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THE three Islamic empires of this exhibition, Ottoman (1299-1923), Safavid (1501-1722) and Mughal (1526-1858), shared a common cultural heritage forged by the former Islamic dynasties of the geographic region of premodern Greater Iran (parts of Transoxiana, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq), the last propagators of which was the Timurids (1396-1510). The second quarter of the sixteenth century, when the Safavids had conquered what had been the Timurid heartland in Iran, Ottoman sultan Süleyman's armies were pushing the borders of his Empire to their widest expanse and Timur's grandsons were establishing the Mughal dynasty in India, witnessed the closest links in the art and culture of these three empires.

Modern sensibility accepts the Safavids as the natural heirs of the former dynasties of Iran (the modern state) for territorial reasons, and that the Mughals, whose dynastic founder was the grandson of Timur himself, had close family ties to the Timurids. It is somewhat harder to connect the Ottomans, who ruled in Anatolia and the Balkans, with the Timurids. The Ottomans, tracing their origin back to the Oghuz tribe of Central Asia, had common roots with the various Turco-Mongol dynasties that originated in Central Asia and had then ruled the Iranian plateau (the geographical region of greater Iran) ever since the tenth century. The close cultural ties that were felt by the Ottomans for their Central Asian cousins, the Timurids, were more overtly manifest in their arts of the book, especially in the last quarter of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth.

Modern scholarship unanimously agrees that the early formation of the arts of the book at the Safavid capital Tabriz was a synthesis of the Shiraz-Tabriz Timurid-Turkman traditions with the Herat Timurid ones, since the founder of the dynasty, Shah Ismail I (1502-1524), reunited western and eastern Iran. The Akkoyunlu capital Tabriz and the royal *kitabkhana* there retained their functions under the Safavids. Shah Ismail's oldest son, the crown prince Tahmasp was sent as governor to the last Timurid capital Herat. He returned to Tabriz accompanied by many artists of the book trained at the royal Timurid *kitabkhana*, including the celebrated artist Bihzad of the late Timurid ruler Husain Mirza's court, who was made the head of the

Safavid *kitabkhana*.[1] The arts of the book were given importance during the first half of the sixteenth century under Safavid patronage, particularly in the first half of Shah Tahmasp's reign (1527-1576), and constitute the primary source for establishing the aesthetics of the period, especially since early Safavid architectural activity cannot be traced.

Priscilla Soucek succinctly summarizes the three links between a Timurid-based aesthetic and the arts of the book in Mughal India; the dynasty's interest in stressing their genealogical and cultural links to their Timurid ancestors, their passionate collection of volumes connected with Timurid artists and patrons, and lastly the migration of artists raised in the Timurid traditions of the arts of the book to Mughal India.[2] A decade after the Mughal ruler Humayun b. Babur (1530-1540 and 1555-1556) acceded to the throne he was ousted from power. He went into exile to the Safavid court of Shah Tahmasp, who helped him regain his throne. When it was time for Humayun to leave the Safavid court in 1544 he invited several of the Shah's artists to return to India with him and at least two, Mir Sayyid Ali and Abd al-Samad, joined him in 1549 at Kabul where he resided, and accompanied him to Delhi in 1555.[3] Although it is widely believed that the genesis of Mughal painting is closely linked to Humayun's stay in the Safavid court, Chahryar Adle presents additional evidence for an active *kitabkhana* at Kabul even before this event, and demonstrates that the Safavid artist Dust Muhammad, the painter,[4] went to the Kabul court of Humayun's brother Kamran Mirza soon after 942 (1535-36).[5] Throughout most of the sixteenth century Safavid-Mughal relations were peaceful, and frequent exchanges in the foundation period of the dynasty helped promote a Persian based Mughal style, which later evolved into a distinct Mughal mode with its own synthesis of elements drawn from Persian, Indian and European sources (ill. 1, 2).

The Ottomans' cultural links to the Timurids are less apparent, partly because of the geographic regions they ruled on either end of the Islamic world, and partly because of the battle of Ankara of 1402 when Timur's armies defeated the reigning Ottoman sultan, Bayezid I and overran Anatolia. Although this threw the Ottoman state into the political confusion of internecine struggle among the princes, it was resolved within a decade and the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 marked its emergence as an empire into the historic scene. Around this time the Timurid princes were fighting among themselves for succession rights, and the house of Timur lost western Iran to the Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu Turkmans. The Timurids were, however, the last great dynasty of steppe origin, the last link of the Turco-Mongol traditions of Central Asia, which is part of the reason why the Ottomans felt a special affinity to the house of Timur.

Although the battle of Ankara at first seemed like a disastrous setback for the Ottoman state, in the long run it had cultural benefits, because many of the talented individuals Timur transported to Samarkand as captives returned after observing and being inspired by Timurid culture to put into practice the new ideas and techniques they had learned.

During the reign of Mehmed II (1451-1481), the Ottoman court, in their newly conquered capital Istanbul, continued attracting skilled individuals of various backgrounds. The Sultan's generous patronage lured artists, poets and scholars from both the Ottoman domains and the Islamic world in general. According to the Ottoman chronicler of the period, Tursun Beg, architects and engineers came to Mehmed's court from the lands of the Arabs and Persians (*Acem*), as well as the Ottomans (*Rum*). He also mentions that builders were imported from Persia (*Acem*) to build the new Ottoman palace in Istanbul.[6]

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[1] Dickson and Welch 1979, 1: 27-51.

[2] Soucek 1987, p. 166.

[3] Beach 1987, pp. 8-9.

[4] Not to be confused with Dust Muhammad, the calligrapher; see Adle 1993, pp. 219-296.

[5] Adle 2000, p. 167.

[6] Kırımlı 1981, 96-97; Atasoy and Raby 1989, p. 89; Necipoğlu 1991, p. 14 and 214; Tursun Beg 1978, fols. 58 r and v.

1-2. Mughal lacquered binding with a Safavid youth on one side and a Mughal officer on the other.
Musée du Louvre, on deposit from the Musée des Arts Decoratifs, inv. 22405 a, b.

Scholars, poets, artists and craftsmen from Azarbaijan and Khorasan were especially welcomed in the Ottoman court, where most of the intellectuals were bilingual in Turkish and Persian in this period. Having had to accept the superiority of the Timurid state in 1402, and having surpassed them militarily by the middle of the century, the Ottomans appear to have set themselves the task of surpassing them in the cultural sphere as well. Both bilingual Turkish poets and Persian ones writing only in Persian from Timurid or former Timurid centers such as Herat, Samarkand, Tabriz and Shiraz received great encouragement and favors at the Ottoman court.

The earliest extant Ottoman illustrated manuscripts dating from the reigns of Mehmed II (1451-1481) and his son Bayezid II (1481-1512) show that many artisans from Persia whose names are unknown must have migrated to Istanbul during this period. Their work clearly reflects the style of the manuscripts produced for the eastern neighbors of the Ottomans, the Karakoyunlu and Akkoyunlu Turkman dynasties in Shiraz, with, however, a clear difference; the apparel of the figures reflect contemporary Ottoman fashions and in especially the Bayezid period, they follow a European-based style for architectural depictions, which are given some depth and seem to reflect features that are

3. The Turkmans who tried to be on good terms with the Ottomans "would wear the Qizilbash taj (a special turban worn by the Safavids that was wound around a cap with a tall red baton) or the large Ottoman turban as the occasion demanded." Here Sharaf Khan Bitlisi and his entourage are removing their pointed Qizilbash tajs and wearing Ottoman turbans. Istanbul 1584. Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.1365, fol. 140v.

found in contemporary Ottoman buildings. In some instances the artists create an original composition which closely follows the text rather than the set iconography repeated in numerous earlier Shiraz copies.[7]

Throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries both the Ottomans and the Safavids were ambitious to annex part of each others' lands to expand their own territories. Before the solidification of the Ottoman-Safavid border with the 1639 peace, large groups of people were migrating in both directions. In the words of the Safavid chronicler Iskandar Munshi, there were "many people who tried to be on good terms with both the Ottomans and the Safavids" around this time and migrating Turkmans "would wear the Qizilbash *taj* (a special turban worn by the Safavids that was wound around a cap with a tall red baton) or the large Ottoman turban as the occasion demanded."[8] His words are corroborated by an illustration in the Ottoman historian Mustafa Ali's chronicle of the Ottoman vizier Lala Mustafa Paşa's eastern campaign, *Nusretname* (Topkapı Palace Museum Library H.1365, fol. 140v), in which the Kurdish khan, Sharaf Khan Bidlisi and his close companions are shown donning the Ottoman turban, while their discarded Safavid turbans *(taj-i Haidari)* with the high central baton rest on the floor [ill. 3].

Safavid power had originally depended on Turkman groups from the former Akkoyunlu lands in eastern Anatolia and western Iran. Some had been Ottoman subjects who had crossed over to the Safavid domains, while some had remained to help the Shah annex Anatolia by staging uprisings. The Ottoman sultan Selim I's victory in his decisive battle with Shah Ismail at Çaldıran in 1514, laid these aspirations to rest. This was followed by his son Süleyman's two eastern campaigns (1534-1555), resulting in closer Ottoman-Safavid contacts because of physical proximity during the drawn-out period of conflict.

Selim's temporary occupation of Tabriz in the aftermath of Çaldıran had a significant artistic impact in Istanbul, which was enriched by both the talented individuals and the rich booty he brought back. The great power and prestige that the Ottomans achieved during Süleyman's reign (1521-1562) also drew attention to Istanbul once

[7] Bağcı et al. 2006, pp. 44-45; Yıldırım 2005, p. 100.
[8] Iskandar Munshi 1979, 2, 643 and 717.

again as an attractive source of patronage for all kinds of individuals, including artisans.[9]

The Timurid period of Transoxian and Persian history, essentially the fifteenth century, was one of the high points of medieval Islamic arts and culture, with outstanding schools of Persian and Chaghatay Turkish literature. Its final flowering at the court of Sultan Husain b. Mansur b. Baiqara (1469-1506) in Herat, where both the Sufi poet Abd al-Rahman Jami and statesman poet Ali Shir Nava'i produced their masterworks, was admired by all subsequent Islamic dynasties.

The Herat Timurid palace of Shahrukh (d. 1447), Husain Baiqara (d. 1506) and his son Badi al-Zaman was filled with both Turkish and Persian poets. The mansion of Sultan Husain's childhood companion Ali Shir Nava'i is also reported to have been a "meeting place" for both Turkish and Persian local and visiting intellectuals including Abd al-Rahman Jami, who was a friend of Nava'i. The encouragement and patronage supplied by the Turkic Timurids for Persian literature was perhaps one of the causes of the Ottomans' continuing fascination with it.[10]

The author of the first Ottoman *Tezkire*, Sehi Beg, declares in the introduction of his work, *Heşt Bihişt*, that in writing his own book, he was inspired by Nava'i's *Majalis al-Nafa'is*.[11] In the same *Tezkire*, Sehi Beg never fails to note if one of the poets he writes about went to Persia (*Acem*),[12] which stands for Timurid Herat, rather than the western Iranian centers, such as Tabriz under the Akkoyunlu, since such remarks are often followed by accounts of meetings between the Ottoman poet in question and Nava'i or Jami, who both lived in Herat.[13]

'Ali Shir Nava'i's influence reached its apogee during his lifetime in the Ottoman realm.[14] Ottoman sultans sent him gifts,[15] and Ottoman poets started writing *nazires* to his poems. The most celebrated among them was Ahmed Paşa, who had been both a teacher and a vizier to Sultan Mehmed II and the Bursa sancakbey (governor) of Bayezid II.[16]

Direct cultural exchanges via diplomatic missions also took place. In one instance recorded in a later account by the official Ottoman historian Seyyid Lokman, painters (*nakkaşlar*) were included in a Turanian (Central Asian) embassy to the court of Mehmed II, to make images of the newly completed Ottoman palace (c. 1578-81).[17]

Sixteenth century Ottoman written sources also contain frequent references indicating the Ottoman admiration of the Timurids and particularly the Timurid court of Sultan Husain at Herat. Writing in the 1580s, Ottoman bureaucrat and historian Mustafa Ali coupled Timur's name with Islamic exemplary rulers Alexander the Great and Solomon and likened the Ottoman sultans to Alexander in power (*miklet*), to Solomon in majesty (*şevket*) and to Timur in violence and fierceness (*savlet u celadet*).[18] The poet Fuzuli (d. 1556) completed his *masnavi, Leyla and Mejnun* in 1535-36 at Baghdad, about a year after the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman conquered the city in 1534. Fuzuli dedicated this work, which he composed in Turkish, to the Ottoman governor of Baghdad. In the section where he talks about the great

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[9] We know that the talented individuals who stayed in Istanbul were doing so voluntarily since at the beginning of his reign Süleyman gave permission to the artists deported from Tabriz and Mamluk centers by Selim to return to their homes; Bacque-Grammont 1975, p. 84.

[10] Tekin 2004, 2, 517.

[11] Kut 1978, pp. 76-77.

[12] Ibid., for example on pp. 204 and 319.

[13] Tekin 1995, p. 179-80; Tekin 2004, 2, s. 517.

[14] According to Central Asian sources and *Tezkires* his entourage included many famous literary persons and his literary gatherings (*majlis* or *sohbet*) were open to not only the locals but also those passing by. Szuppe 1999, pp. 103 and 105.

[15] Nava'i mentions in his *Divan* that he had received gifts from the Ottoman Sultans. Tekin 1995, p. 180. Jami wrote a treatise called *Risâle fi'l Vücûd* and sent it to Istanbul by the time Mehmed II had died, but Bayezid II later sent him gifts and invited him to Istanbul. He also sent the poet 1000 *flori* (gold coins) every year for his poetry. Tekin 2004, 2, p. 517.

[16] Levend 1965-68, 1, p. 251.

[17] Lokman, fols. 14v-15r; see Necipoğlu 2006, pp. 214 and 299, n.18.

[18] Tietze 1979, p. 38 (translation), p. 121 (transliterated text).

poets of ancient times who enjoyed high patronage, he mentions Husain Mirza as Nava'i's patron and refers to him as the "King of Kings," *("Şehenşeh")* of Khorasan.[19] Fifty years later, in his *Tezkire*, Kınalızade Hasan Çelebi refers to Fuzuli as having written poems in the style of 'Ali Shir Nava'i.[20]

A similar theme is taken up by Mustafa Ali in the second half of the sixteenth century. He made constant references to the courts of both Fatih Sultan Mehmed and Sultan Husain Mirza as the paradigmatic models of statecraft and literary patronage.[21] He considered himself the Ottoman equivalent of Firdausi and Jami, and asked the Ottoman sultan of his time to allow him to be what the poet and vizier Ahmed Paşa had been to the Ottoman Fatih Sultan Mehmed, or Mir 'Ali Shir to the Timurid Sultan Husain Mirza.[22]

As a result of the Ottoman reverence of Husain Mirza's court, and above all his companion Mir 'Ali Shir Nava'i, who wrote primarily in Chaghatay Turkish, Chaghatay dictionaries and grammar books were written specifically to aid the Ottoman readers in understanding Nava'i's writings.[23] Ottoman poets continued writing *nazires* to his poems, and some wrote in Chaghatay Turkish under his influence.[24] Ottoman intellectuals and elite collected copies of works stemming from the late fifteenth century Timurid court, with a special emphasis on luxury copies of Jami's and Nava'i's works, as well as Husain Mirza's own *Divan* and a secondary work that was thought to have been penned by Husain Mirza, the *Majalis al-'Ushshaq*.[25]

Nava'i's popularity increased in Istanbul after the last Timurid ruler of Herat, Badi' al-Zaman b. Sultan Husain, to whom Nava'i had dedicated poems, came to live in Istanbul. He had been brought to the Safavid palace of Shah Ismail I in Tabriz after the Safavid takeover of Herat. When the Ottomans occupied Tabriz in 1514, Sultan Selim sent the Timurid prince back to Istanbul along with his courtiers and Herat artists, treating him as a royal guest and allocating him a sum of 1000 *osmanî* a day. Badi' al-Zaman stayed at the Ottoman palace until he died of the plague in 1517.[26] The illustrated Ottoman chronicle *Selimname* from about 1525, which records the events of Sultan Selim I, has a miniature depicting the Timurid prince seated together with Sultan Selim,[27] indicating the privileged status he enjoyed at the Ottoman court.

During the early years of Süleyman's reign several of the court workshops were headed by Persian masters, some of whom had come to Istanbul in the wake of Çaldıran, during his father's reign, but the innovations they introduced in Ottoman art became noticeable only in this period. Three separate trends come to the fore in Ottoman book arts in these years.

Ottoman illustrated manuscripts on the one hand displayed a similar style to the manuscripts illustrated in the Akkoyunlu domains,[28] and on the other to the illustrations of a copy of the *Divan-i Husaini,* the *divan* of Badi' al-Zaman's father, Husain Baiqara, which may have been one of the Timurid prince's books that entered the Ottoman treasury after his death (ill. 4). Its colophon states that it was copied in Herat by the famous Timurid scribe Sultan Ali Mashhadi in *Shaban* 897 (May 1492). The *circa* 1525 *Selimname* in Turkish is one of the Ottoman examples illustrated in this style. The first miniature on fol. 1r, portraying the author of

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[19] Fuzulî, pp. 17-18.

[20] Kınalı-zade, p. 758.

[21] Fleischer 1986, p. 141.

[22] Ibid., pp. 71, 169, and 186.

[23] Köprülü *İA*, 3: 271a; Levend 1965-68, 1, pp. 278-79.

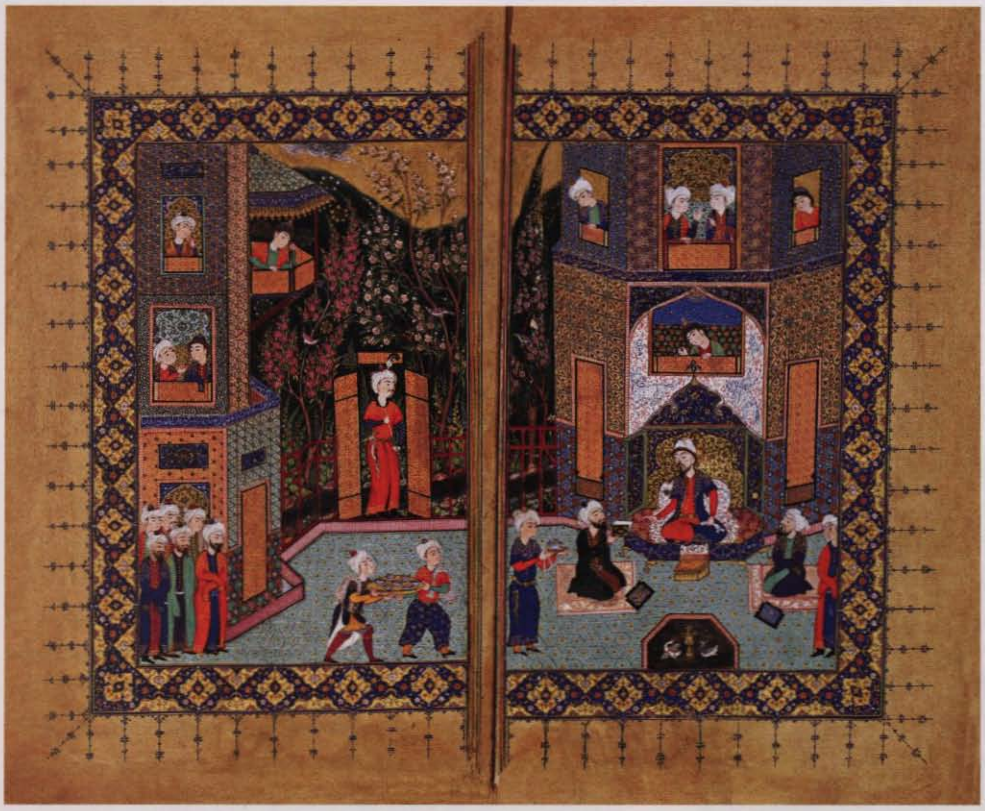
[24] Sertkaya 1970, pp. 133-38. In a second article, Sertkaya published poems written in Chaghatay Turkish by a number of other Ottoman poets. Sertkaya 1971, pp. 171-184; for the Ottoman ideal of competing with the Timurid achievements see Tekin 1995, p. 180.

[25] Uluç 2006, pp. 183-223; Uluç 2000, pp. 569-603.

[26] Çağman 1978, pp. 457-76, from Şükri, fol. 140r.

[27] Şükrî, fol. 140r; Uluç 2006, p. 491, fig. 364.

[28] A Munich copy of the *Yusuf and Zulaikha* of Hamdi (d.1508) in Anatolian Turkish is an especially striking example (Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod.Turc.183). Bağcı, Çağman et al. 2006, p. 64-65, figs. 33-34.



the work Şükri Bitlisi (alive in 1522), its scribe and illustrator (ill. 5) is especially interesting since the 1492 *Divan-ı Husaini* also has a similar page showing its author Husain Baiqara in his studio with the artisans involved in the preparation of his book.[29] Nava'i's works were also illustrated in this style both in western Iran, by now under Safavid control, and in Istanbul by migrant artists. The only noticeable difference between these two groups was the headgear of the protagonists; the Safavid *taj-i Haidari* with its tall red baton, or the larger and rounder Ottoman turban.[30]

Ottoman manuscripts continued to be illustrated in the decorative style of the 1492 *Divan-ı Husaini*'s paintings with their embellished surfaces until the late 1530s. They were mostly copies of the works of Husain Baiqara and Ali Shir Nava'i written in Chaghatay Turkish, but also included Persian works, especially those of Jami. All were versified literary examples reflecting a Khorasan-Timurid based taste in the choice of subject matter as well.

The third trend within the Ottoman *nakkaşhane* inspired by Timurid examples was seen in the *kalem-i siyahi* (pen and ink) drawings and led to the most important stylistic development in Ottoman art of the period. Its first examples are found on five tall rectangular tile panels that had been designed for a brand new pavilion that was built for Süleyman I by the chief court architect (*mimarbaşı*) Alaüddin, known as Acem Alisi (Persian Ali), who was in charge of the renovation of the Topkapı Palace between 1526 and 1529. Alaüddin's pavilion has unfortunately not

4. The manuscript being presented to Sultan Husain Baykara. *Divan* of Sultan Husain Mirza. dated 1492, Herat. Topkapı Palace Museum Library, E.H.1636, fols. 1v-2r.

5. The author, scribe and painter of the book. *Selimname*, Şükri Bitlisi. Istanbul, ca. 1525. Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.1597-98, fol. 1r.

[29] Çağman 1978, fig. 3; for Selimname, see Bağcı et al., p. 61, fig. 30.

[30] Bağcı et al. 2006, p. 56, fig. 26; Çağman 1978, figs. 16 and 17.

6. Single tile panels from the façade of the Circumcision Chamber in the Topkapı Palace. ca. 1526-1529.

survived. The tile panels that were used in its decoration were salvaged, however, and today decorate the facade of the circumcision room (*Sünnet Odası*) in the Topkapı Palace (ill. 6).[31] They were produced on single tile panels measuring 1.25 meters in height with an extraordinary technique and by the cooperation of ceramicists (*kaşigeran*) and painters (*nakkaşan*) from Tabriz.[32] The head of the tile makers (*kaşigeran*), a craftsman called Habib, had also been from Tabriz, but was succeeded by a student trained in the Ottoman palace, Usta Ali *kaşiger* (tile maker). Account books show that in 1527-28 Usta Ali was in charge of a "royal ceramics atelier" (*kaşihane-i hassa*), where tiles were produced for the renovation of the Palace.[33]

The designs of four of the five single-piece tile panels from the facade of the circumcision room (*sünnet odası*) create two pairs in which the design of each panel is mirror reversed in the facing one and the fifth one also has a closely related design. The complexity of composition and the precision of the brush work of the designs point to a close cooperation between the imperial *nakkaşhane* and the *kaşihane-i hassa.*

The designs of these unusually large single piece tile panels are the first and the most spectacular Ottoman examples of the "*saz*" style that was to become popular from the 1540s onwards. According to the *Divan-ı Lugat-ı Türk (Compendium of the Turkic dialects)* completed in 1069 and several dictionaries from the fourteenth century, *saz* is a Turkish word that means a thick forest inhabited by wild beasts and mythical creatures.[34] The meaning of the term "*saz*" determines the theme of the *saz* style that became one of the most popular Ottoman court styles.

From the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards *saz* style images were usually produced in the *kalem-i siyahi* (literally black pen, but signifying a pen or brush and ink drawing) technique, the roots of which go back to China and inner Asia, but it was developed in the Ilkhanid-Mongol courts in western Iran and its most remarkable extant specimens stem from the late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century

[31] The circumcision room was built by Sultan İbrahim in 1641, but the tiles that were reassembled on its facade originate from a number of earlier structures. Necipoğlu 2006, figs. 110-113.

[32] However, there are no Tabriz examples that resemble the dimensions or the technique of these single piece tile panels. Necipoğlu 1990, pp. 146-53.

[33] Necipoğlu 2006, p. 250-251. For Usta Ali *kaşiger*, see Topkapı Palace Museum Archive, D.9706, no. 2, D.9706, no.5 and Başbakanlık Archive MM 17884 and KK 7097; Necipoğlu 1990, pp. 159-65; Uzunçarşılı 1986, p. 60.

[34] Mahir 1987, pp. 124-26; so far the earliest use has been found in a 1640 register of fixed market prices (*narh*); see Kütükoğlu 1983, p. 215.

Ilkhanid, Jalayirid, Timurid and Turkman courts.[35] Many of these examples were collected and preserved in albums.[36] They all feature far eastern animal themes, dragons, simurghs, *chi-lins* (Chinese four-legged creatures) and wild animals in combat, or other enchanted forest creatures like fairies, as well as stories from the well-known Turkish epic *Er-Töştük*.[37] Ottoman *saz* compositions differ from these earlier examples in the style of the flowers they use and the thin, pointed, feathery, serrated-edge leaves impaling each other that are often described as dagger-like (*hançeri*). Since they also depict mythological and wild animals as well as fairies, they reflect the relationship between the term "*saz*" and Turkic mythology with its stories of forests and animal combats.[38]

The proponent of the *saz* style in the Ottoman court was an artist known as Şah Kulu (d. 1556), who accompanied Selim to Amasya on his way back from Çaldıran in 1514. He was later sent to Istanbul and entered the corps of court artisans (*cemaat-i ehl-i hiref*). Although the Ottoman *saz* style is closely linked to its Timurid roots, it was creatively developed in the Ottoman court studios to leave its mark as an Ottoman style.[39] The spectacular designs of the tile panels from the façade of the *sünnet odası* are attributed to Şah Kulu since, besides being one of Sultan Süleyman's highest-paid artists, he was also uniquely favored by the Sultan; he is the only artist who is reported to have been provided with a private studio in the Palace grounds, which Süleyman occasionally visited the artist to watch him at work.[40] In the Ottoman wage register of 1526, his name is the first entry in the list of the painter-designers (*nakkaşan*), indicating that he was the foremost of the artists named there.[41] This has often been interpreted to signify that he was at the head of the court studio (*nakkaşhane*),[42] but a 1545 wage register lists him as *serbölük* (the head of the corps) of Ottoman painter-designers (*Rumiyan bölüğü*).[43] According to contemporary written sources the Ottoman court *nakkaşhane* was divided into two corps of craftsmen in this period; the *Rumiyan* (meaning Ottoman) and the *Acemyan* (meaning Persian, but implying non-Ottoman, since its members included a "Frank" and a "Magyar"). It is interesting to note that Şah Kulu, who was from Baghdad according to the same 1545 wage register, was appointed as the head of the native corps *(Rumiyan)*, although it was well known that he was a student of the famous painter Aqa Mirak at the Tabriz court and had come to Istanbul after Çaldıran.[44] His appointment as the head of the *Rumi* (Ottoman) painter-designers was probably due to the new *saz* style that he created in the *kalem-i siyahi* technique at the Ottoman court, which wrought a bridge between the western Turkic world of the Ottomans and the eastern shamanistic Turkic world of Central Asia.[45] It may also have been because of his origin, which may have been from a Turkic background. Under its Ottoman name *saz* style (*saz yolu*), *kalem-i siyahi* technique reached a new level of perfection in Şah Kulu's work, becoming almost synonymous with his name and inspiring later authors to mention his name as the standard to be attained in this style.[46]

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[35] London 2005, p. 150.

[36] For examples incorporated into several 16th century albums, see Washington DC 1987, pp. 32 and 99-103.

[37] London 2005, p. 150; Curatola 1989, pp. 90-91; Mahir 1993, pp. 279-81.

[38] London 2005, p. 150.

[39] Mahir 1986, pp. 113-31; For Şah Kulu, also see Paris 2007b, pp. 15-16.

[40] Mustafâ 'Alî, p. 65. The only other court master ever consulted by the Sultan was no other than the great architect Sinan.

[41] Topkapı Palace Museum Archives, D.9706; Meriç 1953, p. 3; Mahir 1986, p. 114, n. 2.

[42] Atasoy and Raby 1989, p. 104.

[43] Topkapı Palace Museum Archives, D.9613-3; Meriç 1953, p. 5; Mahir 1986, p. 114, n. 4, for the head of the court studio (*nakkaşbaşı*) see Çağman 1989, p. 35.

[44] Mustafâ 'Alî 1926, p. 65.

[45] London 2005, p. 150.

[46] Müstakimzâde Süleyman Saadeddîn Efendi, *Tuhfe-yi Hattatîn* (İstanbul, 1928), p. 271, calls an 18th century master the Şah Kulu of the time in executing *saz* style, see Mahir 1986, p. 131.

Around 1540-50, a new decorative style inspired by the flowers grown in the Palace gardens and dubbed the *şükûfe* (flower) style began to dominate the Ottoman decorative vocabulary. Its creation is attributed to Kara Memi (d.c. 1570), who illuminated royal manuscripts starting from the 1540s.[47] He was trained in the court workshop under Şah Kulu, whom he succeeded as the head of the Ottoman (*Rumi*) painter-designers in 1552, following Usta Ali *kaşiger*, who had replaced his master, Habib Tabrizi in 1527-28 as head of the ceramicists and the renowned Ottoman architect Sinan, who had become the chief royal architect (*mimarbaşı*) in 1538 replacing Alaüddin, known as Acem Alisi (Persian Ali).

The new Ottoman floral style appeared in almost all media at around the same time as the manuscripts illuminated by Kara Memi, and was an immediately recognizable visible idiom distinctly different from anything that was produced by the Ottomans' neighbors. Its first publicly seen manifestations were in the designs of tiles, textiles and wall paintings. Especially with the İznik tiles that re-created an atmosphere of gardens indoors, the formation of a classical Ottoman style in the decorative arts became visible in the second half of the sixteenth century.[48]

The Ottoman court played a central role in the formation of this distinct Ottoman taste. Timurid and Turkman influences from Herat and Tabriz were fading out to be replaced by a newly formulated local court aesthetic. As principal patrons of the arts in the Ottoman capital, the choices of the Ottoman sultan, his family and his principal officers became characterized by this primarily floral aesthetic with magnified patterns that employed both the flowers that were grown in the Palace gardens and Chinese ones creating an immediate visual impact. The popular *rumi*-arabesque, Chinese cloud and three-point designs that accompanied them were never abandoned and continued to be used with the new motifs as well.

The timing of this radical departure from the norms established by the Timurids and maintained by the Safavids, coincided with the time of intense conflict with the latter as well as the period when the Ottomans began to project their image as the perpetuators of orthodox Sunni Islam in contrast to their Shi'ite eastern neighbors. From this time onwards, Ottoman court art also kept largely away from figural imagery in publicly visible forms, such as tiles, textiles and carpets, unlike the Safavids, who were content to continue the established design styles instead of striving for a new one, but freely incorporated figural imagery in all media produced for secular purposes.[49] The Mughals were also interested in the naturalistic representation of flowers, even though Mughal flowers often sprang from a common root showing a stronger European influence. They were used both in the marginal decorations of album pages and textiles, as well as jewelry work and other media. Mughal flower style appeared roughly half a century after the Ottoman flower (*şükûfe*) style, displaying a similar taste shared by the Ottomans and Mughals, even though the manifestation of their representative styles was distinctly individual and chronologically in different periods. Bejeweled items that were produced under these two dynasties also display a common flower taste,[50] which is especially noticeable in items carved out of jade and decorated with precious stones in flower-shaped gold mounts, even though they again use differing styles and techniques (cats. 55 and 157).

Another fundamental difference in the arts of the book of these three states was in the choice of subject matter. Both the Ottomans and the Mughals were interested in

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[47] A book of royal expenses from Süleyman's reign has two entries, one under 949 (1542) mentions that "*nakkaş* Kara Memi" was donated 20 *filuri* (ducats) and another under 952 (1545) specifies that "*nakkaş* Kara Memi" was donated 30 *filuri* for illuminating a manuscript *("kitap tezhibi için")* (Topkapı Palace Museum Archive, D.1992, fols. 10a and 32a), cited by Necipoğlu 1990, p. 169, n. 47.

[48] Necipoğlu 1992, pp. 195-217; Necipoğlu 1990, pp. 156-58.

[49] The Ottoman historian Mustafa Âlî celebrates some Rumi (local) artists and calligraphers as the inventors of new styles differing from that of the Iranian world (Persian style/*üslub-u Acemi*); Mustafa Âlî, p. 67-69 and 73-74.

[50] O'Kane 1992, s. 64, compares the Ottoman taste for gold objects inlaid with precious stones with the Timurids. Since the Mughal taste was also dependent on their ancestral aesthetic, this shared taste once again highlights the shared Timurid heritage of the area.

illustrated historical texts even though their illustrative styles were not similar. The Safavids, on the other hand, maintained the tradition of illustrating new copies of literary texts written in former times. The Safavid court continued to commission illustrated copies of the legendary Persian epic, the *Shahnama* of Firdausi,[51] written and compiled in the eleventh century on the orders of the Turkic Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna.

From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, almost all Ottoman illustrated books were either official dynastic chronicles or contemporary histories, mostly illustrated as single copies to be deposited in the royal treasury. The Safavid production, on the other hand, was much more prolific, and the deluxe copies produced at centers like Shiraz were avidly collected by the elite of all three empires.[52]

Dynastic portraiture also became one of the principal interests of the Ottoman ruling house. It started with Sultan Mehmed II (1451-1481) and developed into a tradition that continued without interruption until the Empire dissolved in the twentieth century. Mehmed commissioned Italian artists, who created his images in their own style as well as training local artists in the Istanbul palace. He also had his miniature portrait painted by one of these local artists who had some European training but who were also familiar with the eastern painting traditions. Mehmed's renowned portrait painted on paper is attributed to the artist Sinan Bey or his pupil Şiblizade Ahmed, both known to have been portrait painters at the Ottoman palace. Drawing heavily upon the Timurid conventions of small-scale portraiture it depicts the Sultan seated in eastern style and smelling a rose.[53] Mehmed II's more realistically rendered face inspired by an Italian model was, however, grafted onto his body, creating a hybrid portrait that conformed neither to the eastern nor western traditions completely, which was interpreted as indicating the Sultan's wish for a distinct Ottoman idiom in the arts (ill. 7).[54]

7. Portrait of Sultan Mehmed II smelling a rose, attributed to Sinan Bey's student Şiblizade Ahmed, ca. 1480. Topkapı Palace Museum, H.2153, fol. 10r.

[51] Sims 1978, pp. 756-57.

[52] Uluç 2006, pp. 469-505.

[53] Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.2153, fol. 10a. For further connections between Timurid, Mughal and Ottoman portraiture see Sims 1978, pp. 747-72.

[54] İstanbul 2000, pp. 28-29.

Ottoman dynastic portraiture was codified by the late sixteenth century,[55] during the Murad III period (1574-1595). Its serial character stressed the long rule of the House of Osman in an unbroken succession from father to son, and the iconographic prototypes it established for each sultan were employed in the subsequent dynastic histories produced at the Ottoman palace.

Neither the Safavids nor the Mughals, who had both established their rule only in the sixteenth century (in 1501 and 1526 respectively), possessed a long line of dynastic ancestors such as the Ottoman one. The Mughals developed a varied iconographic tradition for royal representations within the narrative illustrations of historical manuscripts, but individual portraits of the Mughal emperors were principally made to be included in textless royal albums, entirely lacking the serial character of the Ottoman dynastic portraits.[56] The early Safavids (1501-1587) were simply not interested in individualized royal portraits; instead they reflected an idealized image of the shahs mostly through the illustrated copies of the legendary Persian epic, the *Shahnama* of Firdausi. The only example of an illustrated and versified Safavid history in the pre Shah Abbas I period (1501-1587) is a copy of the *Shahnama-i Ismail* by Qasim Junabadi dated 940 (1533-34), which continues the tradition of generic portraits rather than recognizable, individualized ones.[57] A notable exception to this is the many personalized, recognizable portraits of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) from the seventeenth century. Grube and Sims demonstrated, however, that this was no other than a trend started in 1027 (1618) by an Indian artist, who visited Isfahan in the entourage of the Mughal ruler Jahangir's envoy. The portrait of Shah Abbas I with its distinguishing characteristic of the Shah's mustache then became a "stock male type in the pictorial imagery" by the late seventeenth century.[58]

All modern writers agree that the change of policies in the Safavid state date from the reign of Shah 'Abbas I (1587-1629), at the onset of which both the economic and political conditions were unstable. The reign of two weak shahs after Shah Tahmasp (1524-1576) had induced a civil war, coupled with twelve years of unbroken conflict with the Ottomans on the western front, and hostilities with the Uzbeks in the east (1578-98). From the beginning of his reign 'Abbas followed a general policy of subjugating the Turkman tribes, and reorganized the army adopting a slave system paralleling the Ottoman model.[59] He thus tightened the central Safavid rule and used his newly established slave-elite to disseminate state policies as well as court-sponsored art forms.

This was also the time when Safavid official history writing increased and the reflections of the Ottoman *saz* style could be seen in the lands of the Safavids. Its examples survive in Safavid book bindings (cat. 63),[60] tiles,[61] and carpets.[62] An ink drawing from a Safavid album at the Topkapı Palace Museum Library depicting a youth gazing at an Ottoman-style *saz* drawing which he is holding in his hand shows the interest of the Safavid world in this dynamic style.[63] One last mention of an Ottoman model is supplied by Olearius, who reports that in 1637, when he was traveling in Iran, the governor of Ardabil had a pavilion built following a model that was brought from Anatolia.[64]

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[55] The earliest historical text with a series of portraits of all the sultans is Seyyid Lokman's *Şemailname* of 1579 written in Turkish (Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.1563).

[56] For Mughal illustrated histories see Meredith-Owens 1971, pp. 20-34; Sims 1978, pp. 747-72; New York 1987.

[57] Wood 2002.

[58] Grube and Sims 1995, pp. 178-208.

[59] Babaie et al. 2004, p. 111.

[60] Istanbul 2006, pp. 148-49, cat. no. 30.

[61] They are seen, for example, on the *cuerda seca* tile panel in the courtyard of the Masjid-i Shah situated on the south side of Shah Abbas I's Maidan-i Shah in Isfahan, built between 1611 and 1666. Ferrier 1989, p. 208, fig. 25.

[62] New York 1973, p. 200; Ferrier (ed.) 1989, p. 126, fig. 16. A later example exists in a lacquer painted penbox dated 1115 (1703-5), see Melikian-Chirvani 2007, p. 395, cat. no. 148.

[63] Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H.2140, fol. 29v; Mahir 1987, fig. 8.

[64] Olearius 1656, p. 283; cited by Köprülü 1966, p. 296.

The Safavid and Mughal dynasties did not last as long as the House of Osman, but by the second half of the sixteenth century distinct aesthetic modes emerged in the arts of the book of all three empires, both thematically and stylistically. This mid-sixteenth century crystallization was brought about by the dynastic workshops, alternately called *kitabkhana* or *nakkaşhane*, of each state and the court artists (*nakkaş*) who created common styles and decorative vocabularies both for illustrations and the embellishment of almost all artistic media throughout the lands of each empire.