencies on the Golden Horn slopes, the Süleymaniye announced its primacy among a host of projects that altered the image of the Ottoman capital in the later 1500s. Its construction coinciding with Ottoman re-formulations of Sunni orthodoxy that marked the middle decades of the 1500s, the Süleymaniye announced this new emphasis on religion through its layout, decoration and epigraphic programme.⁹²

The ruling elite remained major sponsors of urban institutions, continuing patronage patterns that had been established in the 1460s and 1470s. However, the institutions that these personages founded changed, congregational mosques replacing the convent-mosques of earlier periods and *medreses* gaining precedence over the public kitchens and prominently located bath-houses earlier patrons had chosen to construct. Among the grand *vezirs* of these

⁹² For Süleyman's mosque complex and the consolidation of Ottoman Sunni orthodoxy in the mid-sixteenth century, see Gülru Necipoğlu, 'The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul: An Interpretation', *Muqarnas* 3 (1985), 92–117.

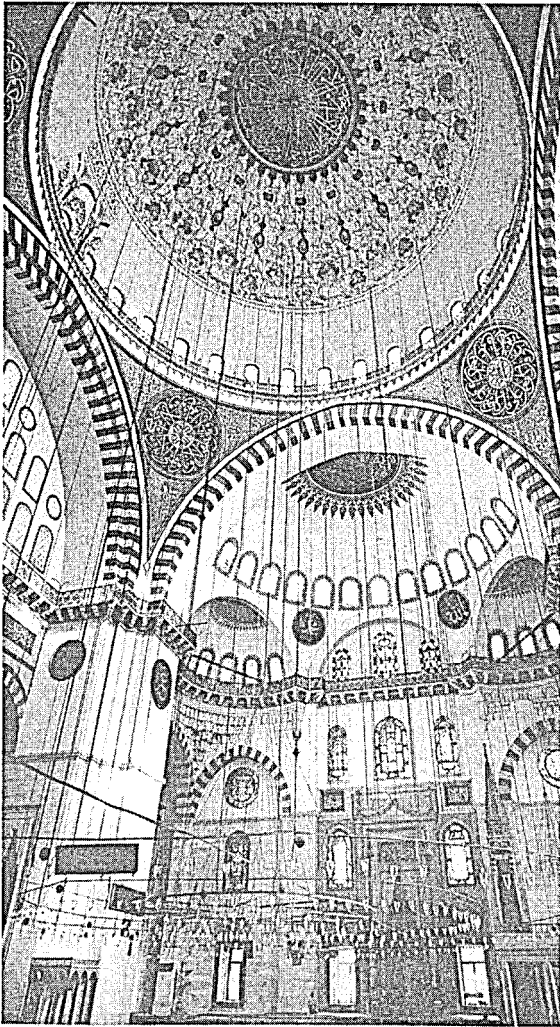


Figure 13.21b. Süleymaniye mosque and mausoleum, Istanbul, 1550–7, architect Sinan: interior view towards the mihrab. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

decades, Rüstem Paşa (1544–53) and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa (1565–79) emerged as highly visible patrons of charities and infrastructural projects throughout the imperial territories, particularly along major trade and pilgrimage routes.⁹³

⁹³ Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 315–31, 345–68.

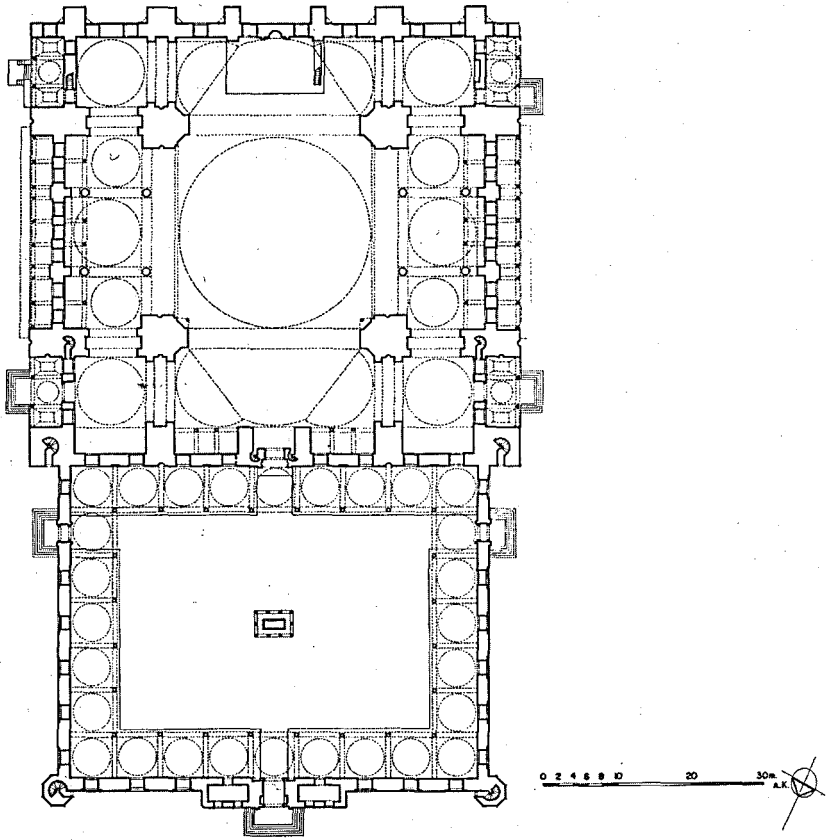


Figure 13.21c. Süleymaniye mosque and mausoleum, Istanbul, 1550–7, architect Sinan: plan. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

The architectural patronage of dynastic women in the capital city was a novelty concurrent with a set of transformations in their political roles. Dynastic women's works became part and parcel of the visual hierarchies articulated in Istanbul through the later sixteenth century.⁹⁴ Beginning with Hürrem, the beloved and powerful consort and later wife of Süleyman, women of the dynastic family assumed increasingly salient roles as patrons of urban institutions and architecture. Hürrem's complex (1537–40, hospital added in 1551) is still situated in a somewhat remote spot, to the north of the Byzantine

⁹⁴ Leslie Peirce, 'Gender and Sexual Propriety in Ottoman Royal Women's Patronage', in *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies*, ed. D. Fairchild Ruggles (New York, 2000), pp. 53–68.

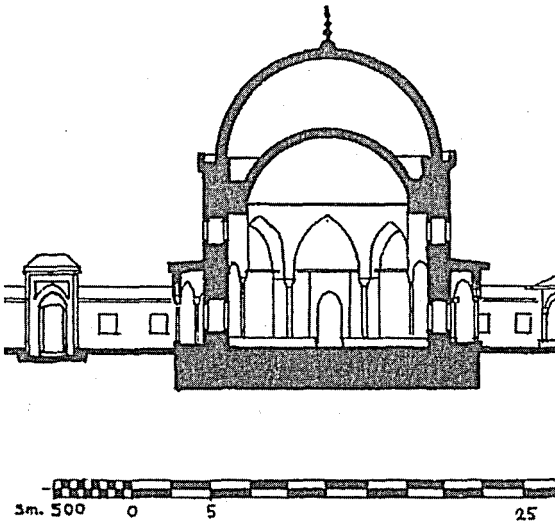
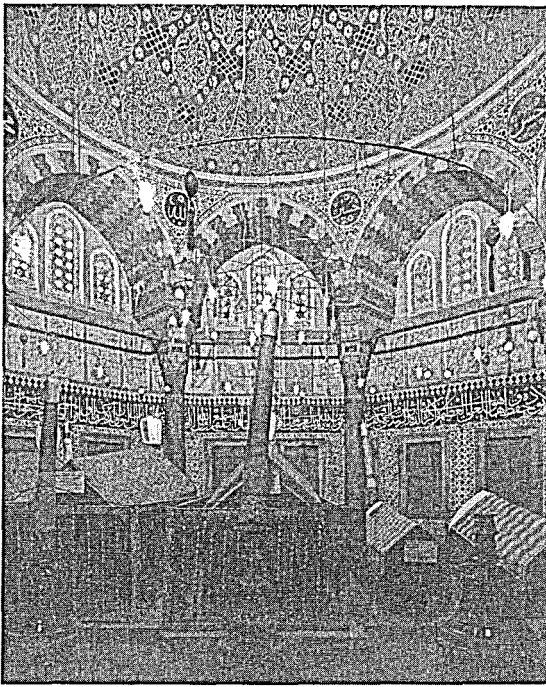


Figure 13.22. The mausoleum of Süleyman I: (a) interior, (b) section. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive; Ali Saim Ülgen, *Mimar Sinan Yapıları*, detail from Plate 34)

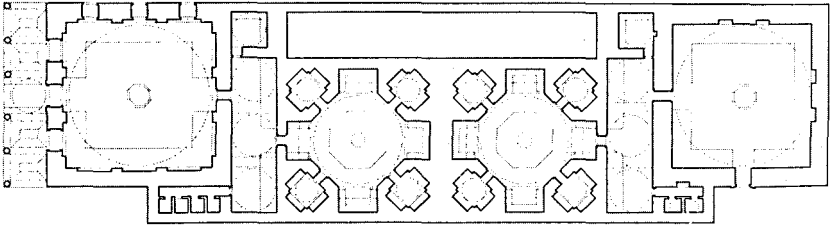
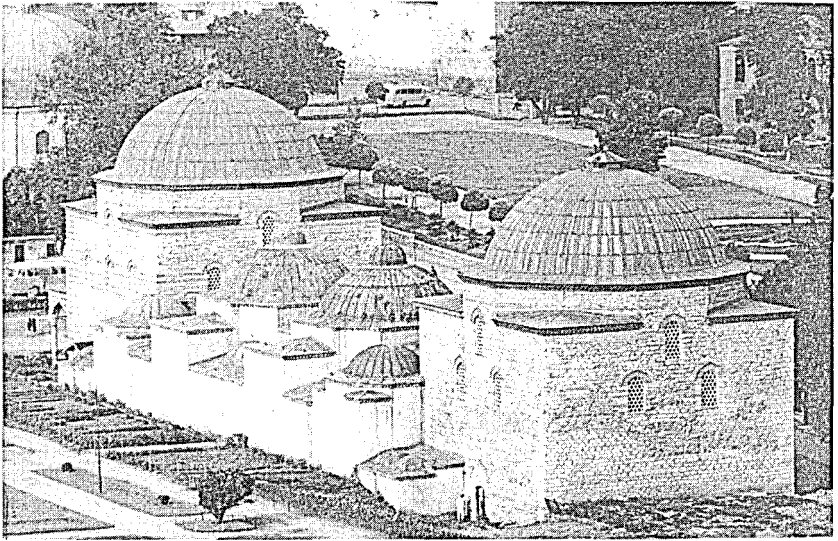


Figure 13.23. Haseki Hürrem public bath, 1550s, Istanbul, architect Sinan: (a) aerial view from the south; (b) plan. (Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

Forum of Arcadius (Ottoman Avratpazarı), on the southern branch of the Mese. It bespeaks the gendered nature of choices Hürrem made regarding her foundation and her prospects as a patroness of architecture. The more prominent buildings were a public kitchen and a hospital alongside a *medrese*, in addition to a small, single-domed mosque.⁹⁵ In the following years, such relatively marginal siting options would give way to increasingly prominent buildings sponsored by women. In the 1550s, Hürrem was to commission

⁹⁵ Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 271–6.

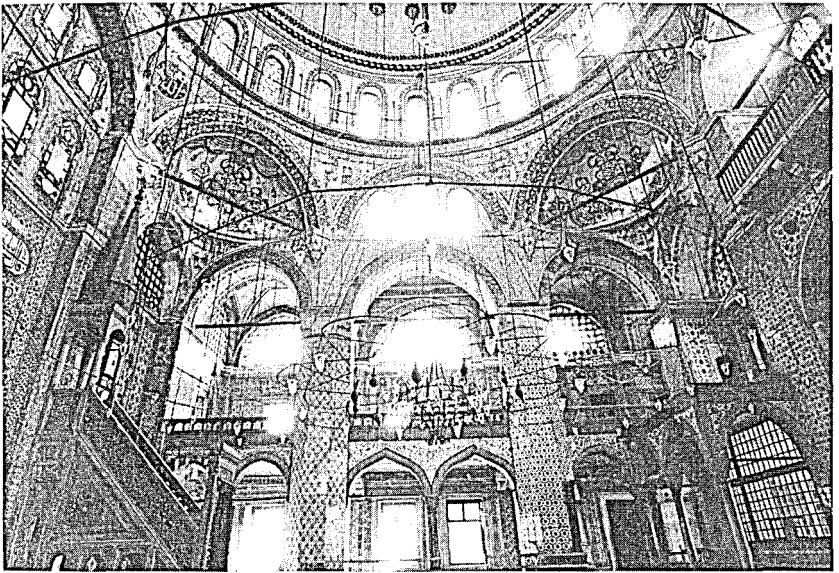


Figure 13.24. (a) Rüstem Paşa mosque, Istanbul, ca. 1563, architect Sinan, interior view towards the south. (Photograph Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

a double bath designed by the architect Sinan at the very heart of the city, across from the Hagia Sophia (Figure 13.23). The daughter of Süleyman and Hürrem, Mihrimah, was able to place her two projects at major points of entry into Istanbul, first in Üsküdar (ca. 1544–8) and then in Edirnekapı (ca. 1563–70); the prominence of these sites once again highlights the growing visibility of women’s works in the Ottoman capital. Both women undertook expansive charities on sites of religious significance in the empire’s Arab-speaking provinces, Hürrem in Jerusalem and Mihrimah in Mecca.⁹⁶ Yet in construction they undertook jointly with their husbands, royal women were often overshadowed by their prominent spouses, a case in point being the foundation of Selim II’s daughter İsmihan Sultan and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa near the Kadirga port in Istanbul.

Drawing upon standardised formal vocabularies and typologies that characterised the uniform and static architectural designs of the earlier sixteenth century, Sinan and the atelier he directed focused on a number of formal problems with brilliant effect. The centrally planned sanctuary covered by a

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 301–2; Amy Singer, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence: An Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany, N.Y., 2002).

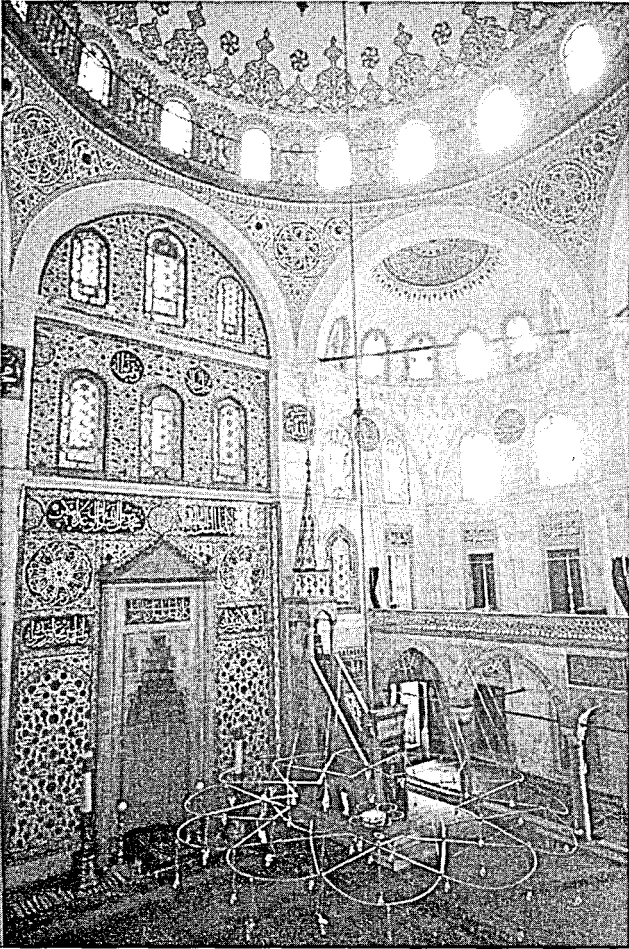


Figure 13.24b. (b) İsmihan Sultan and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa mosque, Istanbul, 1571–2, architect Sinan, interior view towards the south. (Photograph Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive)

system of domes and vaults was a constant theme throughout Sinan's long career. Modes of massing and architectonic expression, the spatial articulation and lighting of the domed sanctuary, and the manner of relating buildings to urban or suburban environments, on the other hand, changed in the context of particular projects and in response to the altering tastes, demands and means of the patrons at issue (Figure 13.24).⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Aptullah Kuran, *Sinan: The Grand Old Master of Ottoman Architecture* (Washington, D.C., 1987); Sönmez, *Mimar Sinan Dönemi Türk Mimarlığı ve Sanatı*; Seyfi Başkan (ed.), 400. *Anma*

"In proportion to the abundance or paucity of piers, columns, and buttresses, [the architect] should close up the domes and half-domes, and bind the arches together in an agreeable manner, without carelessness", wrote Sinan, when he was defining the difficult art of architecture. Following a note on the importance of sound foundations, this brief remark nevertheless highlights the primacy of domed construction and the relationship between the roof and the support system in his designs.⁹⁸ Sinan explored means of transmuting the simple geometries of earlier designs into intricately articulated volumes of a structurally integrated roof system and load-bearing masonry structure. The pyramidal masses of his earlier sultanic mosques and the heavily buttressed, strongly grounded smaller sanctuaries all possessed an evident sculptural quality. As for the major royal commissions of these decades, the Şehzade and the Süleymaniye mosques each featured a complex of domes, half-domes, turrets and weight towers, their pyramidal composition reflected also in rhythmic façade compositions. These designs bespoke a radical breakaway from the additive nature of earlier domed construction, where an abrupt transition from the wall system of the prayer hall to the roof created a linear break between the prismatic mass of the sanctuary and the domical superstructure. A composite mass of domes and half-domes, and the load-bearing structure composed of walls and free-standing elements now encircled a unified interior where space seemed to be in continuous flow.

The primary monument Sinan designed for Selim II, the Selimiye in Edirne (1568–74), announced a re-formulation of the architectural configurations of the chief architect's earlier sultanic mosques. A new emphasis on the verticality of the singular dome and on façade articulations informed the design of the mosque, whose structural system based on an octagonal baldaquin uncompromisingly centralised interior space, and bold volumetric massing were tightly interlocked. Through the 1570s and 1580s, possibly in response to the increasingly dense urban fabric of Istanbul, Sinan and the architects of the corps he directed continued to explore accents on verticality. The singular dome on a high drum, surrounded now with vaults or smaller domes at a lower level, created a roof system that was once more clearly separated from

Yılı *Mimar Sinan Semineri* (Ankara, 1988); Doğan Kuban, *Sinan's Art and Selimiye* (Istanbul, 1997); Kuban, *Osmanlı Mimarlığı*, pp. 249–349; Gülsün Tanyeli and Kani Kuzucular, 'Osmanlı Mimarlığında Çift Örtü Sistemi', in *Seven Centuries of Ottoman Architecture: A Supra-National Heritage*, ed. Nur Akın, Afife Batur and Selçuk Batur (Istanbul, 1999), pp. 106–11; Jale Erzen, *Sinan, Ottoman Architect: An Aesthetic Analysis* (Ankara, 2004); Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*; İ. Aydın Yüksel, *Osmanlı Mimarisinde Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Devri (926–974)* (Istanbul, 2004).

⁹⁸ *Tuhfetü'l-Mi'mārîn*, fol. 13b, in *Sinan's Autobiographies: Five Sixteenth-Century Texts*, ed. Howard Crane, Esra Akın and Gülru Necipoğlu (Leiden, 2006), p. 66, discussed by Erzen, *Sinan*, pp. 54–5, 82.

the prismatic mass of the load-bearing structure. Façade designs that became increasingly planar and increasingly transparent, with uniform tiers of windows, further accentuated the dynamic and vertical visual effect of these later mosques. The composition of the façade was now divorced from the domed baldachin inside.⁹⁹

A continuous, highly creative dialogue with monumental architecture across time and space accounts for a number of visual constants as well as a set of specific references in Sinan's design and highlights the historical-mindedness that shaped his work and, at the very end of his career, his autobiographies as well. A lifelong engagement with the Hagia Sofia shapes his major sultanic monuments in the form of re-interpretations, as in the Süleymaniye, competitive response, as in the Selimiye, or direct quotations, as in the Kılıç Ali Paşa mosque near the imperial gun foundry. The double-domed mausoleums of Süleyman I and Selim II refer back to the late antique building tradition, with spatial configurations and roof structures that hark back to martyria. Süleyman's octagonal, double-domed and porticoed mausoleum refers to the Dome of the Rock. Selim II's funerary monument, perhaps in response to the Hagia Sofia, in whose enclosure it stands, invokes late Roman building traditions not only in its double-shell structure and deep exedrae, expanding the octagonal space under the dome, but also in its marble-faced walls with highly pronounced mouldings.¹⁰⁰

Creative engagement with the past and allusions to monuments or forms that responded to the status or demands of Sinan's patrons informed buildings in other ways as well. It has been suggested that the Uljaytu mausoleum in Sultaniyya near Tabriz resonated in the tower-marked octagonal base of the Selimiye dome; courtyard fountains of the Şehzade and the Rüstem Paşa *medreses* formally alluded to medieval tomb towers of Anatolia. Sinan revisited late fifteenth-century experiments with octagonal enclosures in Haseki Hürrem's hospital, built in the 1550s, and again in the Rüstem Paşa *medrese* of the 1560s. A paradigmatic monument of the earlier fifteenth century, the Üç Şerefeli mosque in Edirne, informed the design of several projects. Sinan's façade compositions of the 1570s and 1580s were increasingly elaborate and may have been responses to contemporary Italian experiments, particularly St. Peter's in Rome.¹⁰¹

99 Jale N. Erzen, *Mimar Sinan Dönemi Cami Cepheleri* (Ankara, 1981).

100 Kuran, *Sinan*, pp. 87–91; Aptullah Kuran, 'Mimar Sinan'ın Türbeleri', in *Mimarbaşı Koca Sinan Yaşadığı Çağ ve Eserleri*, ed. Sadi Bayram (Istanbul, 1988), pp. 223–38.

101 Kuran, *Sinan*, pp. 48, 136–48, 249; Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Challenging the Past: Sinan and the Competitive Discourse of Early-Modern Islamic Architecture', *Muqarnas* 10 (1993), 169–80;

Decorative programmes and preferences varied according to building types and the status of the patrons: palatial structures and royal tombs were intensely decorated, and monumental mosques often bore deliberate, if subdued, decorative programs, but utilitarian structures were accorded few embellishments. The royal mausoleums of Süleyman and his immediate family featured polychrome marble floors and wall revetments, patterned and inscribed İznik tiles, densely painted and richly gilded stucco surfaces, carved wood, polychrome voussoirs, muqarnas capitals and transition zones, and marble cornices (Figure 13.22). Another ornamental layer of luxury textiles and objects of material and symbolic value further adorned these buildings. Without doubt, Sinan's royal mausoleums were among the most lavishly decorated structures of the period.

By contrast, in Friday mosques, with the notable exception of Rüstem Paşa's foundation, decorative features selectively accentuated structural or symbolic foci (Figure 13.24). Polychrome İznik tiles carrying designs of the new floral aesthetic on a white background harmonised with the textures and colours of the sandstone masonry and marble details of the interiors. The epigraphic programmes of these monuments, comprising Qur'anic verses, *hadith* and the eight revered names (Allah, Muhammad, the four caliphs, Hasan and Husayn), were deliberate textual compositions meant to communicate the intentions of the patrons. Executed in paint or on tiles, monumental cursive scripts re-interpreted by Ahmed Karahisari (d. 1556) sought to augment their visibility and legibility with bold contrasts of colour.¹⁰² The disparity between the surface embellishments of mosques and mausoleums suggests that restraint in decoration, often noted in the literature as a defining aspect of Sinan's architecture, was highly contextual. The connection between structure and surface revetments, on the other hand, did remain a constant through this period, as observed in one of the earlier buildings designed by Sinan, the tomb of Şehzade Mehmed (1543–4): the sumptuously designed *cuerda secca* tiles follow and frame the structural and fenestration lines, foreshadowing later uses of tile decoration.¹⁰³ As the solemn and authoritarian orthodoxy of the 1550s and 1560s gave way to a livelier religious culture, the earlier visual

Kuban, *Sinan's Art and Selimiye*, pp. 135, 202–22. On possible inspiration by contemporary Italian façade designs, see Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 102–3.

¹⁰² Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Qur'anic Inscriptions on Sinan's Mosques: A Comparison with Their Safavid and Mughal Counterparts', in *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expressions*, ed. Fahmida Suleman (London, 2007), pp. 69–104; Muhittin Serin, *Hat Sanatı*, pp. 107–11.

¹⁰³ Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu, *Les grandes lignes de l'évolution du programme décoratif en céramique des monuments ottomans au cours du XVIème siècle* (Ankara, 1985).

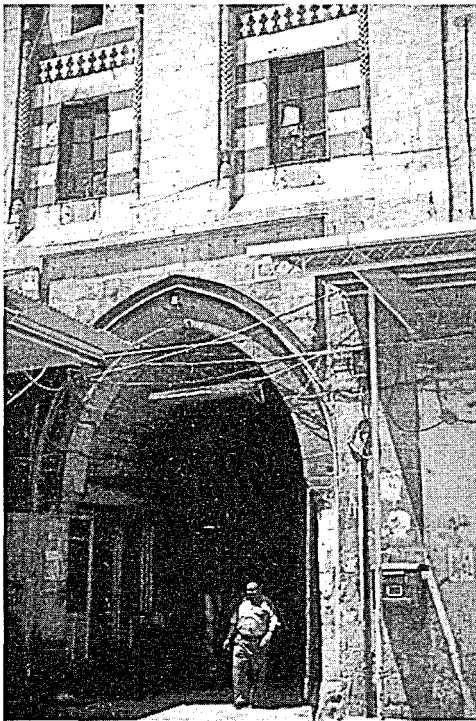
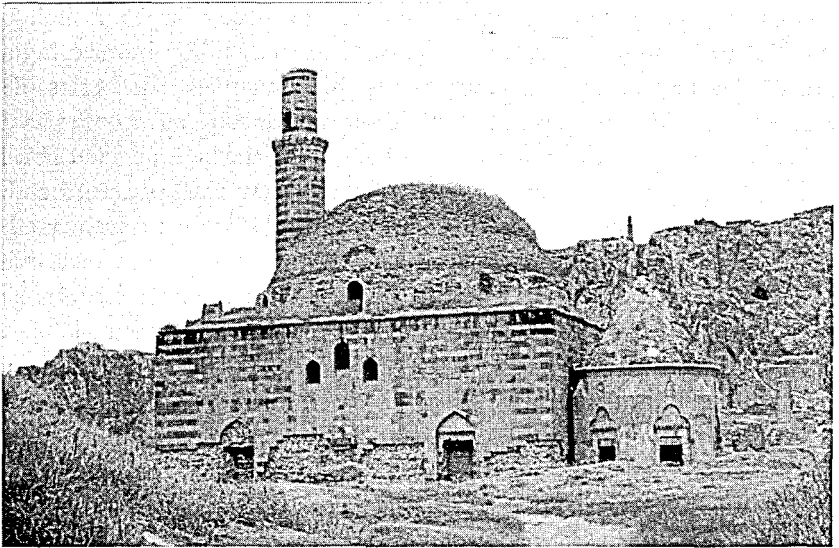


Figure 13.25. (a) Köse Hüseyin Paşa mosque and mausoleum, Van, 1567–8, 1587–8, architect Sinan (photograph Boğaziçi University Aptullah Kuran Archive); (b) Khan al-Gumruk, Aleppo, interior facade of courtyard, 1560s or 1570s (photograph by the author)

restraint in monumental religious buildings gave way to a more liberal use of ornament and colour, as the rich decorative programmes of the Selimiye and other projects of these decades indicate.¹⁰⁴

Construction in the capital focused on central arteries, city gates, and focal points on the seashore, and also on certain residential neighbourhoods. The orthogonal planning principles that had shaped many complexes beginning with Mehmed II's foundation in Istanbul now gave way to subtler uses of geometry. Like earlier Ottoman patrons and architects, Sinan and his patrons were not engaged in integrating public squares or broad arteries into architectural design through uses of linear perspective. Sinan instead created complex and multivalent architectural compositions whereby the hilly terrain of Istanbul and its dense urban fabric became integral design components. He expertly manipulated multiple points of physical and visual access to the constructed order of the buildings, not only in the prime monument of the age, the Süleymaniye, but also in relatively minor works such as the mosque complexes founded by Princess İsmihan and Sokollu Mehmed Paşa in Kadırga (1567–71) and by Princess Şahsultan and Zal Mahmud Paşa in Eyüp (1577–90).

A similar frenzy of construction spread out over the empire as a whole, as the sultan, the dynastic family and members of the ruling elite undertook construction along the routes connecting the capital to major cities and the frontiers. Patrons also sponsored important foundations in provincial cities of symbolic, political or economic importance. Away from the capital and its vicinity, the role of the chief architect was mostly limited to the creation or approval of designs that would then be realised by lesser members of the corps or by local architects. In this regard, the architectural and urbanistic elaboration that marked Istanbul and its environs found diverse reflections in the provinces. Urban or inter-city complexes might be conceived in an expansive manner, often elaborating on orthogonal planning principles in use since the 1460s. But construction usually remained simplistic in comparison to the intricate structural and spatial displays in Istanbul.

In the vast and differentiated cultural geography of the Ottoman domains, the visual idiom of the imperial centre was filtered through a variety of lenses (Figure 13.25). Regional idioms were selectively integrated into the imperial visual order. The level of patronage, the agency of local architects, craftsmen and intermediaries and the cultural politics of the centre vis-à-vis various social

¹⁰⁴ Baha Tanman, 'Edirne Selimiye Camii'nin Hünkar Mahfilindeki Bazı Ayrıntılardan II. Selim'in ve Mimar Sinan'ın Dünyalarına', in *Arkeoloji ve Sanat Tarihi Araştırmaları: Yıldız Demiriz'e Armağan*, ed. Baha Tanman and Uşun Tükel (Istanbul, 2001), pp. 239–45; Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 247–52.

groups and provinces all played a part in determining which architectural and decorative elements of local origin might enter buildings commissioned by members of the ruling elite. In the empire's eastern provinces, where founders of urban institutions had to reckon with extant networks of clients, the Ottoman visual order readily absorbed the earlier Islamic heritage. Balkan projects often showed fewer references to local traditions and greater adherence to the basic features of established building types.¹⁰⁵

Buildings sponsored by the Ottoman elite might, however, have an impact on non-Muslim religious architecture in the provinces; thus the use of a hexagonal baldachin in the Greek Orthodox church of Daou Pendili near Athens points to the appeal of a typical Istanbul mosque layout for a non-Muslim community. Since throughout this period the imperial architectural office employed considerable numbers of non-Muslim architects, the agent of this design may well have been a court-trained master.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, such a use is indicative of the looser architectonic codes and practices of signification in at least certain provinces, for no Orthodox patron could have undertaken such a project in Istanbul. In cities, the regulations of the centre dictated the small sizes and unambitious architectural layouts of non-Muslim houses of worship where domes, if constructed, were concealed under pitched roofs. Monastic establishments of the Greek Orthodox community, on the other hand, did sponsor larger-scale domed churches through this period. In the Balkan provinces, monasteries of Mount Athos remained a source for designs that often followed medieval Byzantine prototypes, while contemporary Ottoman design and ornamentation on the one hand and itinerant workshops on the other did have an impact on several projects of this period.¹⁰⁷

Particularly where public structures were concerned, in the later 1500s the sheer speed and volume of work necessitated a full-fledged organisation of

105 Machiel Kiel, 'Some Reflections on the Origins of Provincial Tendencies in the Ottoman Architecture of the Balkans', in Machiel Kiel, *Studies in the Ottoman Architecture of the Balkans* (Aldershot, 1990); Machiel Kiel, *Ottoman Architecture in Albania, 1385–1912* (Istanbul, 1990); Irene Bierman, Rifa'at Abou-el-Haj and Donald Preziosi (eds.), *The Ottoman City and Its Parts: Urban Structure and Social Order* (New Rochelle, N.Y., 1991); Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden and Boston, 2004); Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Egypt's Adjustment to Ottoman Rule: Institutions, Waqf, and Architecture in Cairo, 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden, 1994); Julian Raby, 'Diyarbakır: A Rival to Iznik', *Istanbul Mitteilungen* 27–8 (1977–8), 429–59.

106 Robert Ousterhout, 'Ethnic Identity and Cultural Appropriation in Early Ottoman Architecture', *Muqarnas* 12 (1995), 48–62 at p. 50.

107 Slobodan Ćurčić, 'Byzantine Legacy in Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Balkans after 1453', in *The Byzantine Legacy in Eastern Europe*, ed. Lowell Clucas (Boulder, Colo., and New York, 1988), pp. 57–83; Slobodan Ćurčić, *Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent* (New Haven, Conn., and London, 2010), pp. 787–97.

design and construction, procurement of labour and building materials and a degree of modularisation through standard sizes for frequently needed construction elements. Building materials from different sources also needed to be of more or less uniform quality, and it was the job of the sultan's bureaucrats to ensure that artisans complied. Account books documenting royal constructions and related sources reflect the complex choreography of orders, objects and peoples dispersed in distant parts of the empire but converging on a particular construction site, often in Istanbul. Orders to İznik or Uşak describe the sizes, colours and motifs of custom-made tiles or carpets that were to decorate and furnish new buildings. Account books detailing expenses for materials and workforce, wherever they exist, render tangible this feverish activity centred on a given building. Workmen collected and transported spolia from antique sites, quarried stone and felled timber, while *kadıs* and other officials searched for masters as well as skilled and unskilled labourers; often craftsmen came to the building site as deportees. This highly bureaucratised and centralised system often, but not always, worked smoothly. Conflicts did occur even between the sultan and his chief architect, as Sinan vividly remembered in his memoirs.¹⁰⁸ In other cases, the various urban ateliers preferred to satisfy market demands and neglected those of the court, for as so often happened all over Eurasia the administration was a poor paymaster.¹⁰⁹

The vague and interchangeable Ottoman vocabulary for design and the paucity of extant source material allow but partial conclusions concerning the methods of design and construction. At times, Ottoman officials attempted to clarify the malleable term *resm* by using the elaboration *resm-i mücesssem* (model); *karname* could indicate a plan, an elevation or a model. Extant drawings and written documents suggest that builders used gridded ground plans, which deployed a range of Persianate and Italianate representational conventions of draughtsmanship, and less frequently also elevations and models. The highly uniform architectural style and typology and standardised building materials minimised pre-construction design work, particularly in less ambitious projects.

Through standard measurements, proportional systems and modules, architects could determine a building's primary features.¹¹⁰ Masters used

¹⁰⁸ Crane, Akin and Necipoğlu, *Sinan's Autobiographies*, p. 125.

¹⁰⁹ Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Süleymaniye Camii ve İmaret-i İnşaatı (1550–1557)*, 2 vols. (Ankara, 1972 and 1979); Stéphane Yerasimos, *Istanbul: la Mosquée de Soliman* (Paris, 1997); Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 176–86 and passim; J. Michael Rogers, *Sinan* (London, 2006).

¹¹⁰ Aptullah Kuran, 'Mimar Sinan Yapısı Karapınar II. Selim Camisinin Proporsiyon Sistemi Üzerine Bir Deneme', in *VII. Türk Tarih Kongresi: Kongreye Sunulan Bildiriler* (Ankara, 1973),

paper or cloth models and stencilled drawings for laying out decorative and epigraphic programmes; they might also prepare individualised designs, as well as templates for regularly repeated units. Elaborate architectural models often served for presentations and ceremonial purposes only.¹¹¹

Detailed orders and reports on finalised projects survive which may or may not have been accompanied by drawings. These documents hint at the role of verbal description in design and planning, for which a highly articulate vocabulary was available. Residues of a largely oral culture of craftsmanship and master-apprentice relations in addition to the highly circumscribed mode of education within the corps of architects may have led to the continued relevance of verbal description alongside a range of visual devices. Cafer Efendi's expansive tri-lingual dictionary of architectural and related terminology appended to his *Risale-i Mimariyye*, too, indicates the wealth of verbal representation and its importance in design and construction processes.¹¹²

Representing new configurations of power, ca. 1570–1600

Rapidly changing power dynamics at the sultan's court through the final decades of the sixteenth century impacted Ottoman visual culture in multiple ways. Profound transformations in the workings of the administrative apparatus and economy resulted in political turbulence, internecine struggles, massive uprisings and on the whole considerable tension during these decades when patronage patterns were radically altered. Increasingly, the more sedentary lifestyle of the monarch allowed members of the inner palace organisation, including women, court officials and servants, to take on more central roles in political decision-making on the one hand and artistic patronage on the other.

Shifts in the structure of Ottoman rule, together with financial troubles, began to have a visible effect on court culture, transforming modes of elite self-fashioning and representation. These decades saw an expansion in reading and book culture in the urban milieu of the Ottoman realm which translated into courtly art and visual culture as a remarkable increase in the

vol. 2, pp. 711–6; Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Plans and Models in 15th and 16th-Century Ottoman Architectural Practice', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 45(1985), 224–43.

111 On the use of templates for decoration, see Levenson, *Circa 1492*, p. 198; Rogers, *Sinan*, pp. 90–1; Walter B. Denny, 'Turkish Ceramics and Turkish Painting: The Role of the Paper Cartoon in Turkish Ceramic Production', in *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture in Honor of Katharina Otto-Dorn*, ed. Abbas Daneshvari (Malibu, Calif., 1981), pp. 29–36.

112 For terminology and descriptions, see Cafer Efendi, *Risâle-i Mi'mâriyye: An Early Seventeenth Century Ottoman Treatise on Architecture*, ed. and trans. Howard Crane (Leiden, 1987), pp. 76–103; Dündar, 'Bir Belgeye Göre Amasya II. Bayezid Külliyesi'.

production of illustrated and illuminated manuscripts. The range of subjects that appealed to Ottoman elite consumers of illustrated works expanded as patrons assembled larger and increasingly more prestigious book collections. During these decades, a wave of *bibliophilia* at the sultan's court was concurrent with a concern for historiography: visual representations of the recent or ancient past dominated the iconographic programmes of illustrated manuscripts across a range of diverse genres.

On the other hand, by the late 1500s, architectural investments visibly shrank, not only in number but also in the scale of buildings sponsored, as patrons adjusted their aspirations to their diminishing means. It is perhaps emblematic that Mehmed III's royal mother Safiye was unable to complete the great mosque complex that she undertook at just that time. Financial reasons were partly responsible for the – provisional – termination of the project, alongside the factional politics at the court that facilitated but at the same time circumscribed a queen mother's architectural patronage.

Architecture: The canon reconsidered

The final decades of the sixteenth century saw a series of parallel changes in the architectural field. Novel formal choices and representational agendas emerged as patronage mechanisms changed and construction industries and the empire-wide organisation of architectural activity entered a period of critical transformation. Alterations in the power dynamics of the Ottoman court brought a new set of patrons, queen mothers, *vezirs* of the Imperial Council and eunuchs of the court to the fore of an increasingly diminished architectural activity in the capital. Even so, the complex founded by Murad III's mother, Nurbanu, at the edge of Üsküdar (1571–85) was second only to Süleyman's and Mehmed II's foundations in the city proper. It bespoke the growing power, wealth and influence of the queen mother within the rapidly changing dynamics of the court. Nurbanu's foundation combined the characteristics of urban and roadside complexes, with its accommodations and charities including a large caravan-serai and hospice compound, a school, a dervish lodge and a mosque bearing the royal sign of twin minarets. A double bath on the Divan artery displayed Nurbanu's patronage in the walled city. In the closing years of the century, Safiye Sultan's unfinished project for a great congregational mosque complex at Istanbul's Eminönü waterfront bespoke the – highly contested – reversal of patronage prerogatives, now claimed by another powerful queen mother.¹¹³

¹¹³ Kuran, *Mimar Sinan*, pp. 163–81; Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 280–92; Lucienne Thys Senocak, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan*

Sinan's final works in the capital, built for members of the imperial council and two court eunuchs, further reflected the reversal of status hierarchies formulated in the mid-1500s.¹¹⁴ During Sinan's last years as chief architect and the decade following his demise, sultans were no longer the major builders in Istanbul, the institutional priorities of patrons changed, and new formal trends emerged. Architects responded to the increasingly dense urban fabric of the capital city when designing public buildings. The vertical masses of mosques were articulated by façade compositions of multiple tiers of windows, stringcourse mouldings and cornices. The mosque of Nişancı Mehmed Paşa, attributed to Sinan's successor Davud Ağa, re-interpreted the octagonal baldachin system of Sinan's Selimiye mosque, creating a highly sculpted system of supports and screen walls surrounding the space under the central dome. *Veziirs'* and eunuchs' mosques of the following decades featured variations of the polygonal domed baldachin, while the Şehzade mosque was to provide the model for all such sultanic foundations – including the queen mother's mosque at the Eminönü waterfront – into the middle decades of the eighteenth century.¹¹⁵

Lack of available land and the diminished resources of the founders in an age of recurrent financial crises explain the smaller sizes and contracted functional ranges of foundations established by the Ottoman ruling elite in Istanbul. Its institutional configuration, reminiscent of the Mamluk foundations of medieval Cairo, a small complex housing a *medrese*, the mausoleum of the founder, and a public water dispenser (*sebil*), became the major form of foundation patronage. The complex of the grand *vezir* Sinan Paşa on the city's ceremonial axis and that of the chief white eunuch Gazanfer Ağa abutting the Valens aqueduct represent this trend (Figure 13.26). Sinan Paşa's tenure as the governor of Egypt, during which he sponsored an Ottoman-style congregational mosque in Cairo, may point to the mediation of elite patrons not only in transposing the imperial style to the provinces but also in introducing provincial architectural and urban practices to the capital city.¹¹⁶ Sometimes the classroom of the *medrese* also served as a *mescit*; less frequently, these relatively small complexes also possessed a dervish convent.

(Burlington, Vt., 2006); Nina Cichocki (Ergin), 'The Life Story of the Çemberlitaş Hamam: From Bath to Tourist Attraction,' unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2005.

114 Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, pp. 506–14.

115 Erzen, *Mimar Sinan Dönemi Cami Cepheleri*; Kuban, *Osmanlı Mimarisi*, pp. 381–90.

116 Zeynep [Ahunbay] Nayır, *Osmanlı Mimarlığında Sultan Ahmet Külliyesi ve Sonrası* (Istanbul, 1975), pp. 170–94; Zeynep Ahunbay, 'Cairene sabil-küttab and Its Reinterpretation in Ottoman Architecture', in Deroche, *Art turc/Turkish Art*, pp. 47–52.

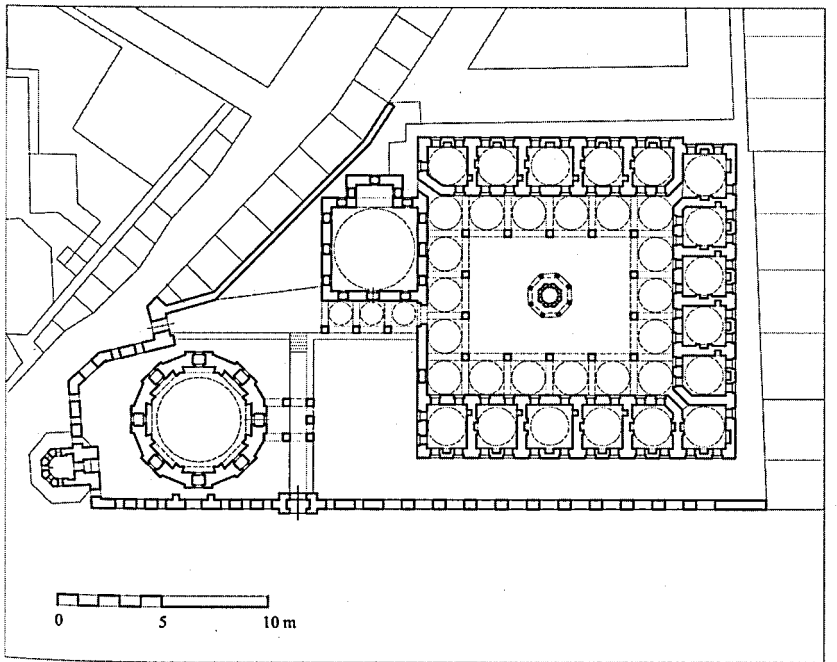
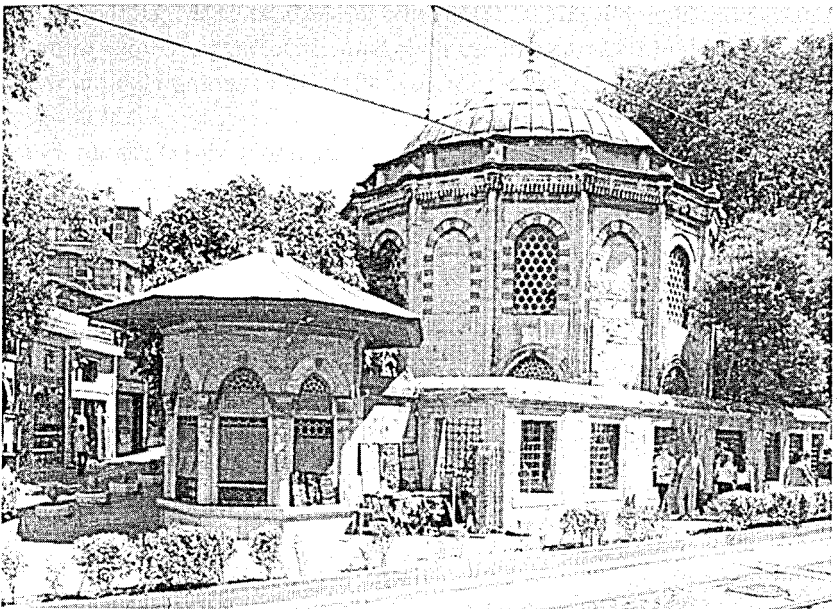


Figure 13.26. Sinan Paşa medrese, mausoleum and sebil complex, Istanbul, 1593, architect Davud Ağa: (a) view from the west, (b) plan. (Gülru Necipoğlu, *Age of Sinan*, p. 509)

A new, more interactive relationship to the urban context shaped these foundations. While the circular forms of their ornate *sebils* jutted out into the street, their window-pierced enclosure walls, often running along a major artery, prominently displayed the mausoleum and the *medrese* within. Minor complexes that engaged the street in their design gave the Divan artery its contiguous architectural form.¹¹⁷

Novel dynamics of rule also changed the uses of the Topkapı Palace. An extensive rebuilding of the palace's harem section in the 1570s and 1580s most clearly reflected the new style of rule of the increasingly sedentary sultan. Here the queen mother Nurbanu and her son inhabited newly built and furnished quarters. Turning the former privy chamber into a space for exhibiting holy relics, Murad III moved the royal residence permanently into the harem. This section of the palace acquired a new spatial organisation, with assemblages of rooms organised around several courtyards and opening into hanging gardens. Its complex, hierarchically ordered layout embodied the intricate hierarchies of the court, including the harem, where the queen mother, the sultan's consorts and the eunuchs wielded growing power and influence.¹¹⁸

Past looking: Picturing the golden age, negotiating the present

The final decades of the sixteenth century are marked by an unprecedented interest in the production of luxury manuscripts on the part of the ruling elite; this trend was part of an increasingly vivacious Ottoman book culture. Presumably the love of Murad III for beautiful books helped to set the fashion for manuscript collecting among his courtiers. In fact, the bibliophile sultan ruled at a time when transformations in the structure of Ottoman rule compelled members of the ruling elite to articulate or to re-define their collective and individual self-image vis-à-vis the broader configuration of power and to insert themselves ever more boldly into the rapidly changing political landscape. While the most prestigious books were still destined for the sultan's private treasury, patronage and ownership of lavishly produced manuscripts became a prestigious sign of membership in the elite. Manuscript patronage and collecting was one channel through which an increasingly wider circle of patrons and intermediaries could negotiate new modes of representation within a rapidly changing world.¹¹⁹

117 Maurice Cerasi, 'The Urban and Architectural Evolution of the Istanbul Divanyolu: Urban Aesthetics and Ideology in Ottoman Town Planning', *Muqarnas* 22 (2005), 189–232.

118 Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, pp. 159–83.

119 On late sixteenth-century transformations and historiography, see Cornell H. Fleischer, *Bureaucrat and Intellectual in the Ottoman Empire: The Historian Mustafâ Âli (1541–1600)*

Multi- or single-volume histories and genealogies of the house of Osman, accounts of recent and contemporary events and world histories integrating Ottomans into a venerable ancient and Islamic past were produced in illustrated copies. Sokollu, the seasoned grand *vezir* of Süleyman's later years, who remained in power through Murad III's early sultanate, had a central role in the initiation of the late sixteenth-century historiographic project. Other prominent actors in this frenzied production were Feridun Ahmed Bey, the head of the palace chancery; Seyyid Lokman, appointed to the post of *şehnameci* in 1569 and active through the early 1590s; and Nakkaş Osman, a master painter at the sultan's court by 1566 and the leading figure in palace-sponsored projects through the 1590s.¹²⁰

Histories in the *şehname* format followed the track opened by the *Süleymanname*. Among them was a volume covering the last years of Süleyman's reign (*Zafername*, 1579), a *Şehname-i Selim Han* (1581) and a *Şehinşahname* (1581) on the reign of Murad III up to 1580. In 1579, court artists completed a serial portrait album of Ottoman sultans, named *Kıyafetü'l İnsaniye fi Şemai'lü'l Osmaniye* ("The Human Physiognomy in the Likenesses of the Ottomans"), which included verbal descriptions of the features, demeanour and endeavours of each individual ruler.

A world history in Turkish, begun during the reign of Süleyman, was completed in 1583. Focusing on the lives of the prophets, with its final section devoted to the Ottoman dynasty, the large-sized and luxurious *Zübdetü't-Tevarih* ("The Cream of Histories") straddles the genres of historical narrative and genealogy. Its paintings include scenes from the lives of the prophets and portraits of caliphs, imams and the Ottoman sultans. Portraits in the *Zübdetü't-Tevarih* partake of the genre of serial portraiture elaborated by the contemporary atelier of Nakkaş Osman. On the other hand, the narrative images present novel interpretations of established norms of Persianate religious and literary iconography, at times transposing the norms of Ottoman historical painting into the realms of myth and ancient history. The initial volume of another dynastic history in Turkish, the *Hünername* ("The Book of Arts and Skills"), conceived in four volumes, was completed in 1584. Continuing, like

(Princeton, N.J., 1986); Cemal Kafadar, 'The Myth of the Golden Age: Post-Suleymanic Transformations in Ottoman Historical Consciousness', in *Süleyman the Second and His Time*, ed. Halil İnalcik and Cemal Kafadar (Istanbul, 1993), pp. 37–48. On Ottoman manuscript production in the context of this transformation, see Necipoğlu, 'The Serial Portraits', pp. 31–44; Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs'. On book ownership, see Lale Uluç, *Turkman Governors, Shiraz Artisans and Ottoman Collectors: Sixteenth Century Shiraz Manuscripts* (Istanbul, 2007), pp. 469–505.

¹²⁰ Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 113–20, Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 83–139.

the *Zübdetü't-Tevarih*, a project initiated and abandoned during the reign of Süleyman I, it presented historical biographies of Ottoman sultans from the founder Osman through Selim I. Completed four years later, the second volume focused on Süleyman.¹²¹

In terms of their thematic range, illustrations belonging to the histories composed in the 1570s and early 1580s were in part closely related to earlier Ottoman historical painting: campaign and siege scenes, enthronements and receptions, and images of the royal hunt predominated. Artists adapted *Shahnama* imagery not only to Ottoman settings but also to Ottoman ideals, and, as in the *Süleymanname*, they explored new visual formulations for significant loci and events.¹²² Numerous images interpreted narrations of the death and funeral of Süleyman and his succession by Selim II, visually underlining the role of Sokollu Mehmed Paşa both as a principal actor of the period and as a patron and intermediary in the production of these illustrated chronicles.¹²³ Painters also celebrated Selim II's restoration of the Hagia Sofia with an image of the building that conflated not only elevation and perspective renderings but also ideal and actual representations of the building's fabric. City images drew upon models used by Piri Reis or the circle of Matrakçı, or at times translated prints into the medium of book painting. Siege and battle scenes often incorporated such topographic representations, such as the many depictions of the conquest of Szigetvar (1566) or the siege of Malta (1565) in the *Şehname-i Selim Han*.

While thematically following earlier Ottoman tradition, these illustrations mediated transformations of the representational idiom. Relatively more open compositions of interior scenes supplanted the rigid frames and frozen formality of the *Süleymanname*. Such images reflected the calculated calm of tightly choreographed events at court, where the size of a figure, its relationship to others and its spatial location still conveyed status and power. An expansive perspective that allowed compelling portrayals of massive military operations or the restrained grandeur of crowded court ceremonials replaced

121 Bekir Kütükoğlu, 'Şehnameci Lokman', in Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan (Istanbul, 1991), pp. 39–48; Serpil Bağcı, 'Visualizing Power: Portrayals of the Sultans in Illustrated Histories of the Ottoman Dynasty', *Islamic Art: Studies on the Art and Culture of the Muslim World* 6 (2009), 113–27; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 113–57; Günsel Renda, 'New Light on the Painters of the *Zubdet al-Tawarikh* in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art in Istanbul', in *IVème Congrès International d'Art Turc, Aix-en-Provence, 10–15 septembre 1971* (Aix-en-Provence, 1976), pp. 183–200; Günsel Renda, 'Chester Beatty Kitaplığındaki *Zübdetü't-tevarih* ve *Minyatürleri*', in Prof. Dr. Bekir Kütükoğlu'na Armağan, pp. 458–506; Necipoğlu, 'The Serial Portraits', pp. 42–4; Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 235–9.

122 Bağcı, 'Visualizing Power'.

123 Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 88–9.

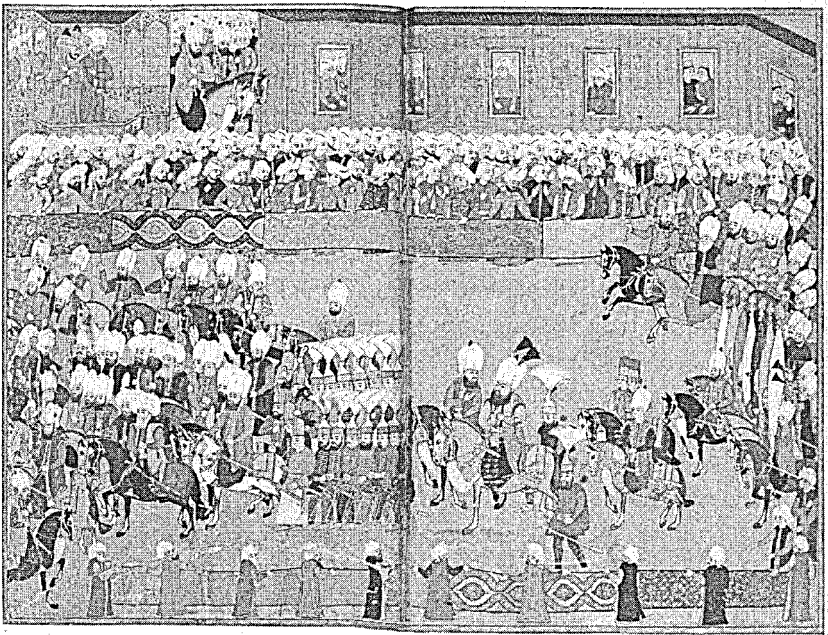


Figure 13.27. Mehmed III returns from the Eger campaign, Ta'likizade, *Egri Fetihnamesi*, 1596–1600. (Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, Istanbul, T.1965, fols. 68v–69r)

the narrower frames of earlier images. Within highly detailed plan-views of the Topkapı Palace and its outer gardens, artists set scenes depicting the busy daily life in the first two courtyards and the private realm of the third court. Figures were now smaller in relation to the architectural or natural settings in which they moved. Tight groupings, multiple axes, a subdued palette of background colours and a limited use of surface ornament in architecture and landscapes created images of greater complexity while at the same time augmenting their legibility. Double-page paintings depicted battlefields, palatial courtyards or interiors, or urban plazas or streets, the breadth and comprehensiveness of their spaces often emphasised by the horizontal stacking of planes (Figure 13.27). Such arrangements appeared through the 1580s and remained a distinguishing feature, particularly of the imperial histories.¹²⁴

Courtly patrons collaborated with the *şehnameci* Lokman and the team of book artists under the direction of Nakkaş Osman in the creation of yet another novel format, namely the royal portrait album. Tightly connected to

¹²⁴ Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 112–53.

the historical deliberation of these decades in its genealogical focus and produced within the same years as the *Zübdetü't-Tevarih*, the *Kıyâfetü'l İnsaniye fi Şemâilü'l Osmaniye* (1579) derives from multiple Timurid, Ottoman and Italian sources to create an iconography of royal portraiture. The surviving documentation concerning this imagery reveals the intricate interconnectedness of a diverse range of cultural spheres, and particularly the complex webs of reciprocity between Ottoman collectors and painters on the one hand and their Italian counterparts on the other. Distinct but related formulations of the Ottoman royal image emerged in Istanbul manuscript illustrations, Venetian oil paintings and Basel prints, to name only the primary centres and media of production.¹²⁵

Further additions to the historiographic corpus introduced thematic and visual novelties to courtly painting. Contemporary and recent history remained the focus of elite patrons, as the writing and illustration of dynastic history became one of the sites where new power dynamics were negotiated, and artists and patrons conveyed the image of an increasingly sedentary sultan.¹²⁶ One of the most lavish productions of the palace ateliers of these decades, the *Surname-i Humayun*, is a narrative of the festival celebrating the circumcision of the crown prince Mehmed in 1582.¹²⁷ This volume contains several hundred double-page paintings, the vast majority of which represent various performances and processions at the Istanbul Hippodrome. Artisan communities, alongside other – largely urban – professional groups, passed before the sultan and his entourage of grandees and prestigious guests, displaying their products or enacting aspects of their profession. While music, dance and theatrical performances had been common to such festivals earlier in the 1500s, the artisan processions and their representation were novelties, underlining the new prominence of craft organisations within the social landscape. Against the unchanging backdrop of the iconic sultan and his grandees, the successive images of the *Surname* captured an immensely colourful show. Taken together, the paintings and the text added up to an imperial self-portrait of a different kind, an ideal construction of the Ottoman social order as choreographed by the palace, at the ceremonial centre of the capital city.

125 Lokman Çelebi, *Kıyâfetü'l- İnsâniyye fi Şemâilü'l-'Osmâniyye* (Istanbul, 1987); Raby, 'From Europe to Istanbul'; Filiz Çağman, 'Portrait Series of Nakkaş Osman', in Kangal, *The Sultan's Portrait*, pp. 164–87.

126 See Woodhead, 'An Experiment in Official Historiography', and Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', for different interpretations.

127 Nurhan Atasoy, *1582 Surname-i Hümayun: An Imperial Celebration* (Istanbul, 1997); Derin Terzioğlu, 'The Imperial Circumcision Festival of 1582: An Interpretation', *Muğarnas* 12 (1995), 84–100.

Creating visual and textual portraits of Süleyman as the ideal ruler and of the empire as a sphere of just rule, the second volume of Lokman's *Hünername* (1589) resonated with the mood for historical reflection characteristic of the late sixteenth century. This volume focused on the bravery and power of the sultan as reflected in his skills as a hunter, his military prowess and conquests, his justice, and his benevolence reflected in charitable works; significantly, the latter were situated in the eastern territories, whose institutional and visual Ottomanisation had been a concern during Süleyman's reign. In consequence, the book, and the series to which it belonged, has been interpreted as an Ottoman version of the mirrors-for-princes, where narrative paintings visualised the abstract qualities attributed to the sultan and to Ottoman imperial ideology at large.¹²⁸

When preparing the text (1592) and illustrations of the *Şehinşahname* (before 1597–8) authors and artists adjusted to the increasingly sedentary lifestyle of the sultan. While military scenes largely repeated the formal conventions devised in the 1580s, it was now not the monarch who appeared as the commander of his armies but rather one of his *vezirs* or governors.¹²⁹ The court historiographer Talikizade created the last *şehnams* of the sixteenth century; their paintings have been attributed to a courtier who would rise to high administrative posts, namely Nakkaş Hasan or Hasan Paşa.¹³⁰ Unlike Haydar Reis, another courtier-painter who worked independently of the palace workshops, Hasan followed, and in part transformed, the conventions of courtly painting that had taken shape, particularly during Nakkaş Osman's tenure as master of the ateliers. His topographic representation of the princely capital of Manisa, and his image of Mehmed III's urban procession in celebration of the victorious Eger campaign, develop representational conventions formulated by the painters that had illustrated the work of Matrakçı in the 1530s and by Nakkaş Osman in the 1580s.

At the same time as patrons and painters transformed the thematic range of the *şehname* series, they also created a new sub-genre of illustrated history, the *gazaname*, narrating in text and image mostly the military exploits of *vezir*-commanders. Mustafa Ali's *Nusretname* (1581, presentation copy 1584), a narrative of the Persian campaign under the command of the author's patron Lala Mustafa Paşa, featured images of military confrontations, receptions and fortress restorations. Scenes from the commander's eastward journey

¹²⁸ Bağcı, 'Visualizing Power'.

¹²⁹ Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 210–30.

¹³⁰ Zeren Akalay, 'XVI. Yüzyıl Nakkaşlarından Hasan Paşa', in *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi İstanbul, 15–20 X. 1973: Tebliğler* (Istanbul, 1979), vol. 3, pp. 607–26.

included a sumptuous banquet near İznik and a meeting with the sheikh of the Mevlevi dervishes at Konya.¹³¹ Lacking the spatial expansiveness and the visual economy that marked paintings in the Lokman volumes created under the direction of Nakkaş Osman, the *Nusretname* nevertheless shared the late sixteenth-century pictorial idiom of the sultan's court. In the process, artists and patrons created a new image of the commander, deliberately conflated with royal iconography to imbue the *vezir's* public persona with attributes of sultanic power. While the pictorial idioms of the several illustrated *gazanames* created in the 1580s and 1590s varied considerably, they all translated the Ottoman *şehname* imagery into the accounts of *vezirs* and their exploits.

In the changing political configuration, eunuchs of the court gained a hitherto unprecedented visibility. Vested with increasing authority and power primarily through their roles as intermediaries for sultans and dynastic women, eunuchs participated as patrons and intermediaries in artistic ventures. The chief black eunuch Mehmed Ağa was involved in ambitious projects of the court workshops, such as the *Surname* and the *Zübdetü't-Tevarih*, and was the main intermediary for the production of an illustrated *gazanama*, the *Gencine-i Feth-i Gence*. Gazanfer Ağa, chief white eunuch of the inner palace and an important figure in Ottoman cultural patronage at the turn of the seventeenth century, was likewise an intermediary in the production of Mustafa Ali's *Nusretname*. He was also involved in one of the final Ottoman *şehnames*, the *Egri Fethi Şehnamesi*, which as already noted narrated Mehmed III's conquest of the Hungarian fort of Eger, in an attempt to revive the image of the warrior sultan of earlier decades. At the same time, Gazanfer contributed to the new expansion of book culture at the court, sponsoring illustrated copies of literary and esoteric works such as the translations of Cami's *Baharistan* and al-Bistami's *Miftah al-jafri al-jami*. Zeyrek Ağa, another highly influential courtier, a eunuch of the harem who also served as *ağa* of the inner treasury, proudly announced his patronage on the gold-stamped and jewel-encrusted binding of one of the most sumptuous manuscripts of the period, the *Divan* of Murad III, a frame of ultimate aesthetic and material value for the sultan's poetry.¹³²

Unlike the histories and conquest narratives of earlier decades, which only existed in single copies destined for the imperial treasury, after the 1580s palace

131 Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 167–71; Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 144–62.

132 On the *Divan* of Murad III, dated 1588, see Roxburgh, *Turks*, p. 458; Zeren Tanındı, 'Bibliophile Aghas (Eunuchs) at Topkapı Sarayı', *Muğarnas* 21 (2004), 333–43; Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 202ff. On Zeyrek as *ağa* of the inner treasury, see Çağman, 'Mimar Sinan Döneminde', p. 74.

workshops at times made multiple copies of particular works, underlining the growing range, number and visibility of patrons and intermediaries. Sharing a focus on Ottoman genealogy, the *Zübdeü't-Tevarih* and *Şemalname* became the property of individuals occupying the highest echelons of the Ottoman hierarchy; books of literary and esoteric subject matter, too, survive in multiple copies. Dynastic women also came to act as patrons of illustrated manuscripts: in 1582, Murad III's two daughters, Ayşe and Fatma Sultan, each received an illustrated copy of Suudi's book on astrology and divination, translated into Turkish as *Matali'us-Sa'ade*.

Illustrated works of religious, literary, mystical and esoteric content attracted courtly attention, particularly from the 1580s onwards. *Zübdeü't-Tevarih's* world historical framework already had included a life of the Prophet; an illustrated version of the six-volume *Siyer-i Nebi* on the same topic, designed to hold 814 paintings, was completed in 1595.¹³³ It is worth noting that in the contemporary Safavid world there was an obvious interest in illustrated narratives of Muhammad's life as well; probably in both realms religious history was appropriated for current political agendas. The most extensive iconographic programme narrating the life of the Prophet in the entire Islamic world, the *Siyer-i Nebi*, drew on diverse sources to create a novel religious imagery.¹³⁴ Visualising Mustafa Darir's late fourteenth-century Turkish text, artists placed considerable emphasis on the miracles of the prophet Muhammad and the actions of his son-in-law Ali. Flaming haloes and veiled faces underlined the sanctity of the Prophet and his immediate family. With Safavid paintings depicting scenes from Muhammad's life, these images thus shared a degree of iconophobia; however, while in Iranian images Ali also appeared with a veil, Ottoman artists and patrons did not allow him this emblem of holiness. Taken together, these images provide a glimpse into new formulations in pictorial representation across the Shi'ite-Sunni divide.

Religious and esoteric works and the literature on wonders (*acaib*) favoured in courtly circles underlined the increasing preference for Turkish, whether they were original works or translations from Persian and Arabic. One such translation was Abd al-Rahman al-Bistami's *Miftah al-jafr al-jami* ("The Key to Comprehensive Prognostication"), a compendium of apocalyptic and prophetic texts in wide circulation in Ottoman courtly circles already in the 1520s

¹³³ Zeren Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı* (Istanbul, 1984); Rachel Milstein, Karin Rührdanz and Barbara Schmitz, *Stories of the Prophets: Illustrated Manuscripts of Qisas al-Anbiya'* (Costa Mesa, Calif., 1999).

¹³⁴ Karin Rührdanz, 'The Illustrated Manuscripts of the Athar al-Muzaffar: A History of the Prophet', in Hillenbrand, *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars*, pp. 201-16.

and 1530s, resonant with the messianic image that Süleyman cultivated in the earlier part of his reign. Following perhaps a surge of millennial expectation at the approaching end of the tenth Muslim century, courtly patrons and artists turned once more to al-Bistami's text, of which they commissioned a number of illustrated copies at the very end of the 1500s.¹³⁵ Signs of the approaching end of time, wondrous creatures encountering ordinary human beings, the siege and conquest of Cairo, Aleppo, Jerusalem and Constantinople, and battles between the Mahdi and infidels constituted the overarching pictorial themes of *Tercüme-i miftah-ı cifrî'l-cami*. Their representations often conflated aspects of Ottoman history with apocalyptic signs and the image of the Mahdi with that of Ottoman rulers. A double portrait of Süleyman with his grand *vezir* and confidante İbrahim Paşa, with a textual reference to the latter's demonic character, resonated with the early years of Süleyman's reign.¹³⁶

A related genre receiving considerable attention at the turn of the century was the cosmographic and geographic *acaib*. The well-liked "wonders" literature of the medieval Islamic world, particularly Qazvini's *Adja'ib al-makhlûqat wa ghara'ib al-mawjudat* ("Wonders of Creation and Marvels of Existence"), originally in Arabic, now appeared in Persian and Turkish versions. In the 1550s, court painters had begun but not completed an illustrated copy; in the final decade of the century, their successors finished the project, adapting the rich iconography of "wonders" to the Ottoman idiom.¹³⁷

As already noted in the context of the *Surname-i Hümayun*, urban life and settings acquired a new visibility in the courtly manuscript painting of those years. Illustrated works covering a wide range of subject matter and genres, not always historical in character, betray this new interest. One copy of the *Tercüme-i miftah-ı cifrî'l-cami* contains an image of Cairo quite remote from the apocalyptic theme of the narrative and instead resonates with a much-favoured topic of the time: boats on the Nile carry men and a woman enjoying cups of coffee in a serene scene of leisure, surrounded by coffee-houses on the banks of the river (Figure 13.28).¹³⁸ A double-page painting in Suudi's *Matali'üs-Sa'ade* features under each planet persons and professions (*kimesne ve taife*); this series of portraits ranges from sultan to porter,

135 Cornell H. Fleischer, 'Ancient Wisdom and New Sciences'; Bahattin Yaman, 'Osmanlı Resim Sanatında Kıyamet Alametleri', unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Hacettepe University (2002); Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 196–200.

136 Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, p. 198.

137 Karin Rührdanz, 'Qazvini's 'Aja'ib al-Makhlûkât in Illustrated Timurid Manuscripts', *Studia Iranica* 26 (2002), 473–84; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 200–5.

138 İstanbul Üniversitesi Kütüphanesi, TY 6624, fol. 126b. See also Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, T. 439, fol. 9a, in Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, p. 234.

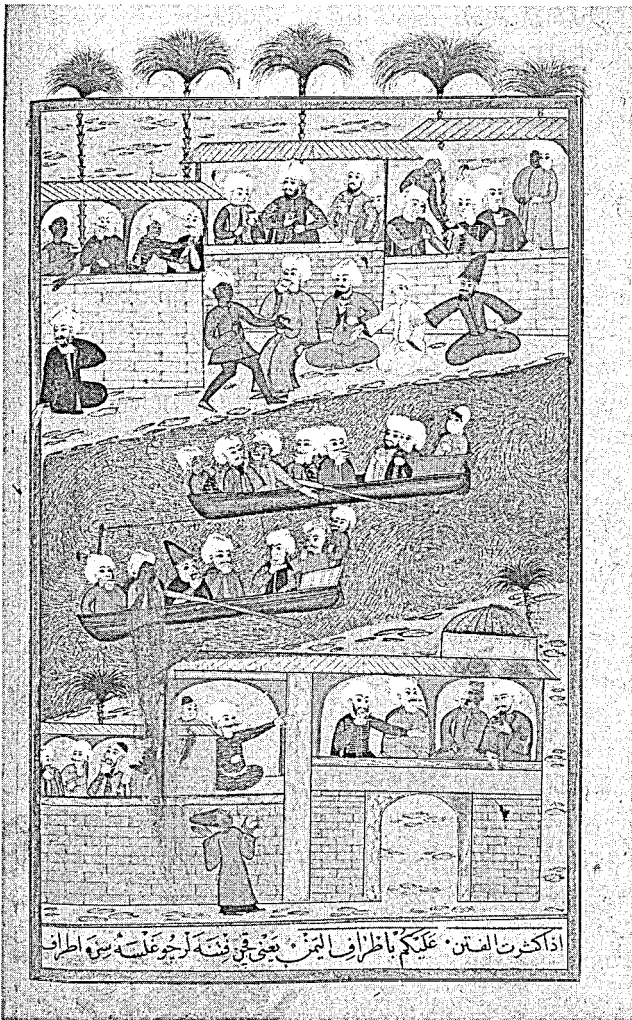


Figure 13.28. Cairo: coffee drinkers in boats and coffeehouses on the banks of the Nile, Şerif bin Seyyid Muhammed, *Tercüme-i Miftah-ı Cifri'l-Cami*, 1595–1600. (Istanbul University Library, T.6624, fol. 126v)

builder, candlemaker, fisherman and farmer. An illustrated copy of *Tercüme-i Baharistan-ı Cami* (ca. 1600) contains an abundantly detailed image of a grocer's shop. Resonant with the rise of street and genre scenes in contemporary Safavid painting, such themes also invite comparison with imagery in albums prepared in Istanbul primarily for European visitors and readers that

feature the capital's central urban settings and portray its inhabitants across the socio-political hierarchy. We possess references to a book market at the Bayezid II complex at the edge of Istanbul's commercial sprawl, which was one of the places where artists produced such works for sale. The increasing volume and circulation of single-page paintings and albums containing images that do not illustrate a particular text also attest to the emergence of new trends in the production and consumption of pictorial arts in the Ottoman world.¹³⁹

A multiplicity of interaction networks informed pictorial representation. Numerous book production centres with diverse visual idioms reflect the vivacity of contemporary book culture and the intensity of elite patronage. Cities in the empire's eastern provinces, such as Aleppo and particularly Baghdad, emerged as loci of luxury book production and painting. During his tenure in Aleppo, Mustafa Ali commissioned illustrated copies of two of his works, the *Nusretname* and the *Nushatu's-Selatin*; the illumination and paintings of these works betray an affinity with the visual idiom of Ottoman court art. In Baghdad, he commissioned a third work, the *Cami al-Buhur*, narrating the princely circumcision ceremonies of 1582, but the work remained unfinished.¹⁴⁰ This mishap notwithstanding, Baghdad, frontier city between the Ottoman and Safavid realms, with a revered political, intellectual and religious past, close to Alid sites of pilgrimage, possessed a vastly productive school of painting. Most popular were literary works of a religious nature; lives of Ali and his family, stories of martyrdom in Karbala and works on Islamic history were illustrated with lively narrative scenes. Poetry compilations, including those of Fuzuli and Baki, featured images of courtly gatherings.¹⁴¹ Baghdad's painters also produced a set of *silsilenames*, genealogies of prophets, saints and monarchs starting with Adam and closing with the current Ottoman dynasts. Their portraits based on court products such as the

139 Lale Uluç, 'Majälis al-'Ushshâq: Written in Herat, Copied in Shiraz, Read in Istanbul', in *M. Uğur Derman 65th Birthday Festschrift*, pp. 569–603; Leslie Meral Schick, 'Ottoman Costume Albums in a Cross-Cultural Context', in Déroche, *Art turc/Turkish Art*, pp. 625–8; Leslie Meral Schick, 'The Place of Dress in Pre-Modern Costume Albums', in *Ottoman Costumes: From Textile to Identity*, ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Istanbul, 2004), pp. 93–101; Franz Babinger, *Papierhandel und Papierbereitung in der Levante* (n.p., 1931).

140 Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, p. 248.

141 Karin Rührdanz, 'The Role of the Urban Ateliers in Ottoman Miniature Painting since the End of the Sixteenth Century', in *Aspects of Ottoman History: Papers from CIEPO IX, Jerusalem*, ed. Amy Singer and Amnon Cohen (Jerusalem, 1994), pp. 75–83, Rachel Milstein, *Miniature Painting in Ottoman Baghdad* (Costa Mesa, Calif., 1990); Filiz Çağman, 'XVI. Yüzyıl Sonlarında Mevlevi Dergahlarında Gelişen bir Minyatür Okulu', in *I. Milletlerarası Türkoloji Kongresi*, vol. 3, pp. 651–77.

Zübdetü't-Tevarih and the *Şemalname*, the artists' audiences possibly included members of the extended imperial household.¹⁴²

Given such connections between the court in Istanbul and workshops in provincial capitals, Baghdad emerged as a site of Safavid–Ottoman encounters and convergences. Partaking in the linguistic re-orientation of Ottoman court culture in the late sixteenth century, a significant portion of the illustrated manuscripts produced in Baghdad were written in Turkish, while literary works in Persian retained their popularity as well. The visual language of narrative painting, on the other hand, differed sharply from the conventions and visual choices of the court artists in Istanbul. With crowded and animated scenes of multi-focal action preferably taking place under a high horizon line, large figures, dynamic compositions that often flow into the margins, bright and saturated colours, rich surface ornament and many architectural representations, Baghdad painting in the late sixteenth century was akin to contemporary Shirazi and to a lesser extent Khurasani schools. On the other hand, some sartorial and architectural details and modes of grouping figures underline the images' connection to the Ottoman centre. The Baghdad governor Hasan Paşa, Sokollu Mehmed's son, sponsored at least three such manuscripts. His involvement underlines the cultural connections between that city and Istanbul and evinces the growing interest of Ottoman elites in expanding the thematic and material range of their book collections. Networks allowing the acquisition of artwork extended beyond the sultan's domains, as exemplified by the Istanbul elite's marked predilection for products of the Shiraz workshops through the late 1500s.¹⁴³

Created at the turn of the seventeenth century, the wall paintings of a Christian merchant's mansion in Aleppo demonstrate the existence of yet another network of provincial painting ateliers and patronage, connecting the Ottoman centre to cities within and beyond the sultan's realm. Here, artists transposed images of courtly assembly and portrayals of heavenly creatures from Persianate books onto the densely painted panels of an audience hall, juxtaposed them with biblical scenes, and immersed this remarkably mixed iconography into an extraordinary combination of decorative ornament of Mamluk, Persian and Ottoman derivation.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Serpil Bağcı, 'From Adam to Mehmed III: Silsilename', in Kangal, *The Sultan's Portrait*, pp. 188–201.

¹⁴³ Milstein, *Miniature Painting*, pp. 110–11; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 253–9; Uluç, *Turkman Governors*.

¹⁴⁴ Julia Gonnella and Jens Kröger (eds.), *Angels, Peonies, and Fabulous Creatures: The Aleppo Room in Berlin* (Berlin, 2002); Rührdanz, 'The Role of the Urban Ateliers'.

*Inserting the author into picture and text: An expanding
discourse on the arts*

Group portraits depicting the multiple authors of illustrated manuscripts constitute a significant addition to the Ottoman iconographic repertory in the late 1500s. Prominently placed on the opening or closing pages of the book at issue, these images are at once unmistakable assertions of authorship and signs of membership in the Ottoman elite (Figure 13.29). At the same time, such portraits in the setting of a study underline the collaborative nature of book production, where authorial roles often varied and overlapped.¹⁴⁵ The earliest group portrait featuring a painter is the frontispiece of Şükri-i Bidlisi's *Selimname* (ca. 1530); it was possibly inspired by a similar author portrait placed on the closing pages of the *Divan-ı Husaini*, created in Herat. Not repeated by Ottoman painters of the following decades, such images became more frequent in the late 1500s.¹⁴⁶ Another *Selimname*, composed by Lokman for Selim II, contains a group portrait with Lokman himself, in addition to Ahmed Feridun Bey and Şemseddin Karabaği, a bureaucrat and a scholar, influential in the conceptualisation of the work. Slightly smaller in scale and hence of lower status, there appear the painters Osman and Ali, who devised the iconographic programme in collaboration with the author. Copies of the *Şehname-i Selim Han* and Taşköprizade's *Şaka'ik al-Numaniye* all feature portraits of authors and artists. A portrait of the *şehname* writer Talikizade by Nakkaş Hasan ends the *Şehname-i Humayun* (1596–1600), and another work of Talikizade features a group portrait of author, painter and calligrapher. Eulogies to the art of the painters Osman and Hasan Paşa on the closing pages of imperial histories by Lokman and Talikizade attest to the growing visibility of the men responsible for these most prestigious products of the court scriptorium.¹⁴⁷

It may not be coincidental that Mustafa Ali completed his *Menakıb-ı Hünerveran* within the same years that the painter Sai Çelebi collaborated with Sinan to create the latter's autobiography. *Menakıb-ı Hünerveran* is a biographical dictionary of calligraphers and artists of the book modelled on Timurid and Safavid treatises and particularly the *Risala-i Kutbiya* of Kutb al-Din Muhammad Yazdi, whom Ali had met in Baghdad. Ali may also have

¹⁴⁵ Roxburgh, *The Persian Album*, pp. 85ff.; Fetvacı, 'Viziers to Eunuchs', pp. 20–1, 121–6; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 118–19.

¹⁴⁶ Şükri-i Bidlisi, *Selimname*, TSM H 1597–98, ca. 1530; Atıl, *Süleymanname*, p. 77 n. 43; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 63–4, 118–19, 182–5.

¹⁴⁷ Filiz Çağman, 'Nakkaş Osman in Sixteenth Century Documents and Literature', in Déroche, *Art Turc/Turkish Art*, pp. 197–206; Bağcı et al., *Ottoman Painting*, pp. 181–4.



Figure 13.29. Group portrait of Ahmed Karabaği, Seyyid Lokman, Ahmed Feridun and the painters Üstad Osman and Nakkaş Ali; Seyyid Lokman, *Şehname-i Selim Han*. (Topkapı Palace Library, A. 3595, fol. 9r)

drawn inspiration from Ottoman biographical dictionaries of poets, which, from the mid-1500s onwards, included short biographies of court artists such as Şahkuli and Nigari, offering commentaries on their art alongside samples of their poetry. The *Menakıb* closely followed the established genre of the biographical dictionary to comment on the styles of calligraphy and book arts in which the subjects had been proficient but also on the various techniques and modes of depiction that these artists had used.

Ali's biographies positioned Ottoman calligraphers and artists, establishing their genealogical links and inter-relationships with teachers and colleagues from the Iranian and Ottoman worlds and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Ali's work simultaneously connected certain artists of Rum to their Persian counterparts, while at the same time differentiating them; his wide geographic horizons encompassed Nishabur, Herat, Mashhad, Isfahan, Shiraz, Tabriz, Baghdad, and of course Istanbul. His portrayal of complex webs of patronage and apprenticeship and his emphasis on familial links underline the interconnectedness of book artists across temporal and spatial boundaries. Simultaneously, his frequent remarks on regional and urban distinctions shed a strong light on his – and

his contemporaries' – preoccupation with the shape and lineage of a Rumi identity.

The set of autobiographical texts composed by Sai in collaboration with the aged Sinan culminates in two complete works, the *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye* and the *Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan*. Unlike Mustafa Ali, who wrote within the established genre of the biographical dictionary, Sai and Sinan straddled a variety of literary genres in portraying the chief architect.¹⁴⁸ These texts and their preparatory versions offer a biography that underlined the making of the architect's professional persona and his relations to sultans and grandees. With comments on design and construction, and with the appended lists of works for which Sinan claimed responsibility, the autobiographies negotiate norms of authorship in a world of corporate, collaborative and largely anonymous production. While only one surviving inscription carries the name of the chief architect, Sinan's and Sai's focus on authorship was perhaps the response to an emerging conjuncture: Davud Ağa, Sinan's successor, would leave his name on three public and private structures completed before and during his much shorter tenure. In the inscription he composed for Sinan's tomb, Sai summed up the architect's achievements enumerated and elaborated in the autobiographies, transposing their authorial exertions from the confines of the manuscripts onto the street near the Süleymaniye.¹⁴⁹

Sharing "declinist" comments on the lack of skill, talent and elite encouragement, Sinan's autobiographies and Ali's biographies of artists respond to changes in courtly patronage that had immediate implications for their careers. These texts at the same time reflect an increasingly vivacious world of artistic consumption and commentary. Sai and Sinan reveal their expectations for aesthetic and technical appreciation through recurrent references to discerning viewers and "possessors of skill and vision". Comparable references to a learned and discerning public also imbue the writing of Ali, who discusses audiences and markets for calligraphies and albums, discerning connoisseurs of the book arts (*ehl-i kalem, ehl-i rakam*), ambitious collectors spending fortunes on albums, and stylistic innovations in calligraphy and pictorial representation. Ali also focuses on the personae of certain designers and on debates regarding the value of the works produced in the lands of Rum compared to their counterparts in the Iranian realm.¹⁵⁰ Alongside texts such

¹⁴⁸ Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Sources, Themes, and Cultural Implications of Sinan's Autobiographies', in Necipoğlu, Crane and Akın, *Sinan's Autobiographies*, pp. vii–xvi.

¹⁴⁹ Yüksel, *Osmanlı Mimarisinde Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Devri*, pp. 371–2.

¹⁵⁰ Necipoğlu, Crane and Akın, *Sinan's Autobiographies*; Mustafa Ali, *Menakib*. For parallels in the Persianate world, see David J. Roxburgh, *Prefacing the Image*, p. 125; Qadi Ahmad Qummi

as Taczade Mehmed's technical treatise on calligraphy and Cenderezade Mehmed's preface to the album of Murad III, Sinan's autobiographies and the *Menakib* mark the elaboration of a critical vocabulary and a set of tropes that captured Ottoman appraisals of and responses to arts and architecture.¹⁵¹

In place of a conclusion

Through the expanding discourse on the arts, Ottoman literati and artists participated in the broader current of reckoning, with the world and with the self, which was integral to the late sixteenth-century landscape of change and re-ordering. In the world to which Mustafa Ali, Sai and Sinan turned their nostalgic gazes, moments of refinement, equilibrium and relative closure had been reached. The 1500s created a regional visual idiom distinct from, but at the same time interconnected to various degrees with, the visual culture of the larger Islamic and Mediterranean worlds. The enduring yet flexible architectural and decorative vocabulary of this period would constitute the basis of explorations and re-interpretations by Ottoman artists and architects of the following centuries. Towards the end of the 1500s, however, the strict visual codes formulated by Sinan had begun to dissolve in the face of political rearrangements and in response to new formal predilections. Already by 1605, through the insertion of fragments drawn in perspective into otherwise flat pictorial planes and through radical contrasts in the scales of his figures and their settings, the painter Ahmed Naksî had complicated and profoundly destabilised the established spatial order of Ottoman painting.

b. Mir Munshi, *Calligraphers and Painters: A Treatise by Qadî Ahmad, Son of Mîr Munshî* (circa A.H. 1015/A.D. 1606), trans. Vladimir Minorsky (Washington, D.C., 1959), p. 175.

¹⁵¹ Wheeler M. Thackston (ed.), *Album Prefaces and Other Documents in the History of Calligraphers and Painters* (Leiden, 2001), pp. 29–31; Froom, 'A Muraqqa', pp. 41–59.