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A study of Kufic script in Islamic calligraphy and its relevance to Turkish graphic art using Latin fonts in the late twentieth century

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University of Wollongong

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A Study of Kufic script in Islamic calligraphy and its relevance to Turkish graphic art using Latin fonts in the late twentieth century.

DOCTORATE OF PHILOSOPHY
from
UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by
ENİS TİMÜÇİN TAN, GRAD DIP, MCA

FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS
1999
CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work has not been submitted for a degree to any university or institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

Enis Timuçin Tan
December 1999
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CONTENTS
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I:
The philosophical background to the beginning of Islamic art

1.1 Sufizm and Islamic art 2
1.2 Art in Islam 5
1.3 Mimesis 17
1.4 Prohibition of depiction 22
1.5 The conclusion 25

CHAPTER II:
The development of the Kufi script

2.1 The origin of the Arabic alphabet 28
2.2 First calligraphic developments in the Arabic alphabet 34
2.3 Spread of the Arabic alphabet 40
2.4 Revealing of the Kufic form 42
2.5 The Kufi script 46
2.6 The branches of the Kufic script 50
2.6.1 The classification of the Kufic script in the traditional Turkish Islamic arts 54
2.7 The conclusion 56

CHAPTER III:
The importance of calligraphy in Turkish history of art

3.1 Calligraphic developments and famous calligraphers in The Turkish calligraphy art (Ottoman period) 60
3.2 Women calligraphers 64
3.3 Expansion of the art of Turkish calligraphy 67
3.4 The main rules of Turkish calligraphy art 78
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1 Writing in the Fine Arts</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2 The rise of calligraphy as a dominant Islamic art form</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3 Mahmud Bedreddin Yazir; Characteristics of Ottoman calligraphy</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4 In technical characteristics, the principal role belongs to the rigid aesthetic rules of Turkish calligraphy. These are “Beautiful Form” and “Beautiful Placement”.</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Traditional Turkish illumination art</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Illumination</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Marbled paper (Ebru)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 The conclusion</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER IV

The summary of the development of Latin alphabet, evolution of graphic concepts and Turkish graphic art history

4.1 Structural development of the Latin alphabet | 96 |
4.2 The typography, its development and newer forms of writing through the invention of printing machine | 99 |
4.2.2 The forms of writing that evolved after the invention of printing machine | 99 |
4.3 Geometric formation of a latin letter | 106 |
4.3.1 Basic design differences of Latin letter | 108 |
4.4 The conclusion for the development Latin alphabet | 109 |
4.5 The Evolution of the Graphic Concepts | 111 |
4.6 The history of Turkish graphic arts | 119 |

CHAPTER V :

Creating new arrangements by using Latin Alphabet forms upon an inspiration of Kufic arrangements

5.1 The costitutions of Kufi composition | 132 |
5.2 Creating new arrangements in contemporary graphic forms | 135 |
5.3 The conclusion | 153 |

CHAPTER VI :

General conclusion of the thesis

6.1 The beginning of the Islamic art of calligraphy and
the Kufic script. The impact of Tasawwuf (Islamic philosophy) on the art of calligraphy 156

6.2 Modern compositions of Latin alphabet inspired by ancient Kufic models 162

6.3 The principal points in the classical Kufic compositions to be used in contemporary designs 165

6.4 Possible contributions of contemporary compositions to the visual arts of today 168

APPENDIX:

The material used in Turkish calligraphy

7.1 Materials used in the art of calligraphy 170

7.2 Materials used 174

7.2.1 The Pen 174

7.2.1.1 Pens that are used in Calligraphy 175

7.1.2.2 Pointing and Cutting Pens 176

7.2.2 The Penknife 177

7.2.2.1 The plain Penknives 178

7.2.2.2 Writing Penknives 179

7.2.3 “Makta” (Plane) 179

7.2.4 “Hokka” (Inkstand) 180

7.2.5 “Lika” (Silk refuse) 181

7.2.6 Lampblack Ink 182

7.2.6.1 Components of ink 183

7.2.6.2 Coloured Ink 184

7.2.6.3 Gold ink 184

7.2.7 Paper 184

7.2.8 “Mistar” 186

7.2.9 “Zir-i Meshk” 187

ART WORKS 188

GLOSSARY 204

SOURCE OF LIST 233

BIBLIOGRAPHY 235
The subject of this thesis is the Kufic script, the oldest Arabic writing from that emerged in the seventh century with the flourishing of Islamic religion. Given the difference between writing and drawing, the Kufic style should be considered as the most akin to drawing among all Arabic writing styles. The thesis argues that compositions created in Kufic script may inspire contemporary graphic artworks produced through Roman alphabet forms. A central part of the research involves situating calligraphy within the broad framework of the Islamic religious philosophy, the evolution of graphic notions, the protestant art trends related to graphic arts and the historical development of Turkish graphic arts.

The thesis demonstrates that Turkey, at a crossing point between Europe and Asia, between West and East, between secularism and the Islamic religion, possessed a very rich art historical legacy, and was a point of synthesis. Oscillating between two broad tendencies represented by the East and the West, an innovative artistic response to history is neither a total denial of the past by adopting a blindly radical reformist approach, nor an obstinacy in preserving old forms. This thesis offers a positive approach by giving examples of my own graphic synthesis of old Kufic script compositions, which are part of the Islamic culture, and the Roman alphabet forms, which represent the transition to modernism and Western culture. The thesis argues that this double cultural legacy may be crucial in our pursuit of contemporary art, combining a rational perspective with insights into a rich and conservative tradition.
Trends which constitute the history of art evolve in a continuity. Although one could classify history of art into different eras of different categories, although one could say that these epochs are so different from each other that they cannot be reconciled in a way or another, there is no doubt that they make up a consistent whole which would reveal profound similarities under scrutiny. Every movement in art is a response, negative or positive, to another prior movement. It can be negative in that it can defy prior concepts, practices or conceptions by introducing and advocating their opposite, so it constructs its foundations on a negative proposition. It can also be positive in that it can proclaim itself as the successor of a certain art conception by taking this legacy as the basis and developing it from where it has ended. However, this does not mean that this second approach requires that a ready material be recycled forever. On the contrary, it is interpreted, transformed, adapted to the age and evolved into something brand-new. In whichever case, it must be remembered that the history of art is a continuity. This is true even in the case of the most obvious and defying rupture, since this rupture is nothing but another aspect, the negative aspect, of this very continuity, this is only another link in the chain of the history which evolves from it and which perpetuates it. This thesis, which handles the issue of historical continuity in Turco-Islamic arts in the example of the calligraphy and graphic arts synthesis, also makes sense only in this context.

Due to the fact that all movements of art are within a historical context, a central part of the research (Chapter I) involves situating calligraphy within the broad framework of the Islamic religious philosophy. Since representation and drawing were forbidden by religion, Islam artists chose to satisfy the inner need for creation via geometrical and abstract techniques instead of directly describing nature. The art of calligraphy, which offers making art without
referring to natural forms and their direct representation, naturally acquired a prominent status among Islamic arts and developed since it could also convey divine messages.

Following the birth of Islam, the Arabic script, as the language of divine messages, acquired variety in terms of styles and aesthetics. Kufic script was used in the reproductions of the Holy Qur'an. Thus, today it is accepted that the Islamic calligraphy art starts with the Kufi script. Hence, the origins and the development of the Arabic alphabet, the emergence of the Kufi script and its role in this development are examined in Chapter II.

In the Ottoman Empire which stayed as the greatest and strongest state in the Islamic world throughout centuries, the art of calligraphy had a prominent place and it had perpetuated a fairly productive period during 600 years. Therefore, the importance of the calligraphy in Turkish art and history, the calligraphic rules as developed throughout the Ottoman history, and the related arts such as illumination and marbled paper are discussed in Chapter III. Furthermore, female calligraphists of very limited number in a religious society as conservative as the Ottomans are also among the subjects handled in this chapter.

It is accepted that the purposes attributed to the alphabet in both Islamic and Christian civilizations are integral to the philosophies of both. Similar to the Christian art of painting that was fostered by the Church, the Islamic art of calligraphy has been supported by the Islamic religion and evolved due to the prohibition of description. Over many centuries, under the influence of the Islamic philosophy that attributes a mystic and divine purpose to the art of calligraphy and a doctrine that prohibits all representation, the calligraphers have been able to create such compositions that range in scale from intricate books to powerful architectural compositions that have the force of an abstract painting for the contemporary spectator. Today, Roman characters are designed by graphics and typographical experts. The use of computers with advanced graphic programs has given these experts access to unlimited design
possibilities. This gives rise to the idea that forms of writing can be seen more and more in the field of art as aesthetic units in their own right. To appreciate this use of Islamic structures in contemporary Roman fonts, in the first part of Chapter IV, a background to the structural development of the Roman alphabet will be given as a counterpoint to the Islamic history discussed in the previous chapters. Then it becomes clear that the aesthetic effects of Kufic compositions can be rendered in Roman alphabet forms as well.

Another pertinent issue is the invention of the printing machine which immensely contributed to the cultural and social life in the Western world. Because the changing life had provoked changes in economy and society, the currents of art in the twentieth century, in their turn, had also been influenced by them. This chain of development instigated by the invention of the printing machine is relevant to the thesis, since in the second part of the same chapter, this will bring us to the evolution of graphic notions, the protestant art trends related to graphic arts and the historical development of Turkish graphic arts. These revolutionary currents of art, that have created their own aesthetic structures making use of the existent design elements, were developed with a counter-taste for the economic or social conservatism as opposed to the classical branches of art. Setting out from the Kufic compositions, our aim in this thesis study is, in a way, to demonstrate that it is possible to regard the compositions by Roman script as one of the protestant currents of art. Thus, in the second section of Chapter IV, we will linger on the issue of protestant currents of art that have greatly influenced the twentieth century graphic arts.

The Turks, who have worked on the mystical Islamic calligraphy for one thousand years, have adopted the Roman alphabet in 1928 and Western philosophy of arts and culture ever since, so contemporary graphic arts in Turkey are 71 years old now. Thus, we will see examples of the historical development of Turkish graphic arts which will help us to see the point that a nation has reached in contemporary graphic arts with the background of Islamic art of calligraphy. Thus, we can better understand the importance of the background of the Turkish art of graphics in the modern graphical
compositions making use of the classical Islamic calligraphy forms. Furthermore, most of the artists who have a place in the establishment of contemporary Turkish art of graphics have been educated in Germany and thus predominantly inspired by the German and Bauhaus schools of art around 1930-1950. Also Applied Fine Arts Institute, established in Istanbul in 1957-1958, where German tutors instructed, introduced a considerable number of new designers into the contemporary Turkish graphics sector. Thus, we can say that Bauhaus school has immensely influenced the Turkish graphic arts. This subject also will be dealt with in the second half of Chapter IV.

In Chapter V, the writing compositions produced through Roman alphabet forms by inspiration of Kufic compositions are presented. Here, all known designs of the related artists are included and the phases of development and practice of these designs are explained. The arts of the ancient times have been forgotten with the Announcement of the Republic in Turkey regarding the Schools of Art in 1923. There is a steady tendency towards Western arts starting in that period. Adoption of the Western philosophy of art seemed like a good way of becoming a modern country. The young republic opted for the Roman alphabet in 1928 through the Reform of Alphabet. However, it led to a gap between today and the cultural and artistic legacy of the last thousand years. This chapter investigates the gap between the cultural and mystical aims of Turkish calligraphy, the difficulty of establishing a bridge between an Arabic, Islamic art and secular Western society. The Turkish artists really had many successes during the seventy five years of the Republic. However, when it comes to mentioning the traditional (meant to cover the pre-republican times) Turkish arts, the educators seem to think about the branches of art that are out-of-fashion and can only be seen in the museums. (Conversation with Textile and Graphic departments' teachers at Fine Art Faculties of Mimar Sinan and Marmara Universities) There are only a few research programs in Turkish universities today regarding the Traditional Turkish Hand-Crafts and they are more generally concerned with restoration and history of arts. This thesis argues that the traditional arts will open the road to a new horizon in our contemporary arts with the condition that the artist makes use of the historical
accumulation of the branches of art as well as he should be prepared for the future in terms of both the technique involved and creativity.

Finally, general conclusion, a summary of the whole thesis is briefly presented in Chapter VI, furthermore, the conclusions deduced from the aesthetic characteristics of Kufic writing compositions are enumerated, and potential contributions of possible contemporary designs to modern art are stated.

So the thesis mainly argues that since Turkey, at a crossing point between Europe and Asia, between West and East, between secularism and the Islam religion, possess a very rich art historical legacy, this would bring us back to the art historical continuity issue. Oscillating between two broad tendencies represented by the East and the West, the solution is neither a total denial of the past by adopting a blindly radical reformist approach nor a neglecting obstinacy in preserving old forms right as they are. The parts which create this multi-layered cultural formation are not frozen, instead they are in a continual interaction, and here lies the continuity. So the cultural legacy awaits to be transformed through either a negative approach or a positive one. Here, in this thesis, a positive approach is adopted by offering a graphic synthesis of old Kufic script compositions, which are part of the Islam culture, and the Roman alphabet forms, which represent the transition to modernism and Western culture. Hence our belief is that this cultural legacy may be of great help in our pursuit of the modern art with the condition of preserving a contemporary and rational perspective, and not being restricted by traditional conservatism.
CHAPTER 1

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND TO THE BEGINNING OF ISLAMIC ART
CHAPTER I

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND TO THE BEGINNING OF ISLAMIC ART

In this first chapter, the place and purpose of art in Islam is discussed and examples are given. The interpretation of art through the Sufic philosophy of Islam and how calligraphy in particular, has been influenced by this philosophy will be examined. The emphasis in this chapter will be on the connection of calligraphy to Islam as a religion. The Islamic philosophy of art had a great impact on calligraphy and determined its fundamental role among the other Islamic arts. Following the Renaissance, with the development in science, philosophy and art, Western culture had become dominant, imposing its own values in every domain and particularly on aesthetic tastes and perceptions in the field of art. The question "what is beauty?" has been asked since ancient times, long before the Renaissance, and to attain beauty through art had always been one of the main preoccupations of Greek philosophers. Both Islam and Christianity were closely involved with art as an expression of religious belief. The Christian church was, until the Renaissance, the main patron of artists and dictated what was required. Islam however was more closely involved with art and continued the quest for “what is beauty?” The Renaissance period marks a diverging point of the two cultures on the question of “what is art?” The aim here is to demonstrate the direct effects of the Islamic philosophy on Islamic arts, particularly on calligraphy, and clarify the differences in the evaluation of works in Eastern art, which have a totally different background from Western culture, philosophy and perception of art.

In the tenets of the Islamic religion, the act of creation is considered exceptional and peculiar to God, therefore, to imitate nature in the way it is created means to act as an equivalent to God, and thus, it is to blaspheme God. For the Islamic
artist, the representation of nature and living beings through figurative means does not imply the desire to imitate God but to contemplate His creation. This new perception of the world, opinions and feelings, introduced by Islam, were expressed in new symbols. As a result of all these factors, Islamic art has developed from mysticism, moving away from realism with the fear of committing the sin of polytheism. Following the introduction of Islam, even motifs that had been previously used were interpreted in new compositions. Plant motifs were stylised to become only geometrical figures, whereas animal motifs were reshaped, made abstract and twisted into geometrical representation of their muscles. In most cases, a plant motif was associated with an animal figure and vice versa. "To create a flamboyant fairy tale was the purpose in all these unrealistic compositions which were the novelties of Islamic philosophy" (Erginsoy 1). Despite the fact that the Qur'an does not directly prohibit the depiction of living beings, the generally accepted idea is that the religion does not allow naturalistic visual depictions, thus, Islamic art was denied a development in this direction (Agaoglu 151). The commandment in the Qur'an prohibiting the worship of statues as gods had been interpreted by the clergy and the "ijtihad" as a forbiddance to draw pictures of all living beings. This was the result of the lack of a lucid explanation in the Qur'an and the fear of causing any doubts or even committing a sin. This idea became predominant particularly in the ninth century (Erginsoy 2). Although depiction had been prohibited since the first century of the religion, especially after the death of Muhammad, it was not much obeyed at the time. Human and animal figures had been mostly used in ornamentation of non-religious items such as metal coins. There were even pots in the shape of animals. However through centuries, the prohibition of depiction had been established subconsciously among Islamic artists and the people so that Islamic art has not proceeded in the direction of the mimesis of nature (Erginsoy 2). In Islamic art, there are no examples of three-dimensional figures such as statues.

1.1 Sufism and Islamic art
The Arabic word "sufi" means wool. The early Sufis were said to wear cloaks
made from wool, similar to the ones worn by Christian monks and ascetics. These cloaks symbolised the disregard for material possessions. Sufism emerged from a fusion of Islam and Christianity and other mystic traditions of the lands conquered by the Muslims. This mystical movement had a profound impact on the development and spread of the Islamic civilisation. The Sufi assimilated various aspects of indigenous religious traditions more readily than the more orthodox versions of Islam.

The description of Sufism as Encyclopedic term is an: aspect of Islamic belief and practice in which Muslims seek to find the truth of divine love and knowledge through direct personal experience of God. Sufism consists of a variety of mystical paths that are designed to ascertain the nature of man and of God and to facilitate the experience of the presence of divine love and wisdom in the world (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, V II 355).

The principal aim of Sufism is to attempt to unite with God. For the Sufi, God was the ultimate source of love that had to be reached through primary senses and the Sufi wanted to become one with this love. For the Sufi, everything in the world was a mere reflection of God. After the introduction of Islam, and for many centuries afterwards, states and empires (from the beginning of Islam until the late nineteenth century) were ruled with the authority of Islam only (Sheriat). The main views advocated by the Sufis, which had little chance of being expressed at that time, was that God was the spirit of the universe and each and every living thing made up a piece of it. The Sufi wanted to be liberated from his physical form in order to unite with God. One of the Sufic mystics, namely Al Hallaj, in 922 AD said "I am God", he meant only that he was a piece of God, but he ended being crucified on the cross where his skin was peeled off. He was beheaded and kicked down from the top of the mountain (This event has happened in Antioch where today the facing mountain is called by his name).

The Sufis eventually were organised into orders or brotherhoods each with its own method of meditative practice. Sufis generally participated in collective
rituals to unite with God, seeking ecstatic religious experience by means of rhythmic chanting and musical experience. These rituals, especially music and dancing, became distinctive parts of the Sufic belief.

For the Sufi, the ultimate devotional experience involved the loss of self in order to come closer to God. Some Sufis welcomed death as the ultimate loss of self. Death was not the end of life, but another phase of the transformation towards the Divine. The idea of suffering and dying for the sake of this transformation permeated all of Rumi's (Mawlana Jalaladdin Rumi) poetry works, and he expressed it in ever-new images: the moth that casts itself into the candle, or the snow that melts when the sun enters the sign of Aries, and even the chickpeas that are boiled in order to be eaten and reach a higher level of existence in becoming part of the human body: all these metaphors speak of this mystery of transformation, as does the image of the treasure that can only be found in ruins; for the heart must be broken in order to find in itself the "hidden treasure", which is God (The Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 12, 484). The earthly world was irrelevant, and as stated in the Qur'an, death was the first stage of the journey into eternity.

Sufism represented a move away from the legalistic approach in Islam to a more personal relationship with "Allah" (God). "By the third Islamic century, the doctrine of the "inner way" or the spiritual journey towards Allah had begun to develop. There were different stages of the way corresponding to different levels of Sufi experience. The mystic was first a seeker, then a traveller, and then an initiate. He progressed along the way through processes of self-abnegation and enhanced awareness of Allah. The nearer he came to Allah, the more Allah spoke through his lips, controlled his limbs and moved the desires of his heart, until he reached the final stage when the self was annihilated and totally absorbed in Allah (Robinson and Francis 31). The Persian Sufi saint Hujwiri described the Sufi as "he that is dead to the self and living by the Truth: he has escaped from the grip of human faculties and has really attained (to God)." (Nicholson 35)."
1.2 Art in Islam

Not so many do understand our old music, and those who cannot, do not understand anything from what we say.
Yahya Kemal Beyatli (Famous Turkish poet)

He gave you the form, your form is created perfectly, you will go back to Him.
Tegabun Chapter, 3rd verse

It is crucial to emphasise that the concept of art is very new in Islamic culture. It must be recognised that the various branches of art were considered as separate sciences: for example the science of music or the science of poetry. There was no clear distinction between art and craft (Yetkin 74). Therefore, a discussion of Islamic Art means a wide area of artistic endeavour including numerous examples of artistic excellence from music, architecture and engraving. To evaluate these rich artworks from an aesthetic point of view, the starting point must be Islamic philosophy and religious traditions.

One of the key reasons for distinguishing between craft and art was the presence of an aesthetic concept and concern for original design (Bicer, “Eski Sanat Yazisinda Turke Ozgu Ana Kurallar ve Ogretim Metodlari.” 54). Although Islamic aesthetics was usually described as the science of beauty, it surpassed the limits of this description to be considered as a totality of philosophical and psychological theories with a close connection to art history, sociology, and anthropology. (Ayvazoglu, “Aşk Estetigi” 14) Aesthetics, in its classical meaning, can be described as a branch of philosophy involving the question “what is beauty?” In the Islamic context, aesthetics involves the identification of beauty with art. By contrast, contemporary Western art does not take this approach, because it is not interested in finding an answer to the philosophical question “what is beauty?”, art is more than an act of describing beauty. Contemporary art has established this new approach by getting away from the old absolute doctrines (Tunali, “Felsefenin Işığında Modern Resim” 176).

Aesthetic theories formed in the Western world are far from satisfying when
describing non-Western cultures, especially Islamic arts, since these theories originate from a concept of reality which is based on Greco-Latin culture. Almost all Islamic cultures, such as Turkish or Iranian, were transformed according to the Islamic view of the world after accepting the Islamic religion (Ayvazoğlu, "Aşk Estetiği" 15). Islamic principles are applied in different ways to all Islamic works of art.

Prohibition of Depiction, which will be discussed below, was the most important factor in the original structure of Islamic art, and became the principal basis of Islamic aesthetics. A similar prohibition in the Christian world was, iconoclasm. Although the source of this prohibition is found in the Qur'anic Hadith within a certain logical frame, in principle, its origins have to be searched for in the religious traditions that had turned into absolute rules by the time of the Qur'an (Yetkin, "Estetik Doktrinler" 32). The concept of beauty, which was one of the main concerns of aesthetics, was viewed in a very different light in Islam than the objectivist or subjectivist aesthetic meanings in Western art philosophy. The notion of beauty in Islamic art was not the same as that perceived by Western objectivist and subjectivist aesthetics, it was "absolute beauty"; that is, the beauty of the creator (Tunali, "Estetik" 42). For an Islamic artist, an object, for example, a rose was not beauty (Worringer 13-17), but the reflection of God's grace (Ayvazoğlu, "Aşk Estetiği" 15). God reflects Himself in all that is beautiful (Ağaçoğlu 175-200).

The duty of the artist was considered as a search for the source of beauty. Therefore, he was not concerned about reproducing a similar image of the outer world (mimesis). In all works that can be considered within the framework of Islamic arts, the artist's individuality was almost invisible, which caused art to turn into a kind of metaphysical search (Yetkin, "Türk ve İslam Sanatlarında Estetik" 22). Muslim artists considered their works so outside their personality that mostly they did not sign them. Even poetry, which is the art most dependent on the individual psyche, had been so isolated from individuality by time that it had become an expression in itself (Creswell 160-165).
In this context, the artist was not the creator but the discoverer of beauty, because art was a search for an already existing substance, beauty. Since beauty was not an objective substance, the artist could not reach it by depicting a beautiful tree or describing it by words (Yetkin, “Türk ve İslam Sanatlarında Estetik” 12). The tree was only a sign (The Holy Qur’an 31/28). A tree which is perceived through the senses was in a continuous transformation so that real beauty was not in the transforming qualities of the tree but in its essence (Schimmel, “Calligraphy and Islamic Culture” 82). The artist could reach this essence through an act of isolation. The first stage of isolation was stylisation.

Stylisation was used to simplify and outline the object. Since everything was seen as the manifestation of the creator, God, it was better to start from a certain object and focus on it rather than losing track among numerous objects. This approach inevitably led the Islamic artist to an emphasis on lines. Monotony caused by this was avoided through variation. A real artist never repeated his work (Yetkin, “Türk-İslam Plastik Sanatlarının Estetiği” 12).

All this reveals a need for a different terminology for evaluating Islamic arts. Therefore, mystic terminology has an important place, but this does not mean mystical aesthetics. These mystical characteristics of Islamic art reveal a concept of art and aesthetics deeply affected by mysticism (Biçer, “Sanat Yazıları” 26).

The world as seen with the naked eye, according to mysticism, was a transitory world. The important thing was to transcend that transitory chaos to grasp the absolute truth beyond (Uzluk 7-9). Since God had created the universe in a perfect order, a different means of vision other than the naked eye is needed to see the harmony underlying that structure which we perceive through our senses (Biçer, “Sanat Yazıları” 27).

By this means, the Islamic artist could survive the transitory forms of the temporal world and turn into the spiritual reality of phenomena. Artists could escape from the anxieties of the transitory world and attain to the immanent
peace of the real creator. While Worringer defines isolation as “abstraction from the exterior world” as a psychological mechanism, he emphasises its "ecstasy" (Worringer 13).

Figurative arts originated from a psychological need, such as, the replacement of the physical world with a similar artistic representation. This was seen as a kind of narcissism or a dependency on the material world (Ayvazoglu, “Aşk Estetiği” 67). According to André Bazin, "To redeem existence through vision... How vain is a painting, unless a primitive need such as overcoming time through the permanence of form underpins our absurd admiration." (Bazin 30).

It is possible that Islamic arts, which developed under mysticism, were not attuned to such a complex representation of the natural world. The sacred Hadith, which started with the words "Kuntu kenzen mahfiyyen", had become the principle of aesthetics in the hands of the Sufis (Ayvazoğlu, “Aşk Estetiği” 67). Ibn-i Arabi interpreted the Hadith as "God wishes to be known as Love, God's beauty is the source of all kinds of beauties. God is beautiful and loves the beautiful", he also said that the basic reason of all love is beauty. Love exists as the essence of the universe and initiates the action in all that is created (Ibn Arabi 339). It was a basic Sufic principle that the one who could see beauty searched for its origins.

The sensual, corporeal beauty of woman represented the essence in the symbolism of 'tasawwuf'. The animalism towards woman represented the addiction to the world, in short, the addiction to transient beauties. Forms, in the Sufic belief, were deceptive.

*We should not confuse the word 'love' with the normal meaning of "love".*
Mawlana
The aim of Sufic belief is to find divine love, God. When Ibn Arabi described
divine love, he said, **Divine love is the recognition that the lover and the loved
are a unity.** That is, the purpose was not the material existence and material
pleasures of the loved but the recognition of the original love, the unity in the
loved, and this provided direct unity with divine love. He added that the love of
Layla and Majnun was an example of this kind of love (Ibn Arabi 339).
Mawlana also talks about the love of Layla and Majnun. Here follows his reply
to those who said there were more beautiful women than Layla:

*I am not in love with Layla's form. Layla is not a figure. She is like a cup in my
hand from which I drink wine. So, I am in love with the wine (absolute beauty)
(God) I keep drinking on. You only see the cup but are not aware of the wine. I
would not be interested if they had offered me vinegar in a cup embellished with
gold and jewels. I prefer some wine in an old broken pumpkin rather than that
cup and hundreds of the same kind. But you need love and enthusiasm to
distinguish the wine from the cup* (Mawlana, “Fihi Ma Fi” 4).

These words of Mawlana, through Majnun, made clear the general Sufi view
concerning the relativity of beauty and ugliness. Sufis accepted neither beauty
nor ugliness as an objective value of objects (Ayvazoglu, “Aşk Estetiği” 68). Ibn
Arabi maintained that: "Both the ugly and the beautiful possess God's mercy.
The ugly believes he/she is beautiful and the beautiful is ugly. So, relative to
different tempers, there is nothing absolutely beautiful" (Ibn Arabi 449).
Mawlana as well said that ugliness is not an absolute value if you look at something through the eyes of the one who loves it. (Mawlana, “Mathnawi” 5 4/b. 72-73) According to Sufi belief, since the universe was the manifestation of divine beauty, there was nothing but absolute beauty (God) in the universe. Beauty could be found in something others considered ugly. For this reason, beauty is the one that is loved.

The idea of the ocean defined the absolute existence in mystic symbolism. Endless sea waves are the reality limited by time and place, that is, the visible universe itself. Waves on the water seem to exist, but they do not (Ayvazoğlu, “İslamda Estetik” 44). Mawlana compared the visible universe to cups on the sea (Mawlana, “Mathnawi” 1/b. 1110). For example, what else can a work of art be, other than an empty cup on the sea? An artist should produce works which would continuously hint at the emptiness of cups, which means the visible universe is transitory and the only permanent thing is God. Since inanimate figures cannot think, cry or desire, the only meaning that artists can give to their works other than this hint, is the peace which is the ultimate stage which humanity wants to reach. For example, one can see in Islamic miniatures, that all facial expressions reflect peace. All human passions disappeared, together with the third dimension of depth. Rejection of perspective in Islamic paintings is a rejection of the tragic (Ayvazoğlu, “Aşk Estetiği” 27).

According to Ibn Arabi, forms around us are like shadows. We can perceive the
shadow only through the physical world where shadows are cast. Mountains seem darker with distance, but the colour of mountains are not what we perceive. The reason why the shadow turns into black depends on the distance from the source of the shadow.

Plate 3 – The Turkish mosque evolved from earlier Anatolian domed prayer-hall. After the Ottoman capture of Costantinople, its development was further encouraged by the church of St. Sophia and in the sixteenth century the Architect Sinan perfected a type of symmetrical mosque covered by a single great dome on pendentives, flanked by four semi-domes, with the aim of creating an unobstructed central interior. This is Sinan’s İskèle mosque at Üsküdar – Istanbul.

The artists of that time believed that they could reach the source of colours only by removing all distances. This explains why perspective was not adopted in Islamic arts. The Islamic artist thought he could not reach the abstract truth behind shapes by an objective representation of nature. By contrast with Aristotelian logic, in which mimesis is an absolute condition, in the mystic logic of Sufism mimesis is denied (Ayvazoğlu, “Aşk Estetiği” 31). The colour scale, by contrast, was very important in giving reality to objects. The Islamic artist who avoided imitating the outward manifestation of phenomena was at the same time not obliged to deeply examine the real colours. The artist’s aim was to reach the holy light, the source of colours. "God is the holy light of the skies and the earth" (The Holy Qur'an 24/35), and Mawlana said, "You cannot see the holy light since your essence is lost in colours. As the night falls, and colours are covered, then you understand you can see colours because of the holy light. It is impossible to see colours without exterior light" (Mawlana, “Mathnawi” 1/b 1122).
The Islamic artist did not see colour as an objective quality. They were also against the depiction of momentary impressions as in Impressionism. In their view, continuously changing settings of colours was not worth depicting since it changed endlessly. The Islamic artist looked for the unchanging behind the changing. Mawlana said outer colours can be seen through the help of the sun, inner colours through the help of the sublime light (Mawlana, “Mathnawi” 1/b 1130).

The difference between Islamic art and Western art is reflected in both the colouring and formal patterns. Objects of the visible world are reflected in the works of Muslim artists as abstracted from their individual properties. For example, a tree is not a particular tree but tree in general. So a decorator or a miniature artist does not represent a tree in nature, but he projects the tree in his mind. In short, natural objects perceived through the senses have become symbols in the artist's mind to reflect the universal. The form acquired a representative character only by changing from the individual to the general.

The first thing a miniature artist did was to process a stereotyped material according to the subject. An artist could turn these stereotypes into a work of art through his interpretation. He could produce this interpretation with some variation ("tenevvü"). Variation could open up the Muslim artist's limited opportunity to produce original works (Ayvazoğlu, “İslamda Estetik” 63). The artist, who did not trespass on traditional limits, had to focus on the possibilities of various compositions of the same objects.
Another deeply held idea was that, the artist is the person who does not create beauty but who discover it. The art of calligraphy, which is based on writing letters, is in fact a kind of painting; it had begun more than a thousand years ago and developed completely in a mystical atmosphere. Calligraphy artists were less concerned in writing letters than painting them. Just as the occidental classical painting had developed under the influence of Christianity and all painters began their career by painting figuratively Jesus Christ, Mary and the Saints, the Islamic art of calligraphy too, was very much dependent on religion. Calligraphers' principal aim was to write in the most aesthetic way the name of Allah, passages from Qur'an, words of Muhammad and maxims sublimating the Islamic faith. These examples in different compositions of abstract painting were admired for their beauty.

Malik Aksel, one of the important Turkish painters (1903-1987), said that "writing is the painting of word" and added that, "just as the painting manifests what we see, the writing manifests our words." Since the calligraphy art was not involved with everyday words but aimed to present the Qur'an and important notions of the Islamic faith, it would be more reasonable to say that calligraphers painted less words than ideas.

The influence of religious and social events on Turkish calligraphy art was a common characteristic of all Islamic arts. Since religion prevailed in all social life, essentially religious philosophy oriented the Islamic arts. This explains the total domination of non-figurative arts, of which the most important are
calligraphy, architecture and ornamentation ("Tezyin"), in Islam culture and especially in ancient Turkish arts. Before describing these non-figurative arts, the mystical philosophy of Tasawwuf, in Islam must be explained (Bruckhardt 56).

"Pretending reason and intellect originates from Satan; love from Adam" (Mawlana, "Mathnawi" 4/b, 1395 and 1402)

Mysticism, which was a popular belief in Islam, was dominant in the state of being called Mawlawi. The equivalent of Christian mysticism in Islam was Sufism. The first eighteen couplets of Masnawi were an aesthetic program in itself. Mawlana mentioned music even in the first line. Masnawi interpreters suggested that the word "ney" proposed the wisdom. When you consider that "ney" was at the same time a musical instrument, then the importance of music in Sufism is better understood. Tahiru-1 Mawlawi relates that Mehmed Esad Dede says the following in his uncompleted work called "Masnawi Serhi": "Ney means the wise (perfect) man, there is no other explanation to that" (Mawlana, Serh-i Mathnawi, V1, Pg 51). We know that "Sema" (whirling dance) goes back many years in the history of Tasawwuf (esoterism). The first Semahane (dervishes' meeting house for religious music and whirling) was opened in Baghdad, in 864 (Schimmel, "Sema-i semavi" 3-4).

It is a well-known fact that music, dance and painting in the Mawlawi world are much valued. According to a widespread belief among Sufis, the music echoed God's voice: "Am I not your Lord?" When Sufis heard the first recitation "Am I not your Lord?", this would go deep into their souls. When people listened to the "sema", this recitation which was kept as secret was uncovered, and they overflowed with joy as they listened to that music (Kelabazi 21); thus it caused the wise people to long for the blissful primal union of human being with God (Mawlana, "Mathnawi" 4/b, 731). The Sufi, who rose to dance with the joy of this longing, whirled to the rhythm of the music and as he whirled he was set free from the gravitation, in other words, from the gravity of the transitory world. Now he was free from all assumed forms and started to experience the joy of
reunion with the beloved. The Sema, dance, was a symbol of communion with God (Mawlana, “Mathnawi” 4/b, 1347). Hallac-i Mansur describes this state as follows: The moth flew, whirled and melted itself; has become without a form, without a body, without a name. Why should he turn into shapes anymore? After the communion, what state has been left to turn into? (Yasar 79)

In the mystic literature, the words "mest" (enchanted), "sermest" (intoxicated), "serhos" (drunk), "eshrek" (overexcited) metaphorically expressed this state of ecstasy ("There were the cupbearer, the wine, the wine glass and the whirling at that time which made me whirl around you") (Mawlana, “Rubailer” 1-2, Rubai 150). Even metaphorically, the coexistence of music, dance and drunkenness is a reminder of the Apollo-Dionysos dualism used by Nietzsche in describing art rituals. According to Nietzsche, the purist Dionysian state is possible through music. Because in music there is no reference to any phenomenon, there is neither a borderline nor a vision. According to Nietzsche; the Dionysian artist does not look at visible things, he or she goes deep into appearances and searches for what is in the basis of things. Thus, the borderline between people and objects is removed. In short, the Dionysian state is the effort of humanity to reunify with the separated self (Nietzsche 3).
Apollo, whom Nietzsche accepts as the master of plastic arts, whispers to those who wish to reunify with the self, that they have to live on. Because whatever it costs, his duty is to save beautiful appearances and forms. Apollonian man is not without a "form, body or name" like Dionysian man (Ayvazoğlu, "Aşk Estetiği" 24).

Therefore, man is in continuous conflict with the Dionysian state which is related to the physical world of phenomena. So according to Nietzsche, the artist is either an Apollonian dream artist or an artist in Dionysian ecstasy. Being separated from the actual existence is a horrible thing. While the person tries to melt away to reunify with the self, he is at the same time forced to exist by Apollo. This is what really "tragic" means for Nietzsche. Nietzsche, who essentially claims that this conflict exists in the essence of the world, suggests that life, in a way, is a tragedy (Nietzsche 3).

It would be acceptable to say that the Dionysian state is equivalent to the state of love as the Sufis expressed it. Mawlana, centuries before Nietzsche, in one of his "rubais" (quatrain), described the artist who goes deep into phenomena in the pursuit of the essence of the world (the self) as follows: Let me go there enchanted, to see if the essence of the world is there. Either I step into the desired state or my head swirls in a whirlpool as my heart does (Mawlana, "Rubailer" Rubai 2g). The desired state is the state the wise man complains of being separated from.

In esoteric thought, the duty of Apollo, who forces people to say "yes" to life, had been transferred to Satan. According to the Sufis, Satan did not accept Adam's superiority, since Satan did not see that the compassion of God had been hidden in a piece of earth (Adam). Satan considered himself privileged since he was created out of fire, because he could only see the outer appearance of Adam, in other words, he could only relate with the form. (Muhammad Iqbal 254) So Satan is interested in the superficial world of phenomena, just like Apollo. Mawlana says, Satan is at war with God. Those who are lucky and fortunate know that to pretend reason and intellect originates from Satan and love from Adam (Mawlana, "Mathnawi" 4/b, 1395 and 1402).
A Sufi has to fight against and win over Satan who can prevent him from reunification, at the same time, Satan was considered an indispensable element of discipline for the spiritual development of humanity. If Satan had been demolished because he had challenged the order of God, then Adam would not have committed the sin which caused him to fall from the heaven and know good from evil (Muhammad Iqbal 254), and this would mean he would not be aware of his intellect. That man is who he is depends on his coming face to face with Satan. Humanity's fight against evil is a fight for acknowledgment of the absolute, by getting rid of the duality. Satan's effort to emphasise transitory things is connected to the Apollonian state in Nietzsche's terminology (Nietzsche 3). This conception of the world brings us to the Sufic view of art.

1.3 Mimesis
If we compare the Islamic art with the understanding of the Mimesis notion, which can be considered as one of the starting points of Western art philosophy, interesting conclusions can be drawn.

According to Beşir Ayvazoğlu, who is a contemporary Muslim critic and writer, figurative arts originated from a psychological move to replace the material world with its analogy; and this is both an example of narcissism and an expression of association with the material world (Ayvazoğlu, "İslam Estetiği" 28).
André Bazin suggests that at the end of a psychoanalysis carried out by the Apollonian tradition of Nietzsche, the "mummy complex" would be found. He continues; *According to Egyptian religion, death could only be overcome by the continuity of the material existence of the body. Death is nothing but the victory of time. Creating material appearances of the existence is to draw away the existence from the river of time. Egyptians, by mummifying the corpse, had tried to hold on to existence and had protected the corpse against any accidents by placing little earthen statues near the tomb. These statues were accepted as a substitute for the corpse. The main function of sculpture was thus revealed in the religious sources: to save existence through appearance* (Bazin 30).

To save existence through appearances is possible through Mimesis (imitation) which was first propounded by Aristotle as a theory of art. His work *Poetics* forms the basis of the theory of art in the European tradition (Aristotle 11).

This tradition of Mimesis was first described by Plato in the fifth BC as the relation to reality in art. *Human beings live just like chained prisoners in a cave, turning their back to the sun. Successive shadows of actual objects are reflected on the opposite wall and prisoners believe that these are the real objects. If one of the prisoners is set free and turns his eyes back for the first time, he will be dazzled, then gradually he will see the truth. Then he will recognise that it is the sun which makes the seasons and years. The source of everything that he and his friends see in the cave is the sun* (Plato 200).

In the parable of the cave, the shadows that deceive the prisoners are the data of the world perceived through the senses, which in fact has no reality. Above this deceiving world of appearances, there is the world of Ideas, which can only be perceived through intelligence, and that world is the world of truth. Over all this, there is the idea of Good represented by the sun in the parable of the cave. The Good covers the whole system. However this is not a religious belief (Tunali, "Sanat Felsefesi" 140).

Plato applies his system to aesthetics in the tenth book of "The Republic". Since
the world perceived through the senses has no reality, arts based on mimesis give second hand imitations of ideas. For example, there are many tables in the world, but all of them partake in only one Idea, that is, the Ideas of table. The master who designs tables arranges them in such a way as to fit in with the Idea of table. Then, the function of the painter who draws a table is, undoubtedly, to create second hand imitations of the Idea of table. In short, the painter is the imitator not of truth itself but its projection. Plato believed arts based on mimesis were far away from reflecting the truth. Mimesis does not present the truth, but the world of shadows we perceive through our senses (Plato 281).

Aristotle was not of the same opinion. For him, Plato's worst mistake was to imagine a world of ideas separate from the objects. If ideas were the essence of objects, then they could not be thought separately from the object. Since the object existed as a form, its idea was in itself. According to Aristotle, matter has an objective existence. There are some compounding elements in the object that are separable by thought, but not separable from each other. The most important of these elements is the idea which can be called the soul. And the substance is the essential support of the idea (Weber 90-105). As there must be the Idea of beauty to talk about the concept of beauty, there must be beautiful objects to talk about the beauty of objects.

When Aristotle was establishing his philosophy of aesthetics, he started building his logic inductively, by considering works of art and objects, rather than from the Idea of a transcendent beauty like Plato. Therefore, he assessed art as a reflection, in other words imitation of concrete existence. At the beginning of "Poetics", his work on aesthetics, Aristotle claimed that the arts like epic poetry and tragedy are directly based on Mimesis (Aristotle 12-15).

Although Aristotle's works have been studied closely in the Islamic world, it is hard to find any signs that his theory of Mimesis has been adopted or understood. The proposition that "imitation is essential for human nature" has been understood in a completely different way by Muslim intellectuals. As Tanpinar puts it, it has been interpreted as a recommendation for complying
with good examples (Tanpınar 494). Aristotle's works were influential again in the Western world with the beginning of the Renaissance. Muslims did not understand the theory of Mimesis because they were not interested in the art of Greek antiquity (Ayvazoğlu, "Aşık Estetiği" 31).

In most Muslim countries, Aristotle was the subject of courses in the universities for many centuries even after Ghazzali (1058-1111); he was especially accepted as a foundation teacher. All his known works have been read and discussed including his work "Poetics". However, it is hard to claim that his views in "Poetics" were well understood since examples of Greek art were not known or understood in the Islamic world. Farabi has placed "Poetics" (Kitabu's Shir) at the end of his science system. According to Farabi (870-950), "the art of poetry, which stands on the last step of the scale of truth, is worthless and nothing but lies" (Adivar V4, 460). Due to the difference of the Islamic view of the world, Muslims did not show any interest in Greek art. Although Muslims had a thorough knowledge of Plato's "Republic" and Aristotle's "Poetics", they never examined the thoughts of Homer who was often mentioned in these books (Togan 775-785), (Barthold and Köprüülü 15). According to De Boer, Muslims took one phrase but nothing else from Homer and that was "only one person can rule". "They have no knowledge about great Greek dramatists and lyric poets at all. Ancient Greek has penetrated to Islam culture only through mathematics, natural sciences and philosophy" (Boer 18).

It is a fact that Greek art was not attuned to the Islamic world. The members of a religion which fought against paganism would not be interested in the world of gods and goddesses who had acted so unbecomingly. Moreover, representation of these gods and goddesses in the human form, that is anthropomorphism, was something no Muslim could accept. Greek art identified beauty with the human body, therefore it could not attempt to represent the eternal system. There is an important anecdote in Ottoman history which underlines this antipathy regarding the issue of statues:

*While Süleyman the Magnificent and his army were returning from the Mohaç*
War (sixteenth century), they brought back two candlesticks and three statues from the treasury of the Kingdom of Hungary. The statues were the statues of Apollo, Hercules and Diana which Ibrahim Pasha, the Grand Vizier, had them erected in front of his palace at Sultan Ahmed square.

For that, a poet of the time satirised the pasha with the following lines:

Two Ibrahims came into this world; one has broken the idols, the other erected them.

Those who disliked Figani, a famous poet of the time, claimed that it was he who wrote the satire and they caused him to be put to death by hanging although he was innocent (Sekerci Osman 26-55).

Yet, ideas that Muslims absorbed while studying Greek philosophy would be of much use to them; neo-platonism especially, would be influential for a long time through its association with mysticism.

Muslim Aristotelians, who are called "Meshhaiyyun", have usually interpreted Aristotle by identifying him with Plato and Plotinus, the neo-platonic philosopher of the thirteenth century AD. Therefore, the Islamic philosophy based on Aristotle had two aspects; one is Platonic and the other is neo-platonic. The Meshhaiyyun, with the exception of works of Farabi and Ibn-i Sina on poetry and music, ignored on purpose the aesthetic doctrines of these three philosophers. The Sufis, too, were not interested in artistic issues theoretically and their only interest was the problem of "beauty" when they mentioned the beauty of God (Ayvazoğlu, "Islamda Estetik" 34).

Mysticism in Islamic belief had connections to neo-platonism. Since it is impossible to think about Plotinus' aesthetics separately from Greek and Roman art, in fact, it should not mean much to Muslims who were not aware of this art. Generally, it can be asserted that Plotinus, who searched for common grounds of reconciliation between Aristotle and Plato, applied the same methods for issues of aesthetics (Weber 29). He believed that the principle of beauty was imitation. Any substance without a copy could only be beautiful
once it is unified with a copy. For example, place a raw stone and a refined stone side by side; the refined stone bears the seal of the artist: for example, a goddess in the form of a human being. If a copy is present, then it is beautiful. Otherwise, the unrefined stone would also be beautiful and there would not be any difference between them. Beauty, which first exists in the imagination of the artist, is transferred to the stone and thus a work of art is born. According to Plotinus, natural existence was the image of essence. Therefore, those who discredited works of art for imitating nature were wrong. Because art is not satisfied with the imitation of appearances, it aspires to the ideal and complements the maturity of the objects (Yetkin 32).

In this respect, Plotinus, too, was not able to think beyond the examples of Greek and Roman art, and except in the "pantheist" interpretation, he did not add anything new to Aristotelian aesthetics. The Islamic arts and aesthetics, which originated from the principles of Islam and then assumed an original form by coalescing with the artistic traditions of various tribes that became Muslims, were completely opposed to Aristotelian principles. As the available data are examined, it is noticed that Muslim artists had intentionally avoided "mimesis". However, it is possible to establish some parallelism between Plato's aesthetics and the aesthetics of Islamic art. The prisoner in the cave turns back and sees the truth and recognises that moving shadows on the opposite wall has no reality at all (Ayvazoğlu, “İslamda Estetik” 31-32). The importance of the prohibition of depiction in early Islamic arts came from this background.

1.4 Prohibition of depiction

The meaning given by the Sufis to the word "love" was described in the philosophy of Nietzsche through the Dionysian state. (Nietzsche 247) The Islamic artist, who tried to liberate himself from the attractive but transitory shapes of the physical world by resisting the bewitching temptations of Satan, had reached both an arabesque form and the art of calligraphy. The abstract forms of architecture, which combined all arts, had no mimetic connection to the physical world. The idea of love in the mystical sense of a union with
essential forms beyond appearances was the foundation of all Islamic arts
(Ayvazoğlu, “Islamda Estetik” 37).

The basic reason for this tendency in Islamic arts is found in the main sources
of the religion, that is in the Holy Qur'an and in the Hadiths. It can be claimed
that the prohibition of depiction, which is subject to many different
interpretations, was the driving force that led Islamic artists to abstract forms
(Ettinghausen 254-261).

Although there is not a clear statement in the Holy Qur'an, there were Hadiths
which prohibited representation in painting and sculpture. The tendency
towards imitation or drawing pictures, which exists in all people, was
suppressed with religious and social prohibitions. The reason for this
prohibition was related to the fact that representation of gods with statues
(idols) as in the Greek civilisation was absolutely contrary to the description of
God in Islam and that it would have damaging effects on religious faith. Some
who had accepted Islamic faith had kept their old idols in their home and had
even created new ones. Many times, Muhammad the Prophet witnessed some of
his followers praying (“namaz”) in front of these idols (seventh century). The
worshipper would stare at these idols and identify the idol with the concept of
God. To prevent this, Muhammad the Prophet decreed: do not create images
(representations) and do not worship in front of these images. While His words
should have been interpreted within the context of a critical period at that time,
this was not the case, and for centuries it was the reason of the escape from
figurative arts to geometry and abstraction (Biçer, “Türk Yazı Sanatı Ders
Notlari” 15).

The first thing Muhammad the Prophet did upon conquering Mecca and
entering Kaaba was to destroy all the idols and to remove the pictures from the
walls. According to the story of Erzaki, the Prophet decreed that the pictures be
removed except "the ones under my hands" (Muhammad 171). The pictures
under his hands were the illustrations of Jesus, the Son and the Holy Virgin.
Although there are many rumours on this subject, the right thing to do was to
accept the prohibition of depiction with a moderate tolerance. In fact, this
tolerance had a place in the Holy Qur'an as well. Sculpture and drawing, which
are expressed with the word "temasül" (likeness), were interpreted differently
according to people's attitude. Saint Abraham who is one of the prophets, asked
his father and his tribe "What are these idols you are worshiping?" (The Holy
Qur'an 21/52). Another verse of the Holy Qur'an described Saint Solomon as one
who had artists under his order to create castles, sculptures and bowls like big
pools. In the opinion of religious experts the same word "temasül" (likeness)
should have been used for works of art not created for worshiping (The Holy
Qur'an 34/13). It is clear that the prohibition of depiction was put in place to
remove completely the habits of idol worshiping, and once an intellectual level
was developed, this prohibition would be no more valid (Ayvazoğlu, "Islamda
Estetik" 42).

The prohibition of depiction was not only applied in Islamic religion but also in
Christian and Jewish religions as well. For example, in the Psalms of David, it
is stated that although golden and silver idols had mouths they could not speak,
although they had ears they could not hear and although they had eyes they
could not see; and those who created these idols would resemble them at the
end, and in the other world, they would not avoid the torment of blowing spirits
into these idols. Similarly, naturalistic pictures and sculpture were avoided in
Christianity because of the fear that believers would end in idol worshipping
(Arseven 93).
1.5 The conclusion

Aesthetics, generally described as the science of beauty, has come to expand its descriptive limits to become a combination of philosophical and psychological theories in direct or indirect contact with philosophy, history, history of arts, sociology, anthropology and even biology (Ayvazoğlu, “Aşık Estetiği” 189). Aesthetics has become a collection of data and even a branch of science covering the arts, creation of works of art, their evaluation, both sociologically and anthropologically, aesthetic taste and relevant concepts. Today, due to the spread of Western culture throughout world, the theories of aesthetics have their roots generally in the worldly outlook of Greco-Roman culture in Turkey. This is misleading for the interpretation of works of art coming from non-Western cultures, the Islamic one in particular, since the dominant point of view is that of Western art and philosophy.

All societies which have adopted the Muslim religion have changed their cultural structures and arts upon the profound influence of Islamic view of the world. Even though there may be national differences, it is considered that Islamic principles are dominant in the artistic structure of all Islam societies. We can say that the fact that there are no specific philosophies on art and culture in Islamic history of thought as in the West, has caused the Islamic
thinkers and artists to have a different perceptions compared with those in the West. Art in the Islamic world is not a concept covering creations of aesthetic values under a single banner. Each and every branch of art has been considered as a different branch of science (science of poetry, science of music, etc.), thus the concepts of arts and crafts have not been definitely differentiated.

Therefore, any talk about Islamic arts will follow a path of a flourishing world of creations combined with handicrafts of all kinds. Probably, the most prominent reason is the misinterpretation of Qur'anic words on the prohibition of the worship of statues as a total prohibition of depiction, which has caused the Islamic artist to avoid representation of nature and tend to the abstract. As a consequence of the prohibition of depiction, abstraction and geometry have become the most important elements in Islamic art. For instance, one of the greatest consequences has been the rounding in the shape of Islamic letters in the alphabet although they were rather sharp and amorphous at the early stages of the religion (as in the move to Kufi letters from Ma'kili letters), thus arriving at an efficient and aesthetic expression in writing.

The idea of beauty in Western art corresponds to the idea of absolute (immanent) beauty in the Islamic art. Beauty of any object in nature is a reflection of God's beauty only. The concept of ugliness as found in some theories of aesthetics in Western art is non-existent in Islamic art. Since beauty is absolute (divine), there is no ugliness. The duty of Islamic artist is to look for beauty at its own source. In other words, they have to look for the substance behind visible beauty. Thus, the artist is far from any concern of substituting the physical world with anything else (Mimesis). In almost every creation of art within the Islamic tradition, we can see that the character and individual interpretation of the artist are irrelevant. Works of art are in a way metaphysical creations. The artist in this case is not the creator but the discoverer. For the Islamic artist, the way to reach the substance of beauty is not through depicting an object or expressing it in poetry. That beauty would only be a guide. It is only through abstraction that we can reach the substance itself, and stylisation is the first step to abstraction. Stylisation makes way for symbolisation and then, the
abstract is expressed in a symbolic language. A spectator of Islamic background would not look at the work of art as an external phenomenon but would rather attempt to perceive the mysticism in it. So, in order to arrive at an interpretation, Tasawwuf terminology is required. In conclusion, there is no tasawwufi (Sufic) aesthetics as a separate discipline but there is comprehension of art which has been deeply influenced by the tasawwufi (Sufic) view of the world.

Having considered in this chapter the philosophical background of the Islamic art and the general tendencies of the Islamic artist, it would be better to move now to a general view of the development of the Kufic script. Since this script is the most important and widespread manifestation of the calligraphy in Arabic, first of all a general history of the Arabic alphabet and calligraphy should be given. Then under the light of the present philosophical background, the evolvement of the Kufic script will be considered.
CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF KUELSCRIPT
THE DEVELOPMENT OF KUFI SCRIPT

2.1 The origin of the Arabic alphabet

In this chapter, the etymology of Arabic language and the development of script are investigated by explaining the language structure and its developments in the Arabic peninsula where the Islam religion emerged. As a consequence, Arabic script increased its influence and effectiveness with the gradual expansion of Islam. The great influence of Islam gave a sacred identity to the Arabic language with the transcription and reproduction of the Qur'an where visual aesthetics was of the utmost importance. Because of this, Arabic calligraphy became one of the most important branches of Islam art. In order to clarify this research on the first and most extensively used type of elaborate script, the Kufic, which was the result of the development of Islam from a religion into a religious state, first of all it is needed to clearly show how, 1500 years ago, the Islam religion, affected, changed and improved the language and the cultural and social structure of a society of a mainly nomadic character.

The word Calligraphy is usually defined by its two Greek roots: "kalli" meaning beautiful, and "graphia", writing. Although most often associated with the beautiful writing of the scribes during the Renaissance, it has come to encompass beautiful lettering made by other means as well. Oriental brush lettering or Roman stone carving are equally a part of what is called today Calligraphy.

In contrast to other nations such as the ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Chinese, whose complex writing systems date back thousands of years, the Arabs were late comers. Although Arabic is only second to the Roman alphabet in terms of its widespread use, the Arabic script was developed at a much later date.
Mamoun Sakkal points out that the earliest-known alphabet to mankind was the North Semitic, which developed around 1700 B.C. in Palestine and Syria. It consisted of 22 consonant letters (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.Html>).

The Semitic alphabet travelled to the Arabian Peninsula from two directions. Arabic belongs to the group of Semitic alphabetical scripts in which with few exceptions, only the consonants are represented in writing. The Arabic, Hebrew and Phoenician alphabets were based on this model. The Southern Arabs, although they did not originate from the Northern groups of Semites as Kenanis and Aramis, took their letters from the northern branch of the alphabet. The southern branch of the Semitic alphabet was constituted from the monumental Southern Arabian or Himyeri alphabet which had been used in the southern parts of the peninsula in the past and generally had straight lines and corners, and the “Pro-Arabian” alphabet that represented a branch of the southern alphabet that moved north to Damascus (Barin, 14-15). Around 1000 B.C., the Phoenician alphabet was used as a model for the Greek alphabet and some letters were added by the Greeks to represent the vowels. The Greek alphabet in turn became the model for the Etruscan (800 B.C.), from which came the letters of the ancient Roman alphabet, and ultimately all Western alphabets (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.Html>).

![Plate 10 - Aramaic letters](Plate 10-Aramaic letters)

Aramaic writing, which constituted a linguistic group, evolved in Syria in the thirteenth century BC. It was initially limited to the region of Damascus and north of Syria. The practice of using Aramaic writing expanded to all Semitic countries, except the Arabian and the Punic territories. The great facilities of Phoenician writing led the Arameans from Syria to adopt the Phoenician language and writing for their texts instead of cuneiform writing.
The establishment of their own alphabet was owed to the extraordinary diffusion of the Aramaic language, as it was adopted by the chancellery of the Persian Empire, as one of the official languages (Marcos, <http://www.imultimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/v1.html>).

Sakkal adds that Old Aramaic, the language of Jesus and the Apostles, dates from the second millennium B.C., and some dialects are still spoken by tiny groups in the Middle East. Arabic script still shares with Aramaic: the names of the alphabet letters (Alef, Jeem, Dal, Zai, Sheen, etc.); similar graphic representation for phonetically similar letters (e.g. Sad and Dad, Ta and Tha); the connections of letters in the same word and several forms of each letter depending on its location in the word, except for letters that cannot be connected to the letters which follow them (Alef, Dal, Raa, Waw). The Arabic alphabet contains eighteen letter shapes, by adding one, two, or three dots to letters with similar phonetic characteristics a total of twentyeight letters is obtained. These contain three long vowels, while diacritics can be added to indicate short vowels" (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html>).

However, it is hard to connect the current Southern Arabian alphabet directly to the Phoenician alphabet in terms of shapes, despite what the current classification suggests. It is thought that there have been a number of alphabets in between which have not yet been discovered. Some Arabian linguists, e.g. Anbari (1119-1181), claimed that the Arabian alphabet originated from an alphabet called Ma'kili, which had straight lines and corners (Kufic Arabian alphabet is generally monumental, however, it also has rounded corners), which gives the idea that there is an unknown ( undiscovered) prototype of Himyeri alphabet which has similar properties and that this alphabet had travelled north. However, it must be considered that this alphabet must have derived from the Kufic, changing completely into straight lines and corners, since the Ma'kili writings, which are available today, are not the oldest samples of Arabian writings (Marcos <http://www.imultimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/a3.html>).
According to contemporary scholars, the North Arabic script, which eventually predominated to become the Arabic of the Qur'an, relates most substantially and directly to the Nabatean script, which was itself derived from the Aramaic script. The Nabateans were in close proximity to the other Arab tribes, and they had kept commercial and cultural links with them. They were semi-nomadic Arabs, and they inhabited an area extending from Sinai and North Arabia to southern Syria, establishing a kingdom centred around the main cities of Hijr, Petra and Busra, which lasted from 150 BC until it was destroyed by the Romans in about AD 105. Their language and script outlived the destruction of their kingdom, and continued to have a profound impact upon the early development of Arabic writing especially. The Nabateans left numerous inscriptions scattered in the area they inhabited. (Safadi, 6) Safadi studied the inscriptions of Umm al-Jimal, dating from about AD 250, the Namarah inscription of the famous pre-Islamic poet Imru' al-Qays of AD 328, which represents an advanced transitional stage towards the development of the Arabic script, the Zabad inscription of AD 512, and the inscription of Harran (Turkey) from AD 568.

A second inscription from Umm al-Jimal, dating from the sixth century, confirms the derivation of the Arabic script from the Nabatean, and according to Biçer, points to the evolution of principal Arabic forms. Most of the researchers conclude that the origin of Arabian alphabet is the Nabatean alphabet which had Arabian origins and became Aramaic later in terms of the culture. There are many examples of proof available. During the first centuries after Christ, the southern Arabian alphabet had moved to north as the Aramaic alphabet had moved south (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe Özgü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim metodları” 4).
According to Arabic sources, these distinct forms constituted the so-called North Arabic script which was first established in north-eastern Arabia and flourished particularly in the fifth century among the Arabian tribes who inhabited Hirah and Anbar. From there it spread, in the late fifth and early sixth century, to Hijaz in Western Arabia. Bishr ibn 'Abd al-Malik is reputed to have introduced it into Mecca with the aid of his friend and father-in-law Harb ibn Umayyah. It is Harb, however, who is credited with having popularized its use among the aristocracy of Quraysh, the tribe of the prophet Muhammad. Among those who learnt writing from Bishr and Harb, and became competent scribes, were 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, 'Uthman ibn Affan, 'Ali ibn Talib, Talhah ibn 'Abd Allah, Abū 'Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah and Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, all of whom were destined to play leading roles in the early development of Islam. The first three noted above later became al-Khulafa' al-Rashidūn, the so-called Righteous or Orthodox Caliphs (Patriarchal Caliphs), and Mu'awiyah became the founder of the Umayyad dynasty which ruled the first great Muslim Empire (Umayyad Calphate 661-750).
Safadi points out that after the establishment of writing in Mecca, it spread to the nearby town of Medina, where the tribes of Aws, Khazraj and Thaqif were located. They took up the art of writing with great enthusiasm and they even became rivals to the scribes of Mecca. One of the scribes of Medina, Zayd ibn Thabit, attained great eminence. He became the prophet's most famous secretary and he was also entrusted with the task of collating and writing the first codex of the Qur'an during the reign of the caliphate Uthman (644–56) (Safadi 6).

The earliest Arabic script is known as Maghribi. This was most probably a further development of the Nabatean-derived form of letters. Certain modifications influenced by the Estrangelo type of Syriac script, were commonly used, especially in Hirah and Anbar in the late fifth or early sixth century. There is no doubt that the Maghribi's stiff and angular characteristics and the equal proportions of its letters influenced the development of the famous Kufic script, which emerged some time later, and in which these same qualities predominate. The Maghribi script developed and in time became the script of all the Arabs. With the advent of Islam, it gained a different status and was assumed to be the sacred script that God had especially chosen to transmit
His divine message to all humanity through the Qur'an. (Safadi 7-8).

Mustakimzade Süleyman Saadettin suggests in his book, Tuhfe-i Hattetin, that the art of calligraphy in Islam had started from Ma'kili (Ma'il) characters (Mustakimzade Süleyman 216).

Beginning from eleventh century, the forms of the Arabic alphabet developed rapidly with the rise of Islam. The main two calligraphic styles were the Kufic, and the sof cursive styles, including Naskhi, Thuluth, Nastaliq and many others (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html>). The Kufi script, however, retained its independent value since the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

2.2 First calligraphic developments in the Arabic alphabet
The written language had not been extensively used in the nomadic Arabian tribes. It is even rumoured that the prophet Muhammad was illiterate and that he miraculously started to read after receiving his first divine revelation when God ordered him to “Read!” (Abdurrahman Süleyman 12), (Biçer, “Türk Yazı Sanatı Ders Notları” 9). According to the Islamic records the first revelation of Muhammad took place in AD 610 (Schimmel 4).

*Read! By the name of God, who created human beings from a clot of blood. Read! The Lord is benevolent.*
(Holy the Qur'an, Al-'Alaq 1-3)
In such a society, merchants who owned caravans had to use the written language in order to conduct their business (Bicer, "Türk Yazı Sanati Ders Notlari" 10). They were also those who could speak a foreign language. However, in Arabia, and especially in Mecca, poetry and elocution were highly praised. The poems of the most popular poets in particular were hung on the walls of the Kaabah. As most of the population was illiterate, the zeal for elocution and poetry increased the tradition of memorising. Illiterate people who memorised things were called “hafiz”.

When the Holy Qur'an had been sent to Muhammad as a revelation on the Mount of Hira, the prophet started to deliver the words of God to the believers. These revelations were memorised by many of them and recorded by the special scribes of the prophet (Bukhari, “as-sahih” 1-4). However, to abstain from any conflicts with the revelations, he ordered that his own comments were not to be recorded (Muslim, “as-sahih” II, 2298). The revelations were memorised by many “hafiz” all together in order to avoid any kind of possible mistakes. Once one hafiz memorised God’s orders, he taught it to another and the Qur'an words were spread through this oral method (Safadi 8).

Plate 15 - Maghribi script by al-Qandusi (The Splendour of the Islamic Calligraphy)

Nonetheless, a common version used by everyone did not exist, except in some special issues (Ez-Zerkani, “Menahilu’l-Irfan” I/247). It was forbidden for the
“sahabah” to keep the written pages of the Qur'an during wartime and their journeys. The possibility of the pages being captured by the enemy was feared (Muslim, “as-sahih” III, 1491; Ebu Davud, Snen, II, 35). After the death of Muhammad (AD 632), the necessity to write down the Qur'an was obvious. Due to the problems of memorising, the absence of Muhammad to ask his advice because of the lack of written notes, the death of many of the hafiz in the wars during the spreading of Islam, and finally, in order to enable Muslims all over the rapidly expanding Islam Empire to learn the religion from first hand, it was seen as essential to write down the holy text (Süleyman, 17), (Safadi 7-8).

According to the view of Gilchrist, there were no records as to exactly how much of the Qur'an was reduced to a text during the lifetime of Muhammad. There is certainly no evidence to suggest that anyone had actually compiled the whole text of the Qur'an into a single manuscript, whether directly under Muhammad's express authority or otherwise, and from the information available about the collection of the Qur'an after his death, it must be concluded that the Qur'an had never been codified or reduced to a single text.

The widely accepted traditional account of the initial compilation of the Qur'an ascribes the work to Zaid ibn Thabit, one of the four companions of Muhammad, who, it is said, knew the text in its entirety. There is plenty of evidence that other companions also began to transcribe their own codices of the Qur'an independently of Zaid shortly after Muhammad's death. The most significant attempt was that of Zaid as it was done under the authority of Abu Bakr who was the first Caliph of Islam, and it is to this compilation that the Hadith literature gives most attention. It also became the standard text of the Qur'an during the caliphate of Uthman (Gilchrist 17).

Upon Muhammad's death, a number of tribes in the outer areas of the Arabian peninsula reneged from the faith they had recently adopted, whereupon Abu Bakr sent a large number of the early Muslims to control the rebellion forcibly. This resulted in the Battle of Yamama and a number of Muhammad's close companions, who had received the Qur'an directly from the Prophet, were
killed. What followed is described in this well-known hadith:

Narrated Zaid bin Thabit: Abu Bakr as-Siddiq sent for me when the people of Yamama had been killed. Then Abu Bakr said (to me): “You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you, and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for Allah's Apostle. So you should search for (the fragmentary scripts of) the Qur'an and collect it (in one book)”. By Allah! If they had ordered me to shift one of the mountains, it would not have been heavier for me than this ordering me to collect the Qur'an. Then I said to Abu Bakr, “How will you do something which Allah’s Apostle did not do?” Abu Bakr replied “By Allah, it is a good project.

(al-Bukhari, “Sahih” Vol. 6, 477)

Zaid eventually expressed approval of the idea in principle after Umar and Abu Bakr had both pressed the need upon him and agreed to set about collecting the text of the Qur'an into one book. One thing is quite clear from the narrative - the collection of the Qur'an is said quite expressly to have been something which Allah’s Apostle did not do (Safadi 8), (Gilchrist 17).

Zaid's hesitation about the task, partly occasioned by Muhammad's own disinterest in codifying the text into a single unit and partly by the enormity of it, shows that it was not going to be an easy undertaking. If he was a perfect hafiz of the Qur'an and knew the whole text off by heart, nothing excepted, and if a number of the other companions were also endowed with such outstanding powers of memorisation, the collection would have been quite simple. He needed only to write it down out of his own memory and have the others check it. Desai and others claim that all the huffaz of the Qur'an among Muhammad's companions knew the Qur'an in its entirety to perfection, to the last word and letter, and Desai himself goes so far as to suggest that the power of thus retaining the Qur'an in the memory of those who learnt it by heart was no less than supernaturally acquired:

The faculty of memory which was divinely bestowed to the Arabs, was so profound that they were able to memorise thousands of verses of poetry with
relative ease. Thorough use was thus made of the faculty of memory in the preservation of the Qur'an. (Desai, The Qur'an Unimpeachable, 25) (Gilchrist 17).

We have without doubt, sent down the Message; and we will assuredly guard it (from corruption) (The Holy Qur'an, Al-Hijr, 9).

This task was undertaken by one of the prophet's close friends, Umar ibn al-Khattab (Safadi 7-8). Therefore, according to Umar, the Qur'an was compiled and written down firstly in the era of the first caliph Abu Bekr. And the first scribe of the prophet, Zayd ibn Thabit, had been charged with the responsibility of gathering the pieces and checking its integrity.

After this first manuscript, during the reign of Caliph ‘Uthman (A.D. 574-656, See glossary) there had been four or five copies (seven according to some sources) (Kılıç 149) which had been distributed to the main Muslim centres to be used as the unique commands of God and the sole Islamic doctrine. These first Qur'an manuscripts had been written with the local Maghribi script (Safadi 7-8). Due to the dialects and orthography differences in the Arabic peninsula, these copies were rearranged according to the local script and the local grammar under the reign of St. Osman (‘Uthman) in order to avoid reading differences and misunderstandings and to obtain a standard manuscript (Ebu Shame, 19), (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe Özugü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 6). For a long time after this date, the manuscripts of the Qur'an were extensively copied with Kufah (Kufic) and with other aesthetic scripts developed later and expanded to all of the Islamic world (Yazır 68-69) (Safadi 9). Many writing styles emerged from the Maghribi script and were named after the city where they were designed. For example, the Anbari of Anbar, the Hiri of Hirah, the Makki of Mecca, and the Medani of Medina (Safadi 9).
Gilchrist’s research regarding this subject gives clues of where to look to learn the probable origin of a manuscript of obvious antiquity. The best clue is the script. A number of different scripts were used in the earliest days of the Qur’an’s transcriptions which went through various stages of development. As a result they assist, far more than the other factors we have mentioned, to determine the likely origin of each of the early Qur’an manuscripts that survive to this day.

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Plate 16 - The Arabic alphabet as a way of reading the sequence of letters.
(Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html>)

Before the spread of Islam in the Arabic peninsula, the only proper script known to exist was the Maghribi. It had a very formal and angular character, using equal proportions in its letters. This Maghribi script became the standard from which the other famous early scripts developed. No Qur’an texts or fragments in this script are known with any certainty to exist. However, there
are some very early texts which cannot be defined accurately in respect of the script employed." (Gilchrist 113).

2.3 Spread of the Arabic alphabet

Islam started in the Arabian Peninsula: The prophet was Arabian and the Holy Book was written in Arabic. The Arabs until then had not built any significant civilisations, but the new religion brought dynamism with it. In the seventh century, they created an empire out of a nomadic desert people. By the time of the Prophet’s death, Islam had spread to the whole Arabian peninsula. After the death of the fourth caliph Ali, the caliphate passed to the Umayyad dynasty. In this era, Islam turned into a religious empire. For Muslims, the religion was not only a doctrine of belief but also a governmental and social order (Karal 23). The spread of Islam through force created a new empire and an Arabian imperialism. The religious-political spread was part of the Arabian culture. Arabian culture, language and alphabet spread out together with the religion. The assimilation of other societies accepting their religion was one of its purposes. The Arabian language cut through the local languages of Egypt, Syria and North Africa, and the locals became Arabs. The proverb attributed to the Prophet became true: “That who speaks Arabic is Arabian” (Şimşir 3).

Mamoun Sakkal emphasises that the Arabic alphabet was adopted by several non-Arab nations, with the spread of Islam, for writing their own languages. In Iran, Arabic letters were used to write Persian, with the addition of four letters to represent the phonemes that did not exist in Arabic: p, ch, zh, and g. The Arabic alphabet was used likewise by the Ottoman Turks until 1928, and letters for different phonemes existing in the Turkish language were integrated within the alphabet. It was also used to write other Turkic languages and dialects, such as Kazak, Uzbek and Tadjik. Several other languages used the Arabic alphabet at one time or another, including Urdu, Malay, Swahili, Hausa and the Algerian Tribal languages.

(Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html>)

The Arabian letters, considered by Arabian Bedouins, to be a mysterious
invention, had first entered the Bani Lahm land in Iraq within the first century after the Great Exodus, then invaded through the spread of the religion over much of the African-Asian lands exceeding the Arabic language and world. In the meantime, the languages of many tribes, who accepted Islam although they were not of Semitic origins, found their place in the Arabian alphabet which brought an end to Berber letters in North Africa, Coptic letters in Egypt, Aramaic, Surianic and other Semitic letters in Syria, Arabia and Iraq, and partially the Greek letters in Byzantine territory, Pehlevi letters in Iran, Uygur letters in Central Asia moving all the way with the religion to Afghanistan, Belucistan, India, Malaysia, Sumatra, Java and China (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe Özgü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 5).

The main factor in such a spread was not the perfection of the Arabic language itself but the belief that God elected Arabic particularly as the language of the Holy Book. Islam is a mass of absolute rules to be obeyed. Another factor was predominant clergy’s speeches on the divinity of the language ever since the start of the religion and the obligation of all prayers to be offered in this language which has brought about a union of language in the new empire, making up a very strong basic structure (Öztürk Y. N., “TV Panel Discussion - ATV Turkey”, 7 February 1998), (Gülen F., “Fifth Level Conversations”, Video Tapes.).

The great literature of Persia and the Ottoman Empire has been created in this alphabet which was used in Turkey until 1928. The alphabet was used in the local languages of the Malgashes in Madagascar, the Sevahilis in Zanzibar, the Haussas in Sudan, all Islam tribes in the Great Desert of Sahara, Bosnians and to some extent Albanians in Europe, Circassians in the Caucasus and other Turkic societies in Russia. The Spanish language was also written in this alphabet by the Moors in Andalusia (Şimşir 16). In order to keep the phonetic properties of all these languages in the writing, new letters had to be invented together with punctuation. Arabian moreover, was a foundation for two narrowly-used alphabet systems, Yezidi alphabet used in Musul for Kurdish religious writings and the Balti alphabet formed as a mixture of Indo-Arabian
alphabet by an Islamic society living between Western Tibet and Cashmere (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe Özugü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 5).

The Arabian alphabet in the twentieth century comes second only to the Roman. However, the Roman and Slavic alphabets have recently replaced it in some regions causing it to be less widespread. In the Islamic Turkic states once within the Russian Federation, were the first to use the Roman, and then the Slavic alphabets in 1926. In 1928 Turkey moved to using the Roman alphabet with the revolution of Atatürk. Iran took the same decision slightly before the Islamic revolution (Karal 197).

2.4 The revealing of the Kufic form

The Arabic script, first known by its Kufi (or Cufi) form, had a highly versatile field of application and was formed by phonetic lines written by a reed pen from the right hand side to the left. When executed, the angle between the hand and wrist should be 45 degree, slant in a ribbon-like appearance.

The earliest script used in architecture, either carved on stone or wrought into tile mosaic, is again the Kufic script. The name Kufi derives from Kufa, a city built on the ancient Hira, where it was first used. The exact date when the Arabic script was born is unknown. The earliest samples of the Arabic script, born as a particular form of the Nabatian script and transmuted subsequently, are to be found on the coins of the early second century and in the epitaph on Kumbet-es Sahra, built in A.D. 622, during the reign of Abdülmelik. The main characteristic of the Kufic script appears to be the transformation of the ancient cuneiform script into the Arabic letters.
Although the idea of Kufic as originating from the city of Kufa became popular, there is opposite opinion against it. The Arabs usually distinguish four types of pre-Islamic script; al-hiri (from Hira), al-anbari (from Anbar), al-maqqi (from Mecca), and al-madani (from Medina). The famous author of catalogues, Ibn-Nadim (died 390/1000) was the first to use the word 'Kufic' deriving it from the hiri script. However Kufi script cannot have originated from Kufa since that city was founded in 638, and the Kufi script existed before that date. But this great intellectual centre enabled calligraphy to be developed and perfected aesthetically from the pre-Islamic scripts already in existence (Khatibi and Sijelmassi 124).
Ibn-Khaldun agrees with this hypothesis:

When the Arabs founded their empire, they conquered towns and provinces. They settled at Basra and Kufa and their government had need for handwriting. Thus they began to learn it, and it came into current practice, developing rapidly till reached, at Basra and Kufa, a high degree of accuracy, though not yet perfected. And today Kufic script is well known. Afterwards, Arab conquests and expansion covered Ifriqiyya and Spain. The Abbasids founded Baghdad, where calligraphy was perfected as a result of the development of the civilisation in that city, the metropolis of Islam and centre of the Arab dynasty. The script of Baghdad differs from Kufic in the way that the letters are fully formed, and presented in an elegant and distinguished style. The difference increased under the Vezir (Abu) Ali Ibn Muqlah and his secretary, Ali Ibn Hilal, called Ibn al-Buwwab. But the tradition of the calligraphy of Baghdad and Kufa disappeared with him after the tenth century. The principles and characters of the one differed to such an extent from the other that there was, as it were, an abyss between them (Khatibi and Sijelmassi 128)

The Arabic script, written on hides and paper is generally made of horizontal, vertical and curved lines. The vowels are indicated by marks, (üstün, esre, őtrü) placed above or under the consonants. The compact arrangement of the Arabic calligraphy makes it possible to say a great deal on a small surface when applied on paper and other materials. The facility of the compact arrangement has resulted in decorative designs in architecture. Because of this speciality, the
Arabic script has gained a monumental characteristic with its long ribbon-like lines or the vertical arrangement of these lines on interior or exterior surfaces.

Because the Kufi form was bulky, it was not convenient for writing the Qur'an. Ibn-Mukle developed the “Nesih”, a form which could be written quickly. After that “Thuluth” was developed by Ibn-Bevvap. Besides these, in following centuries “Reyhani”, “Muhakkak”, “Tevki”, and “Rika” forms were developed, Yakutu Müstaemi compiled these forms under the name of “Aklam-i sitte”. Apart from the “Aklam-i sitte” many other calligraphy forms were born. The most important of these was “Ta’liq”. Ta’liq was especially used in literature (Barın, “Study notes” 13).
2.5 The Kufi script

The first calligraphic exploits of Islam are to be found in the monumental script which may be said to have reached its peak in the last half of the second century A.H. which ended in 815 A.D. This script is clearly the outcome of a deliberate aspiration, impelled by the consciousness of the need for a more hieratic form of lettering, a need that had prompted more than one attempt in the direction of sacred art. The form which finally succeeded and prevailed takes its name from the Iraqi town of Kufah which was one of the earliest centres of Islamic learning (Safadi 11).

The founding of two new Muslim cities of Bashra and Kufa after the second decade of the Muslim religion gave rise to two strong and influential schools in Arabian script and language. The Hira alphabet (al-hiri) used to be the dominant script in the area. The script that was developed in Kufa helped to improve the writing forms and areas of usage in Mecca (al-maqqi) and Medina (al-madani), because the city of Kufa was heir to Hira's culture and population and it was the new cultural centre (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazılarında Türkçe Özgü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 7).

Plate 24 - a sample of the earliest Kufi script form, eightieth-ninth centuries

Even if these reforms are regarded as having been applied both on linear and rounded types of writings, it is a fact that Kufa developed exclusively a linear type of writing. This newly developed type of writing had its own proportional qualities. Forms with vertical corners were very important. The writing was
expressed with short vertical and long horizontal lines. This type of writing was named “al-Kufa” after the city where it was most commonly used and because of the claims that it was the city where the writing was developed. In addition, the famous author Ibn-Nadim (died 390/1000) was the first to use the word “Kufic”, deriving it from hiri script.

However, Kufic script cannot have originated in the city of Kufa because that city was founded in 17/638, and the Kufic script existed before that date. But this great intellectual centre enabled calligraphy to be developed and perfected aesthetically from the pre-Islamic scripts already in existence (Khatibi, and Sijelmasi 124). This type of writing comprises all the former attempts towards improving the script and it is accepted as a milestone of all subsequent characters. Taking into consideration that Mecca and Medina scripts are closely linked to one another, it can be said that Bashra and Kufa scripts are closely linked, too. The general outlook is that after a short formal period, all these four scripts had similarities in their basics. The most crucial among their common characters is the slightly italicised arrangement of letters which was generally applied in Mecca and Medina scripts and was also influential in creating one type of writing named “short life italic” in the seventh century. It can be seen that this script does not have punctuation or vowels. Neither were there paragraphs, or the illumination arts which were the basic quality of the early Arabian scripts (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe Öğü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 8).

Plate 25 - Ornamental Kufic composition on the wall, tenth century, Iraq
The Mask script also had its own individual features. In time, it got to have more rounded characters which were created by low and levelled profile and horizontally extended movements. The extension in horizontal lines would differ from line to line and even from word to word in order to provide the writing with a more balanced and aesthetic outlook on the page. The arrangement depended solely on the calligrapher's taste, and some basic rules. One of these rules was that words with three or less characters and the last word in a line would never be horizontally extended. The extended lines were generally followed by lines that were not extended. Soon however, the rules of the Mask script became far too complex. In time, the difficult rules were simplified and rearranged, which helped the Mask script to be used for a longer period of time, as compared to the italic script mentioned above. The Kufic script reached its perfection in the second half of the eighth century. The climax lasted 300 years. It was accepted as the only formal script for the copying of Qur'an during the first years of the religion. The Kufic script had more of a horizontal profile vision when compared with the others. Thus, the height of the writing was less than its width by intention. It provided the writing with some dynamism.

The Kufic script Qur'ans that can be found today are all in the long and narrow rectangular format. Kufic script was not only used for reproductions of the Qur'an but also for architectural and similar materials of illumination in the examples of which we can point out the narrow horizontal lines or the rectangular format. Especially in Horasanian and Seljukian architecture, the Kufic script was intensely used on stone carvings as an interior and exterior element of illumination. The Kufic script used in architecture provided a vast area of design (Yazir 73), it is very interesting therefore, that illumination in the Qur'an was not applied until the early ninth century, however, later on, the elements of illumination started to be used in the writing and many techniques of illumination developed to be used in many areas like architecture, wood working, metal working and the paper itself.
The Kufic script soon started to be used in titles, chapter headings called Sure, between the lines, between the chapters and informative writings called "Kolofon", at the end of a book with the title, date of publishing and name of the publisher. In the previous periods, these elements of illumination were used in all of the Muslim countries. The practice went on until the sixteenth century without any changes, especially in the western Muslim countries all the way to Spain, and soon was called the "western Kufic script". However, in the eastern Muslim countries, the elements of illumination were enriched after the tenth century. The new elements were primarily applied to the Kufic script which came to be named eastern Kufic script (Khatibi and Sijelmasi 9-10).
The simplicity of the Kufic script in its earlier periods reflected the cultural and social hardships of its time. However, the Islamic culture settled and started developing its own characteristics in time, so the Kufic script reflected these developments, and new elements of illumination were formed. It is at this period of time that the chequered and ornamental Kufic characters started. The Kufic used in illumination arts soon became an important model for all Islamic arts.

2.6 The branches of the Kufic script

The simple elegance of the early decorative Kufic script is in contrast with the picturesque enrichment of the Fatimi, Seljukian and Gazne epitaphs. The Muslim artists in Egypt and Syria commonly used the Kufic script in decoration during the reigns of the Fatimi Caliphs (909-1171) especially on metal, glass and textiles. Decorative Kufic script reached its climax in the eleventh century during the reign of the Seljukian sultans in terms of epitaphs. The Seljuks ruled during the late Abbasi period. The golden age of Kufic illuminations were at the time of the Seljuks, especially on architecture and stone carvings. Today, the most prominent examples can be seen in Iraq, north-eastern Anatolia, western Iran and Horasan today. One main point to make about the Kufic script is that it was not bound with strict rules. It provides the artist with a relative sense of freedom both in the planning stages and the creation of the decorative elements. In former ages, Kufic script was used on figures with leaves and flowers as a decorative element. However, starting in the early eleventh century, the letters themselves were used as decorative elements (Welch 47-48). New geometrical elements started to appear, too, which were in figures of hair locks and knots. Vertical corners of some letters merged. Primarily, the design would be comprised of a square.

More complex decorative figures in the development of the Kufic script on epitaphs lasted until the end of the twelfth century. Afterwards, the script lost its practical function and started to be used only as a decorative element. The most important styles are the hair locks and knots in the form of leaves and flowers. In addition, symbolised arrangements of human and animal figures
have also been used. As a contrast, highly complex geometrical arrangements have been created using the simplest form of Kufic, namely the rectangular script, which today is called chequered Kufic script. It was most commonly used in mosques, minarets, china illumination, books and some epitaphs. The decorative Kufic would be applied on all surfaces including tiles, glass, marble, china, wood, stones, metals, ivory, fabric and vellum. Examples of epitaphs can be found throughout the Muslim world. However, the best are in the Amik Plain in Turkey, Karuhan in Tunisia, Cairo in Egypt, Granada in Spain and Gazne in Afghanistan (Sahinoğlu 12-13).

In the ninth century, there are two important developments. The new styles of Kufic script emerged in the eastern and northern Africa. They have been given different names since they differ from the simple Kufic style. The script used in the east has been called al-Kufi al-farisi (Persian Kufic or eastern Kufic) or al-Kufi al-baghdadi (Baghdad Kufic) whereas the one used in the west has been called al-Kufi al-maghribi (Western Kufic). The Keyrevan city of Tunisia was known as the birthplace of the Western Kufi form which showed some small disparities in north Africa (Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco). The standard Kufic script was used in northern Africa during the tenth century. Some variations developed resulting in the formation of north and west African and Andalusian types of script.

Plate 28 - Types of eastern Kufic scripts. From above to below: Early Kufic, Eastern Kufic, Western Kufic, Knotted Kufic, Square or chequered Kufic. (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html>)
Both of these styles were developed as much lighter, dynamic and highly decorative elements compared to the original Kufic. They were really very decorative and would only be used in illumination of books and some other decorations. The original Kufic was called by the Western people as square or rectangular Kufic due to its bulk of horizontal and vertical lines (Lings 15). The eastern Kufic was developed by Persians during the late tenth century. The difference in eastern Kufic was that the long upwards movement of the letters were much more vertical, whereas the shorter sides are italicised to the left, creating an onward dynamic motion. Thus, it is called by the Western artists as tilted Kufic or bent Kufic. The lines are very slim and delicate compared to the classical Kufic. It became even more delicate with time. The flowers in some characters were extended downwards which is common in the western Kufic style.

Plate 29 - A sample of the early periods, Northern Africa, tenth century (Western Kufi)

However, the western Kufic had developed a delicate style, having been set free from the static forms of standard Kufic script. Until recent years, it has also been used as the decorative style for illuminating titles of the Qur'an. One of the worthiest branches of eastern Kufic is the Qarmatian script which is believed to be created around 875 by a well-known rebel group of Muslims. The characters are even closer to each other. The eastern Kufic characters which are more decorative here are accompanied by a ground well illuminated by painting techniques. The ground is decorated with mixed flower figures. The eastern Kufic differs from the original Kufic with its lack of long, wide horizontal lines
and an increase in diagonal and triangular characters. Thus, eastern Kufic, too, is called tilted Kufic. It has a multitude of forms. It is more compact, some forms are more static and some others are rounded. However, each and every one of them is a piece of eastern Kufic script (Lings 16).

There are two basic reasons for variation in writing styles with a view to tasawwufi (mystic) philosophy. According to Islam, divine qualities can be grouped into two categories. One of them is the Quality of Majority and the other is Quality of Beauty. This dualism can be seen throughout the universe. Each one of the qualities of Majority and each one of the Qualities of Beauty are separated into two at contrasting poles and last forever. For instance, power can be used both for the good or evil. Also, the qualities of Beauty can either be kept internal or shared and reflected upon all beings. Both of these elements have horizontal and vertical reflections. To reach a greater sense in the sentence, letters that are extended upwards can be used and likewise, the expanse of the universe can be described in harmony with vertical extensions between letters. These explanations show that each new style in Islamic art has some mystic counterpart (Lings 16-17).
This style of writing has been used in Qur'an reproductions in Iran between the seventh and eleventh centuries. Calligraphers have used it particularly in illumination of chapter headings. The eastern variation of Kufic has been described as rather feminine (Lings 17). What is meant by feminine here can be best explained by its beautiful and holy expressions as well as its fertile character in producing decorative elements.

2.6.1 The classification of the Kufic script in the traditional Turkish Islamic arts

In the traditional Turkish Islamic arts, there are five types of Kufic scripts. The Kufic forms have particularly been appreciated with their architectural aesthetic specialities.

a) Kufi Nesih
b) Kufi jeli
c) Checquered Kufi
d) Cursive Kufi
e) The Kufi of which surface is decorated with cursive branches

a) Kufi nesih: This is a primitive type, used since the early days of Islam. The curved lines are more prevalent than straight lines. The body of the script is bare. The earliest Qur'ans were written in this type of script. Because of the difficulties in working it into building materials, the Kufi nesih has not been popular in architecture and has been used only in manuscripts.

b) Kufi jeli: This type has the most developed body among the Kufic scripts and is used to mark the beginning of the Qur'an chapters and in the inscriptions on monuments. In architecture the Kufi celi has been used more as a decorative element than for reading. This type of script has tended to cover an increasingly wider surface and lose its readability. It has been used on cornices, inscriptions, to inscribe the minaret (turrets of mosques) cornices and drums of the cupolas.
c) **Chequered Kufi**: One of the characteristics of this script is that it is formed of straight horizontal and vertical lines, and another is that the lines and the space between the lines are of equal width. The chequered Kufi has given rise to special styles of piling up and various arrangements in line with its characteristics. It has been used in manuscripts as well as abundantly in architecture. As in all types of the Kufi script, chequered Kufi is also characterised mainly by its geometrical form.
d) **Cursive Kufi:** In this type of script, the letters ended in the shape of a leaf. This gave a more decorative appearance to the letters. This style had been widely used in the “Eastern Kufic” which emerged in Persia.

e) **The Kufi of which surface is decorated with cursive branches:** In this type of script the surface is decorated without interfering with the letters. The written text is perceived separately from the surface on which it is written. This is currently called “Qarmathian” script. It is believed that this script was developed by a rebellious Islamic fraction in the years of 875 (Sahinoğlu 10)

### 2.7 The conclusion

In this chapter, I have described the origins of the Arabian alphabet, its development and its close relation with the Muslim religion which has been the main factor in its development. The importance of writing in society as a result of the birth of the religion has carried the Arabic alphabet to the top of all the Islamic arts. Writing, used as a means of expressing the holy messages of Islam religion, would strive to provide a divine and visual influence with its content, unity among figures and aesthetic structure. The Kufic script was used primarily and most commonly in early periods of the religion for the reproduction of the holy book, the Qur'an, thus it was very influential in both the rise and the development of Islamic calligraphy. It can even be said that Kufic script caused the rise and development of the illumination arts that had never been used before the ninth century. Moreover, the Kufic script itself started to be used as an element of illumination after a certain period of time (since the first copied Qu'ran) which can be seen almost everywhere on paper, architecture and on all kinds of materials. The Arabian scripts that followed the Kufi tradition did not have enough fields of use, as Kufic did, so they were not committed to the art of illumination. Most of them were merely used for manuscripts. Kufic script is the richest in terms of graphic compositions among all the Arabian characters. Building on this chapter on Kufic script, in the next chapters the visual similarity of Kufic characters to Roman letters and whether
the graphic compositions applied to Kufic script may be applied to the Roman letters will be discussed. The applicability of current Roman letters in relation to Kufic decorations will be investigated as a step on the way to contemporary calligraphy.

Plate 35 - Rectangular and interwoven Kufic
CHAPTER III

THE IMPORTANCE OF CALLIGRAPHY IN TURKISH HISTORY OF ART
(Ottoman Era thirteenth – twentieth centuries)
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THE IMPORTANCE OF CALLIGRAPHY IN TURKISH HISTORY OF ART
(Ottoman Era thirteenth – twentieth centuries)

This chapter describes the development of calligraphy in Turkey and outlines not only the main calligraphers and their style of work, but also the rules in calligraphic art. The Turks have had a major role in the spread of the Muslim religion through the empires they have created since the twentieth century. Despite the fact that Islamic calligraphy is in the Arabic script, the Turks converted to the religion and accepted the Arabic script.

The Qur’an descended in Mocca, was read in Egypt, was written in Istanbul.
(Anonymous from public)
(Qur’an was given to the Prophet in Mecca by God, it was best read in Egypt and best written in Istanbul.)

This saying is a proof of the fact. We can easily describe all of the developmental stages of Islamic calligraphy by limiting ourselves with the Turkish calligraphers. Because of its geographical location the Seljuk Empire (from tenth-eleventh to thirteenth centuries), a Turkish Empire contributed greatly to the development and spread of the “Eastern Kufic” style of calligraphy which is known to be used principally in Kufic compositions of architecture in Iran, Iraq and Anatolia. Also the first period of Seljuks, Kufi form experienced its golden age of itself (seventh to eleventh Centuries). So the Seljuks used the especially eastern syle Kufi form on their artworks (usually architecture).

The tradition of calligraphy continued to flourish during the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922). The Turkish calligraphers pioneered never schools of calligraphy taking the art itself to a climax. Calligraphy developed in the Ottoman Empire on documents like manuscripts, decrees of the Sultans, ornamental monograms
of the Sultans and placards, in contrast with the stone and tile calligraphy of Seljuk Empire. However, calligraphy has continued to appear on interior decorations of architectural structures, stone, and wood engravings. The art of calligraphy, had become prominent with the formation of Kufic forms, which became the main factor in the formation of new schools in calligraphy in the Ottoman Empire, and Kufic forms were some of the basic aesthetic criteria and rules (Tunali 368).

Calligraphy had a prominent role in architecture as well which included the writing on stone, brick, enamelled tile, wood and textile is very important. Writing was an element which was mostly appreciated as essential in every domain of Turkish art and which vitalized architecture (Çam 105). Angular writings consisted of Kufic circular writings, “Thuluth” (large-text writing) and “Nesih” (roundish writing in Arabic letters). The ornamented writings called “flowery latticework Kufic” were popular in Seljuk times. But the main field of calligraphy depended on paper and the starting point of all scholars of old Turkish calligraphy, was compositions on paper.

*What I am trying to achieve in painting has long ago been achieved in Islamic script.*

**Pablo Picasso** (Turkiyemiz, 1978)

What is “Hat” (Calligraphy)? “Hat” means line. According to the big dictionary, the word “Hat” has more than 10 meanings. Yet only two of them relate to our subject.

**I- Hat**: Its literal meaning is line.

**II- Hat**: It is also used as infinitive. It means to write (Yazır 10).

Kufic writing was written on parchment with thick and angular letters and is said by public (in the Islam world) to have emerged from the city Küfe where in Iraq (seventh century), may be differentiated into three forms. Khatibi, and Sijelmassi have described how the first is a simple and primitive form written with the Kufic pen and seen in the Qur’ans. In the second form, which is
observed in “sura” titles in wooden or metal carvings, the letters are unadorned, and written on an ornamented ground. The third form of Kufic writing is the most mature, but the most ornamented and it is very much used in the old Turkish architecture. The counterpart of the Kufic writing are “nesih” and following “Thuluth” which existed along with it during the first years of Hegira (Khatibi and Sijelmasi 122). Kufic writing after the sixteenth century may be said to have perished. “Thuluth” writing as well is differentiated into “nesih”, “Thuluth” and “Jaly” (large cursive style). “Nesih” is the base of “Thuluth”. It is used in the Qur’an and other books and in the works to be read in hand. “Thuluth” writing, in contrast with the geometrical angular character of the Kufic writing, is circular with very few straight lines. “Jaly” means big, large writing which comes after “Nesih” and “Thuluth”. But one cannot have “Jaly” writing by enlarging “Thuluth” writing, for its anatomy, its structure is different. It is a writing form used in religious buildings (Aslanapa 387).

3.1 Calligraphic developments and famous calligraphers in the Turkish calligraphy art (Ottoman period twelfth – twentieth centuries)

When we speak of Turkish calligraphy, we refer to writing of aesthetic value in characters based on the Arabic script, which the Turks had adopted as their writing medium after their conversion to Islam. The Arabic characters gradually assumed an aesthetic function after the advent of Islam, and this process gathered momentum from the mid-eight century onwards, so that calligraphy was already a significant art discipline by the time the Turks joined the Islamic world. Therefore it is necessary to begin with a brief review of the structure of Arabic characters and their development during the early centuries of Islam. The most succinct definition of calligraphy formulated Islamic writers is, according to Ugur Derman, “Calligraphy is a spiritual geometry produced with material tools.” The aesthetic values implied by this definition held true for centuries.


With their adoption of Islam religion from the tenth century on, Turks have appropriated Arabic letters together with the Qur’an, but they have made them
into an aesthetic writing. While Arabic “Thuluth” and “Jaly” writings were an art of ornamentation just like the Kufic writing, in Turkey, writing itself has been heightened to the level of an art. The writing of the Qur’an as a work of art was achieved by Turks in Istanbul (Güvenli, “Türklerin İslam Sanatlarına Katkıları” 3).

Before turning to some of our calligraphers whose names are time-honoured in their efforts of developing the Islamic art of writing, the term calligrapher needs to be explained.

The kind of architectural public calligraphy we have been examining, known as “Yazır”, demands long years of study and dedication, as well as special pens, inks, paper and other equipment. Regular practice is essential even for an experienced calligrapher, since it is an art requiring extraordinary discipline and dexterity. The calligrapher might be likened to a man running the wrong way along a conveyor belt. He must run hard just to remain in the same spot, and only by the greatest exertion can he make actual headway. Mathematical rules govern even the apparently most free flowing inscriptions, and the various forms which any letter can take may be interpreted only in strict accordance with these rules. The spelling or wording of the chosen text must not be corrupted in the name of artistic license, so that every single dot must be included in the finished composition. Any composition which fails to comply with this criterion is unacceptable, however pleasing the overall effect to the uninformed eye. This is the main factor distinguishing calligraphy from other plastic arts.

Following the announcement of Turkey as a Republic, the western examples have been rendered in all fields from education to politics resulting in the education of arts to be continued in the direction of the western art samples. Despite the fact that the modern education of arts has already replaced the long-striving, difficult education of the candidate artist by his master of the history, the candidate artists of classical Islamic calligraphy are still in such a traditional
contact with their tutors. The main reason being that even today, the art itself has a mystical touch to it.

However, this does not preclude innovation in calligraphy. As Cevik has pointed out;

*Over the centuries many styles of script and forms of calligraphic composition have arisen. In many cases the innovative style of an outstanding calligrapher has been followed by successive generations of artists, creating alternatives to accepted classical styles* (Cevik, “The Art of Calligraphy” 16).

Until Yakut-u Musta'simi (?-1299) who is said to be the slave of Musta'sim Billah, the last Abbasi Caliph, the point of the writing pen was cut flat. By cutting it crooked, Yakut invented “Tahrif-i Kalem” (Corruption of Pen). With an invention seemingly simple, Yakut succeeded in marking a new phase in the art of writing, in shaping the new course of the development of writing. Hence, in virtue of his innovation contributing to the art of writing, they called “Yakut” the “calligrapher” (Yazir 75-78).

There were calligraphers who produced Beautiful Writing before Yakut. But their style of using the pen was simple and without a character. Concerning those before Yakut, the terms “Katib” and “Kuttab” (clerk and clerks) and “Hattat” and “Hattatin” (calligraph and calligraphers) were used as synonymous. When the calligraphy and calligraphers enjoyed a distinct art school status due to Yakut, the word “calligrapher” began to be used as a new term representing this trend. From then on, the words “Katib” and “Kuttab” have not been used in this sense (Ibn-i Haldun 6).

Moreover, just as the Ottoman calligraphers, also showed new invention for some time following Persians, have used the terms “Hos-nüvis” (Beautiful-writer) or “Hüb-nüvis” as equivalent to “Hattat”; they also used for those who make use of a specific writing style the terms, say, “Ta'lik-nüvis” (Ta'lik-writer), “Kufi-nüvis” (Kufic-writer). Ta'lik style script appeared firstly in Persia. After that Ottomans improved this script by the time (Yazir 75).
Having defined concisely the term calligrapher, it is important to emphasize there were some important rules for becoming a “Hattat”. Every one with a nice writing could not have the title of a calligrapher. Those with the talent for competent writing should also have other attributes as well. As in other art forms, calligraphy is based on efforts and skills possessed as early as almost from birth. The calligraphers must possess some culture enough to govern his art and must be of the personality and patience to be conscious of his skills and to spend all his time to develop himself in this area (just like in all art branches). As well as these skills, one of the famous calligraphers whose name belongs to history of Turkish calligraphy, “Jaly-nūvis” (Jaly-writer) Hafiz Omer Vasfi (1880-1928), the preacher of Hirka-i Serif, has stressed the necessity of ambition for becoming a calligrapher (Inal 33). (As an important historian of calligraphy, Inal has carried out researches on Ottoman calligraphers. His studies included the development of calligraphy throughout the Ottoman Empire and predominant calligraphers of the past.)

Inal (1870-1957) who was historian and calligrapher, wrote about the dedication necessary for an artist: Ambition is the commitment to something with an incessant desire. The persistence of ambition in the self requires the consciousness of the work produced, the naming of it, the writer's profound knowledge concerning the beauty of writing. Ambition feeds from the love of art, whereas despair and dead-lock stifle it and confine the artist to a complete passivity. Where despair and ambition conflict, the will is baffled and at that moment the unproductivity arises. In order to save oneself from this, one needs to get rid of fear and despair and feed ambition. And to do that, one should seek shelter in God's grace and help. (Inal 34)

So Yakut, the first artist to enjoy the title of calligrapher, has said that in this art to have “ambition” is one of the essential conditions and that other conditions are always based on this. As mentioned in chapter first, the Islamic calligraphy art keep its own philosophy until today.
As Yazir has pointed out, in the history of calligraphy, many artists possessed all the necessary qualifications for becoming calligrapher, but failing to use appropriately and temperately these most important of all qualifications, ambition and patience, were unable to have this title (Yazir 134). On the other hand, there were a group of artists who contributed to the history of Turkish calligraphy art, despite the fact that during this period (Ottoman Era thirteenth – twentieth centuries) they were treated with contempt. Although they lacked of opportunities full of love of art, of ambition for learning the art of calligraphy, without intimidation or compromises, and they succeeded in surviving. Although they had no public status though their number were very few, their names have been time-honoured. They were Turkish women calligraphers (Yazir 134).

3.2 Women calligraphers in the Ottoman era

Women, by their nature, by their maturity and sensitivity, have tried their skills in all branches of arts. It is most unfortunate that because the studies concerning our women artists are lacking, it is impossible to appraise definitely the role played by women in Turkish art history. Today precious antiques, very elegantly embroidered cloths, coverings, frames, various crochet-works around handkerchiefs for heads are anonymous, without being known by which hands they are produced, and have been appropriated by history as the works of Turkish women.

That women in Turkish society were confined to the sole responsibility of their house and their children and isolated from the social and economical life, is mainly a result of religion. Religion engenders traditions. Consequently, traditions reinforced through centuries become an important mechanism of sanction within society. There is some evidence given the old Turkish traditions and social structure in Middle Asia, that women had an important place in pre-Islamic Shamanist culture. Because the nomadic Turk tribes did not have a written culture, the situation of women is not clearly substantiated. Berkes' study has shown that women had an important and respected role in old Turk tribes. While the tribe's old women accepted as wise were leading figures in the
tribal rule, with Turkic tribes' move from Middle Asia to Anatolia and especially with their adoption of the Islamic religion, their roles, completely within the framework of Arabic traditions and by religious repressions, were stifled (Berkes 54).

Women had been repressed since the first adoption of the Arabic traditions and religion in seventh century until Turkish social structure began to change in the late nineteenth century. Indeed this situation must have been true for all Sami religions. However Islam has drawn this limit with rigid rules (Ceyhun 95).

Although very rare, some instances of women artists may be pointed at. Among these, the “divan” (collection of lyric poems) written by Sultan Adile, the daughter of Sultan Mahmut II (1784-1839) and found in Fatih public library in Istanbul is the most beautiful example. Below, some beautiful art works are seen from Ottoman women calligraphers (Inal 85, 617, 795).

Plate 36 - One of Esma Ibret Hanum’s work (in a private collection)

There were some women calligraphers of an unknown number, though whose works, however rarely, we see in museums. For example Esma Ibret Hanim (1816-?), Mushref Hanım (1915-?), and Selma hanım (1857-1895) could be pointed out. They have written “Hilye-i Serif”s (works which narrate Mohammed the prophet's main attributes), “Icazetname kitalari” (diplomas) and Divans; and made the ornamentations (“tezhip”) of the works they have written with their own hands (Ozsayiner, “Kadin Hattatlarımız” 8).
Women calligraphers such as these, whose rare traces are found in the history of art, encountered difficulties. Through long centuries, the education in Ottoman Empire was conducted not by the state, but by to private enterprise. Modern science and art were excluded, and for this the culture other twice suffered terrible regression and decline. Education before the reformation ("Tanzimat 1839-1876") essentially consisted of a primary education offered in primary schools ("mekteb-i sibyan") and the high education offered in Moslem seminaries ("medrese") established for this reason. Girls could only attend to "mekteb-i sibyan"s which offer religious instruction and were not allowed to go to "medrese"s for higher education. Until a century ago, there were no opportunities for a Turkish girl to have private instruction, to visit libraries, mosques and similar places and see beautiful examples. (Afghanistan today is a good example to this fundamentalist education system. Women are deprived of the rights of going to school after primary education, going out alone or voting with a very strict regime of oppression.)
The reason for that was, as its many instances can be observed in other monotheistic religions as well, the prohibitions established by Islam religion on women's education were aggravated by social conditions at that times. It should not come as a surprise that women who lack the opportunities men had did not become prominent in these art branches (Biçer, "Türk Yazı Sanati Ders Notları" 18).

3.3 The expansion of the art of Turkish calligraphy

No early Turkish manuscripts dating from the period previous to their conversion to Islam and adoption of the Arabic script have survived to the present day. The earliest manuscripts date from the Seljuks (eleventh to thirteenth centuries). During the Anatolian Seljuk period (tenth – eleventh centuries), the use of Kufi for manuscripts was largely abandoned in favour of "Aklâm-i sitte", the "six scripts". From this point onwards kufî script was reserved largely for book titles and architectural application in decorative forms, either floriate, foliate or interlaced. In its architectural application a geometrical variety of kufî known as satrançlı (Checquered) or murabba’î Kufi, and in some sources as ma’kîli or bennâî was also used.


The forms of writing used in architecture as illumination can be seen as stone carvings in outer walls of buildings and as paintings in the inside. The Kufic style has been frequently used during the period in architectural illumination in addition to its calligraphic use, thanks to its geometrical prosperity. (tenth-thirteenth centuries).

The beginnings of the great period of Turkish calligraphy emerged with the last Abbasi Caliph Musta’sim’s clerk Yakut of Amasya who invented a new writing style and rules around the middle of the thirteenth century, with the curved cut pen point “nesih”, “Thuluth” and “Jaly”. The early experiments with “Nesih” writing assumed its basic character, its essential structure (Çetin, “Encyclopedia of Islam V XIII” 352-357). The classical order comes from “nesih” writing created by Yakut’s hands. Similarly, “Thuluth” which had been written for centuries without any specific changes was handled by him as almost an
anatomy research and made into the most appropriate and satisfying style with all its subtleties. Thus “Thuluth” which became a classical art with Yakut was the base for “Jaly” writing and the latter has taken its first form with Yakut as well. Yakut, by determining all rules and particularities of six forms of writing called “Aklam-i Sitte”, has formed the sound foundations of the Turkish calligraphy art (Aslanapa 389).

From the time of Yakut, until the Ottomans from thirteenth to fifteenth century there were no substantial changing on Islamic calligraphy art. In the fifteenth century, Seyh Hamdullah, again from Amasya, studied the six forms of writing, established by Yakut and introduced some rules similar to the representation of human body on anatomical proportions in classical Greek and Renaissance art (Togan 87). Because of his innovations, Hamdullah, called the “Ka’bah of calligraphers”, became the most important calligrapher of all Islamic countries’ (Welch 29). He was the teacher of Sultan Beyazit II from the times he was a prince until 1470. When the Sultan who used to respect him to the point of holding his inkstand while he was writing, asked him some day; Is it not possible to create a writing proper to us, which has no equivalent in the Arabic lands and in the Persian domain? In response to this request Seyh Hamdullah, not speaking to anybody for forty days, developed “Aklam-i Sitte”, the writing form with six new scripts. “Nesih”, which in Yakut, was about to come about in experiments, reached a classical maturity with Seyh Hamdullah. “Nesih” writing which was in Yakut still not characterised by, dullness and disorder, has acquired a maturity, vigour and vitality. The writings in which single words appeared in Yakut, amounted to a fluent integrity in the forms of lines. “Thuluth” writing which was shaped by Yakut was completely Turkicized and acquired an aesthetic richness in Seyh Hamdullah’s hands. By softening the vulgarity, broadness and dullness in Yakut’s letters, he established the complete and definite rules of writing. It may be said that “Thuluth” writing engendered backwardly “nesih” and forwardly “Jaly” writing. “Jaly” writing found by Yakut was also classicized by Hamdullah (Yazir 41-42)(Ülker 14).
In the Ottoman age statesmen and even the Sultans were very much interested in the calligraphy. As I have already recounted the famous calligrapher Seyh Hamdullah mention that one day, while he has writing, Sultan Beyazid, standing next to him held his ink stand. It is said that a Q’uran written by Seyh Hamdullah was so valuable material to suffice to buy a big building. Today the same calligraphy work’s value is also extremely high (Ülker 8).

Seyh Hamdullah who died in 1519, in Istanbul created the epitaph on the public door (front door) and the “Jaly” writing on the door of the ablutions fountain courtyard of Istanbul Beyazit Mosque and the epitaph of Amasya Sultan Beyazit. Many of the Qur’ans, “En’am”s and hundreds of other writings are his products. Seyh, who inaugurated the classical way of Ottoman calligraphy art, was profoundly influential until the twentieth century.

Plate 39 - Sheyh Hamdullah's Muhakkak (sixteenth Century)

Ali Bin Yahya Sofi, who flourished in the fifteenth century under Fatih, though an earlier calligrapher, can not be compared to Seyh. This calligrapher who wrote the epitaph of Istanbul Fatih Mosque and the epitaph of Bab-i Hümayun in Topkapi Palace, was masterful in reciprocal writing called “Musanna”. In the same century as Seyh Hamdullah, Ahmet Karahisari improved “Jaly” writing (Aslanapa 82).

The values of aesthetic rules established by Yakut and Seyh Hamdullah, only the proportions of shapes change. Karahisari shows in his signatures Kirmanli
Esedullah as his teacher (sixteenth century). But it is said that Yahya Sofi is his first master. Master Karahisari (1468-1556), was a significant artist and creator of the “Jaly” writing on the dome of Istanbul Süleymaniye Mosque, working on “reyhani” and “muhakkak” kinds out of six forms of writing, shaped a style of his own, an “Aklam-i Sitte”. His style as well had its sources in Yakut of Amasya, but it could be said that his script was more beautiful than Yakut. He had a strong style in “nesih” and “Thuluth” writing as well. The ornamented masterwork of the great Qu’ran made Kanuni Sultan Süleyman is a monument of the sixteenth century. His “Besmele”s (the Moslem formula: ‘in God’s name) in various forms are like different paintings (Mustakimzade 582).

Successive (“müselsel”) Besmele’s were Karahisari’s unique contribution to the Turkish calligraphy art. He died in 1556 when the Süleymaniye Mosque has been completed, around age ninety (Aslanapa 85).

Karahisari educated six students, among which his adoptive child Hasan ‘Gelebi was the most prominent. The long history epitaph of Süleymaniye Mosque, “Jaly” writings of Piyale Pasa Mosque are all his work. When he died in
1594, he was buried next to his teacher Karahisari (Ülker, "Ünlü Hattatlar" 18). Ahmet Karahisari's distinctive style remained as a distinct phase in the development of Ottoman calligraphy art and his style was not followed widely (Serin 51).

Because the Ottoman calligraphers took as a model Seyh Hamdullah, the standard Ottoman writing style was evolved out of his style. In the seventeenth century, the Turkish writing style entered a new period of development with Hafiz Osman born in Istanbul in 1642 (Hafiz means; One who has memorized the Qur'an). He took his "icazet" (diploma) in "Thuluth" and "nesih" from Suyolcuzade Mustafa Efendi of Eyüp. "Nesih" writing in Hafiz Osman's influence was improved and simplified and was seen as an integral line that because more easily intelligible. In the calligraphy of Seyh Hamdullah, there are frequent distances between words, words are separately seen. By contrast in the work of Hafiz Osman, the spaces between words and, the line is grasped as a whole, as can be seen in the illustration below ("The Calligraphers of seventeenth Century" 19).

![Plate 41 - "Murakka" Hafiz Osman (seventeenth century)](image)

The maturity period of "nesih"s (seventeenth century) was so strong that it was called "sparkling nesih". Hafiz Osman improved profoundly the classical "Thuluth" writing created by Seyh Hamdullah and provided it with more
fluency, spaciousness and vitality. It is clear that with him writing has acquired a dexterous dynamism.

Yakut, Seyh Hamdullah and Hafiz Osman created the main periods of "nesih" and "Thuluth" writing and the following after these master calligraphers recognized the latter two as the greatest masters. Hafiz Osman who, diffusing the classical patterns, permitted some freedom in writing, was recognised as the most significant master in "Thuluth" and "nesih" after Seyh, with many other calligraphers have adopted his writing. In 1695 he became the writing teacher of Sultan Mustafa II and Prince Ahmet III. Hafiz Osman died at age fifty-six in 1698. During his life, he wrote twenty-five the Qur'ans, many "En'am" suras, "murakka" (restorations and corrections in writing), numberless "kit'a" and sketches; he was the first among Turkish calligraphers to put "Hilye" (the Prophet's descriptive plate by writing) in the form of plate. With his stone stamped Qur'ans, his fame was expanded to all of the Islamic world as far as India and Indonesia (Aslanapa 88).

The Qur'an he wrote in 1682, at the age of forty, was published as reproduction faithful to its original in Istanbul in 1967. Among the many calligraphers he educated, Seyid Abdullah of Yedikule (d.1731), Mehmet of Crete (d.1751), Yusuf Mecdi (d.1721) are the most prominent ones and they have preserved his style strongly until the middle of the eighteenth century and handed it over to following generations. These calligraphers recognized Seyh and Hafiz Osman as two great masters. At the end of the eighteenth century, Unyeli Ismail Efendi was widely known and even compared to Seyh Hamdullah. However, his greatest contribution has been to educate his little brother Mustafa Rakim Efendi. Rakim who was at the same time a painter, and a calligrapher of genius
who made a revolution in “Jaly” writing. He saw “Jaly” writing which depended on distant impression, as a painting and found the style of writing with chequered lines. The development achieved in “Thuluth” and “nesih” by Hafiz Osman was embodied in “Jaly” by Rakim Efendi (Inal 18).

Following the shaping of “Jaly” writing which had been established by Yakut and became classic by Rakim's “Jaly” writing, in the hands of Vice-Chancellor Mustafa Izzet Efendi, “jaly” acquired a softness. The big compositions in Saint Sophia are his works. However, he followed Celaleddin's path rather than Rakim's. Later, Hattat Sami who manifested himself in “Jaly” writing made great efforts to produce in Rakim's way and was successful (Migeon & Toprak 22).
The "Ta'liq" form of writing as well was very much improved under Ottomans. Ta'liq is a type of script in which all the letters display a tendency towards curved and oblique forms. Given the available works, it seems that "Ta'liq" writing was introduced in the twelfth century. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, a Turk from Azerbaijan, Mir Ali of Tebriz created a classical style and from then on, "Ta’liq" writing style expanded throughout Ottoman period and an elegant writing style which could be called Turkish “Ta’liq” came about. In this writing style, though there was not a creator as Mir Ali, the most prominent artist Imad el Hüseyni achieved the such mature style in Persian “Ta’liq” within his limits.

However, Katipzade Mehmet Refi Efendi educated in Istanbul and died in 1769, adapted “Ta’liq” writing without corrupting Turk pleasures (Ta’liq was invented in Iran and developed in Ottoman Empire). Another great “Ta’liq” master flourished in the eighteenth century, Mehmed Esad Yesari who, produced unique works. In every corner of Istanbul one of his epitaphs or his “levha’s” (plates) are found. His son and student Yesarizade Mustafa Izzed followed his path and improved most prominently Turkish “Ta’liq”. The later calligraphers just followed his foot steps in “Ta’liq” writing (Serin 66).

Ta’liq is the name given to a version of “tevki” originating in fourteenth century Persia, where it was mostly used in official documents. This script appears in Istanbul in the second half of the fifteenth century under the name Ta’liq, having dropped the “nes”, but confusingly has no relation to the original script of that name. This graceful, delicately formed script written without vowel points—which as in the case of Persian were unnecessary in Turkish—had a light and poetical air compared to the heavy, grandiose style of thuluth.
The form of Ottoman Ta’liq script known as “hurde” (“small”) or “hafi” was used for literary works and collections of poetry (divan), and was also the official hand used for writing “fetva” (opinions on canonical points of law).

“Ta’liq” has become the writing of the learned in Istanbul; it was used in literature, “divan’s”, poetry books. The epitaphs written with “Thuluth” and “nesih” until the 18th century, from then on, began to be written with “Ta’liq” as thin and thick on some fountains and tombstones (Aslanapa 87).

On the other hand, one of the Ottomans’ formal state writings is “siyakat”. The script known as siyâkat was reserved for Treasury documents and title deeds in the Ottoman Empire. It was so extremely difficult to read and write that it could more accurately perhaps be termed a cipher, and was intended as a prevention measure against forgery. It was never employed with artistic intent. It was used only for official registers. “Siyakat” which is seen from the fifteenth century on, has reached the climax of its development properly in the sixteenth century and was difficult to read. (Müstakimzade 616).

“Divani” writing which is more lively, highly decorated form of Ta’liq, used in Ottoman period and unique to Turkey was used only in writing such as documents deriving from the Sultan’s will, such as decrees, “mensur” (decree showing the ranks of viziers given by the Sultan) and patents. This collated form of original writing prevented any later falsification on decrees. The ta’liq script used for official correspondence in Persia was introduced to Ottoman Turkey by the State of Akkoyunlular (1467-1501) during the fifteenth century. Under the Ottomans, Ta’liq underwent a radical change of form within a brief period, and under this new guise became known as divâni in reference to its use in the official documents of the Divân-i Hümâyun (Council of State). Although divâni was written without vowel signs, the ornate and imposing variety known as celi divâni which originated in Istanbul in the sixteenth century was written with vowel signs. Celi divâni was used in high level state correspondence, and contrary to other scripts designated by the term celi, the term did not mean that it was large in size, but indicated its important status. Both forms of this script
required considerable skill to read and write, and it was almost impossible to add extra letters or words, so the use of divânî and celi divânî for official papers made it easier to keep state affairs confidential and prevented fraudulent alteration. Both scripts are written in lines which curve up towards the end.

“Rik’a”, again a Turkish writing form, is a most easy one. “Rik’a” could be described as a smooth round, sinuous form of “Naskhi”. Despite the close resemblance between their names, rik'a bears no resemblance of form to Rik’a', which is the sixth of the aklâm-i sitte scripts. The rik'a script was that in daily use by every literate Ottoman Turk, and was written with a reed pen whose nib was a maximum of 1 mm in width. Ottoman calligraphers made use of Kufic writing as well. Kufic writing was seen in the fifteenth century on woodengravings, in mosques' pen work, in the middle of the ornamented title pages and in some architectural art works, delftware, tombstones. In the sixteenth century, one of those who wrote Kufic with success and creatively was Karahisari. But in later periods the use of Kufic writing gradually was abandoned (Serin 76).
In so far as writing is an art in itself, it played an important role in the enrichment of decorative arts and in architectural monuments. The European tradition of ornamenting architectural works with painting was in a way paralleled in Islamic countries with the difference that painting was replaced by writing (Yazır 48).

Calligraphers along with architects exhibited their art in great monuments' (like mosques, memorials, fountains, state buildings) with writings from the Qur'an throughout many generations. All architectural monuments constructed in every period from the tenth century on, acquired a different meaning and richness with calligraphic decoration.

Plate 48 - Some different styles of Arabic scripts, “naskh”, “thuluth”, “muhaqqaq”, “nasta’lik”, “Rik’a”
3.4 The main rules of Turkish calligraphy art (Ottoman period twelfth-twentieth centuries)

Writing has had a special place in the heart of the Islamic world since the rise of the religion as it is the means that God sends the divine messages to the people. One of the most important reasons that calligraphy developed as much in the Islamic world was the concern of the artist to convey the divine messages in a visually much more impressive and determinative manner. The prohibition of description in Islam has also immensely contributed to the tendency towards non-figurative arts such as calligraphy. However, in addition to these religious reasons, there happens to be important social and technical reasons why the Islamic art of calligraphy was so popular and famous. Moreover, there are certain rules that have been created as results of the technical solutions that took centuries while the Islamic art of calligraphy perfected. These rules can be summed up as the spiritual and physical characteristics of the Islamic art of calligraphy applied with a touch of oriental mysticism. Only those artist who are capable of applying these rules in their own compositions can be named calligraphers. In this section, we will describe the reasons for calligraphy to be so popular, the features that a calligrapher must hold and the aesthetic findings and rules in the Islamic art of calligraphy.

3.4.1 Writing in the Fine Arts

"The Fine Arts; The masterpieces of admirable arts like literature, music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and theatre may only be perceived through a distinct vision of them that builds upon a special sense and perception of nature and the life" (Sözen and Tanyeli 208). For Hegel (German philosopher, nineteenth century), the Fine Arts that were classified in many ways within the history of philosophy and aesthetics, count to five, respectively: Architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and poetry (Hegel 114). In this classification, we can see that art rises from architecture to poetry, the material gets lighter, the spirit gets deeper and the material rises towards the spirit (Yazir 91).

We an easily see the mystical effect of religion on the Islamic art of calligraphy in the works of M. K. İnal on the position of writing in fine arts in which he defends the idea that in order to attain a better understanding and practice of
the Islamic art of calligraphy, one needs to be really influenced by the
metaphysical influences of the Islamic Sufic belief. Turkish art historians such
as Inal, interpret as “Fine Art” a deep knowledge of material through subtle
craft. Turning to the spirit the artist to opened up the ways for a development of
willpower in terms of superior inventions and tendencies. Thus, Inal stated the
closer to an ideal beauty and metaphysical aesthetics is to human nature, the
better will be performance which will directly affect the maturation of the self
and the society (Inal 4-5).

Plate 49 - Tugrakesh Sami’s work “The
Tugra of Sultan Abdülhamid”
(nineteenth century)

It is not possible to definitely describe the place of the art of calligraphy in
Eastern or Western philosophies of art. All through the period before Islam,
there was no such concept as calligraphy in the whole society in the sense that
we have today, and thus, there was no necessity to save a space for calligraphy
within the spectrum of history of arts. It is only after the Arabic alphabet
became the accepted writing form of the Koran and especially the prohibition of
description that calligraphy started to be a predominant branch of art among
Islamic arts. However, after Islam, the word “calligraphic” used in the West
and various illuminations in some types of writings have been regarded as
a branch of painting (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türke ozgu ana kurallar ve
Ogretim Metodları” 2).

The art of calligraphy was a central point of the non-figurative branches of art in
the Islam and earned itself a prominent space among the eastern arts, taking its
place in the history of arts via the schools it has opened up.
3.4.2 The rise of calligraphy as a dominant Islamic art form

In this section it will be examined the reason in the popularity and importance of calligraphy. The first of the reasons is religional and society;

a) Religion and society:

As we have seen the religious rules of Islam prohibited the human tendency to draw objects or to mimic nature. As I explained in the first chapter, new ideas, sensations, symbols that originated from the religion started being expressed, from seventh century. The more Islamic art was inspired from mysticism, the further it moved away from realism and even the motifs of the previous ages seemed to be re-composed with the new understanding of the world. The figures of plants were stylised into geometrical patterns and animal figures were stylised into geometrical patterns. Many times figures of animals and plants were juxtaposed and a life like a fairy tale was created via unreal fantastic compositions, a novelty of the Islam (Erginsoy 1) (Kühnel 23).

Plate 50 – Calligraphy was used as painting expression in Islamic art

Religion had a influence on all aspects of society. In all of the societies where Islam was adopted and the rules were Islamic, all art was associated with the celebration of the religion. The leader or the military chief who caused the building of the greatest and most perfect masterpiece, whatever it may be, would acquire high prestige in the world of Islam. Moreover, the younger artists were taught by the older artists, who were brought up by the sufic teachings of the society, with the idea that the only aesthetic concern in their art is the sole will of God. All art work was done in the name of God. The ruling classes, that used the religion as a means of politics and government, strongly supported all Islamic arts and architecture, as well as military efforts to influence the public
by religion. Conquering other countries, building the most perfect mosques of the world, creating all the marvellous master pieces of arts in the name of God, would also go in the name of the Sultan or the Khan.

With this in mind, a classical culture and understanding of art formed up in the Islam and princes were brought up to be the future Sultans with his cultural inheritance. Especially in the empires that were built upon Islamic religion, almost all of the sultans were well educated, most of them being poets or lovers of art with high aesthetic perceptions. For example, Conqueror Fatih, Beyazid II, Mahmud II, Selim II, Mustafa could be counted as sultans who were patrons of art. The art of calligraphy has successfully survived until the beginning of twentieth century thanks to highly perceptive sultans. The Ottomans (Turks) in particular became highly qualified calligraphers (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türke özü ana kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 17). The anonymous saying in the Islamic world to prove the importance of calligraphy among Turks;

Qur'an descended in Mecca, has been read in Egypt and been written in Istanbul.
Anonymous from public.

The patient working on all pieces of art, during the periods (until twentieth century) when calligraphy improved, showed that time benefited the artist. Having lots of free time provided the artist with a comfortable media for working. This hundreds of years where there were no industrial concerns (printing press) carried the art of calligraphy to the top.

b) No printing press:
When Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press (1440-1456), the Ottoman Empire was undoubtedly the strongest state in the world of Islam. As a result of hundreds of years under religious order, and the corruption of strict religious rules by each ruling party and the clergy, products of newer technology and inventions were looked on by Ottoman rules as the insistence
on old tradition would lead to irreparable underdevelopment. The Ottoman
Empire ceased expanding after Suleyman the Magnificent and began a long
recession, perceiving all technological and social developments of the world as a
threat to the religion. The Ottoman Empire continued with this attitude until
Tanzimat (1839-1876) when it was too late to compensate for the consequences
of the underdevelopment and isolation of many centuries, disappeared from the
maps in twentieth century, leaving behind the secular and contemporary
Republic of Turkey and a number of states on the Balkan Peninsula and the
Middle East (Kunt, Aksin, Toprak, Yurdaydın 33-73, 187, 391.).

Because there was no industrial method of printing Qur'ans, decrees of the
sultans, state correspondance and scientific books were all hand written and
reproduced by calligraphers. There was a highly respected social class of
calligraphers who earned their living solely by writing. Since calligraphy
required much practice, the artists spent all day writing. They needed to create
a sui generis style. Calligraphers used to make exercises called “meshk”. They
would not even carry a package of a kilogram or two because calligrapher might
lost his sensitiveness of hand. (Barın, conversation with Halis Biçer.) It was
believed that writing down Mohammed’s forty most important saying (Hadith)
would bring a divine reward for calligraphers who produced the best calligraphic examples
of the forty sayings. Thus, the calligraphers prepared for the hereafter, as well, in their
beliefs. They had no financial problems thanks to their social status.

Plate 51 - One of meshks from Yesarızade
(nineteenth century)

c) The flexibility of Arabic script:
The third most important factors in the development of calligraphy in Islamic art was that the Arabic script provided the artist with flexibility in structure and form. In order to create aesthetic perfection in calligraphy, the letters could be shortened or extended as necessary. The shape of the letters should be perceived as flexible, there should not be any rough movements, the punctuation marks should be used to create compositions and so, the piece of calligraphy was presented as aesthetic as a piece of abstract painting (Biçer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Türkçe özü ana kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 16-19). (This subject will be studied in the next chapters at a typographic and aesthetic comparison of contemporary Latin calligraphy (especially in Kufic style).) Islamic architecture (Seljuk and Abbasid era) made much use of Kufic, thuluth and jeli writing styles in the beginning (eighth –twelfth centuries). Calligraphy became a respected branch of art as the religion developed and became the formal art of great empires, such as Seljuk architectures.

Writing is a spiritual science of geometry that is performed by corporeal tools. (Türk İslam Ansiklopedisi, Vol:1, 155)

After observing the fundamental importance of religion, the lack of production printing presses and the fluidity of the Arabic script, in the development of calligraphy rules of Islamic calligraphy art will be set out. These rules demonstrated these three aspects of calligraphy.

Plate 52 - Ismail Hakki Altunbezer's a thuluth composition twentieth century. (It shows the flexibility of the Arabic letters)

3.4.3 Mahmud Bedreddin Yazir; Characteristics of Ottoman calligraphy
According to the Ottoman calligraphers following the traditions, a qualified calligrapher had to have some characteristics which were the criteria for his success. Mahmud Berdreddin Yazir who was a famous calligrapher and historian (1893-1952), describes the characteristics of calligraphy as follows; (Yazir 103)

(These characteristics have been described by Yazir within the borders of Sufic philosophy. Thus, the topics and descriptions are full of literary statements.)

a) **Composition (Terkib):** The process of visual composition is perhaps one of the most important properties of writing. Yazir comments that composition the perception of spiritual geometry as a natural beauty avoided all irrelevancies of form. In other words, it may be closely linked to sufic philosophy examined in Chapter I. The more believed is the calligrapher with the deepest religion belief and the sounder (self-confident) writing in terms of the mystic fire within, produced the best composition. What matters here is much practice and imitation on writing and adherence to rules of calligraphy.

![Plate 53 - Carsambah Arif Bey's \"jeli thuluth\" composition (nineteenth century). This composition shows well stain and movement balance.](image)

b) **Fluency:** The fluency and aesthetic charm of a piece of art derived from the harmony and combination among the letters which is the most important factor in the design of a writing. According to Yazir, the basic factor over centuries in calligraphy has been the most important aspect that we call fluency and has to be strictly followed by the calligrapher.

c) **Tenacity:** In all of the Islamic plastic arts, we can see that the Islamic art is completely under Sufic influence. The Islamic artists performed their arts through the love of God and inspiration of God, even in Tasawwufi literature.
The property of “tenacity” in a piece of art was the confidence of the artists, who tries to create a piece of art with the mystic love inside, so that the Divine aid will be with him since the piece of art shall be performed through the will and love of God. (Yazır 104)

d) **The Hand and the Pen:** The fact that writing is done solely by the hand and the pen, which have different points depending on the type of writing to be done and can be increased or decreased in width, has made composing a much more delicate issue. Yazır points out that the calligrapher must practice for a long time in order to attain great skill, must reflect the love derived from the spiritual world into the skill of the hand.

e) **Invention:** Here, Yazır has given an example to describe searches for the newer in calligraphy: *For instance, if we were to apply an example of calligraphy in thuluth or thalik styles into music, it might be difficult to predict what it will sound like, however, studies to be carried out by expert musicians on this issue might put forth an interesting branch of art such as ‘the fictitious and meaningful music’ that has its place predominantly in the Western music.* (Yazır 104)

f) **Movement (Tahrik):** Movement (Tahrik) literally is the “motion of the pen”. The calligrapher has to practice many years before he may have a characteristic hand-writing. Where will the hand of the calligrapher stop and how long, where will it speed up or give the letter a most beautiful curve all of a sudden with the bending of the pen? Yazır says, it became important to know which writing belongs to which calligrapher, just like a signature. In the same way we can tell an original Van Gogh painting from a false one only by looking at the distinctive motion of the brush.

g) **The Right Measure:** Each and every style of calligraphy has its own measurement. For instance, in thuluth writing 2/3 of the letters should be straight and the remaining rounded. In calligraphy, the piling, connection, extension, assimilation of the letters is only through standard measures of units
in between letters. This characteristic gives calligraphy the same appreciation as that of the spectator of the perfection in harmony in terms of colours and figures in an abstract painting. (Yazır 103-105)

Plate 54 - Ismail Hakki Altunbezer's mirror thuluth composition “musenna” (1945).

In a more recent discussion of the style and aesthetic of calligraphy, Halis Bicer has the following comments titled “Aesthetic findings and rules in calligraphy of art”. Bicer stated that, these necessary rules should be obeyed for successful calligraphic composition as aesthetic: (Bicer, “Eski Sanat Yazısında Turke Özgü Ana Kurallar ve Öğretim Metodları” 14)

3.4.4 In technical characteristics, the principal role belongs to the rigid aesthetic rules of Turkish calligraphy. These are “Beautiful Form” and “Beautiful Placement”.

a) The conditions to be obeyed for the “Beautiful Form” are:
I) “Tevkiye” : To arrange in the proper way the curved, oblique and straight lines.
II) “Itmam” : To make in the proper way the prolongation, brevity and shrillness of a letter.
III) “Ikmai” : To conform to the characteristics of drawing perpendicular and straight lines, of juxtaposing one piece over another, of back supports and of rotation.
IV) “Isba” : To reinforce well by pen the parts to be fed of a letter.
V) “Irsal” : To draw the pen fluently and quickly without squeezing or stopping it.

b) The conditions to be obeyed for the “Beautiful Placement” are;

I) “Tarsif” : To join together the letters so that they be harmonious with each other.

II) “Telif” : To align different letters in a harmonious way.

III) “Tastir” : To put the letters and words in arrow orderly.

IV) “Tansil” : To arrange the point of junction of ad joint letters

(Bicer, *Eski Sanat Yazisinda Turke Ozgu Ana Kurallar ve Ogretim Metodlari* 15).

The characteristics emphasised above by Yazir and Bicer are the best known basic rules of old Turkish calligraphy art. Yazir described how to be a qualified calligrapher and Biçer described what has to be done in order to create an excellent calligraphic design. These are the evident and fundamental rules of the classical Turkish calligraphy art and the performers of this art create their works accordingly. These rules have been established within centuries and thanks to them the art of calligraphy reached its peak.

Because of such acute concern in detail and Islamic calligraphy had a style of its own. Islamic calligraphy possessed technical, discursive and formal characteristics proper to its own artists, its own age and its own area. As Biçer points out “Even though created at different periods, the works of Islamic calligraphy art had a common characteristic structure, balance and harmony. Just as out of the movement of the point the line comes into being, the calligraphy’s own motion has created its own rhythm” (Bicer, “Türk Yazı Sanatı Ders Notları” 25).

For instance in the Ottoman Empire, a candidate calligrapher was obliged to be trained for years by a master calligrapher. How long this training would be was determined solely by the master, and when he was convinced about the mastery of his disciple, he asked him to manifest his skills in front of famous
calligraphers. After proving his qualification, the apprentice had the right to a certificate called “Icazetname” (Diploma). A calligrapher without this document could not even sign his works. (Aksel, “Türklerde Dini Sanatlar” 8)

In any discussion about calligraphy in Islamic art, we have to mention two more branches of art that developed with it. One of them was the art of illumination that supported and embellished the surface where calligraphy would be placed. After the calligrapher had done his task, the illumination artist would take the piece and illuminate around the calligraphy in very special techniques. The art of illumination reached its climax during the Ottoman Empire.

The other branch of art was marbling which was performed only by illuminators or special artists of its own. Calligraphers were very interested in marbling painting (marbled paper) the piece of paper for calligraphy in special techniques, no matter if it were illuminated or not. These two branches of art will be briefly discussed since they are closely linked to calligraphy.

3.5 Traditional Turkish illumination art

3.5.1 Illumination

Illumination is the art of embellishing handwritten books, such as the the Qur'an and Divan (collection of a poet's works) and calligraphy samples such as “Murakka” (a tablet written in various forms of calligraphy), “Tugra” (Sultan's sela) with gilt and dyes.

Turkish artists played an important role in developing this art. These embellishments were given various names according to the method, such as “Halkar” (gilding of flower motifs, used to frame a tablet or miniature), “Tahrirli Halkar” (a decorative motif expressed in counter lines), “Renkli Halkar” (frame of coloured gilding), “Shkufe” (blossom). They also took different names according to where they were used, such as, “Secde Gulu”, “Hizip Gulu” (rosette indicating end of one fourth of a selection of the the Qur'an), “Bashlik”
Section heading pages were known as serberk, and the heading was usually written in white paint and set in the centre of gilded decoration. In the margins of the Qur'ans were rosettes of various designs marking pauses, verses at which worshippers were supposed to prostrate themselves in prayer, and the end of sections. There could be as many as six such rosettes on a single page.

Illumination is one of the major Turkish decorative arts and inseparable from that of calligraphy. The most elaborate decoration was reserved for the frontispiece or “Zahriye”, which generally consisted of a single page but in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries could sometimes be a double spread. Here was written the title of the book, its author, and the person to whom the manuscript had been presented, and an inscription giving the name of its owner. In some cases the frontispiece was reserved entirely for decoration, without any writing at all. After the zahriye came the “ser levha”, or first page of the text, which particularly for the Qur’ans was a double spread. Here the writing was usually enclosed in a decorative frame, perhaps rectangular or niche shaped. Although the most elaborate illumination was usually reserved for the Qur’ans, many other works on religion, literature or science were also decorated.
The last page of a manuscript bore the name of the calligrapher and date of copying, and was known as the "hatime". This page was more lightly ornamented than the "zahriye" and "ser levha". The book illustrations which we refer to today as "miniatures" are framed by borders, and the outer area illuminated. One of the characteristics distinguishing Turkish from Persian miniatures is that this illumination is lighter and never fills the paper entirely. Often Turkish artists preferred the gilding decoration known as halkar or gold sprinkling known as "zerefsan". Important details in the pictures themselves, such as clothing, hangings, walls and tents were also decorated with "tezhib" patterns.

Plate 56 - The binding cover of Fahrettin Razi Tefsir book

The most frequent application of "tezhip" illumination after manuscript books was calligraphic inscriptions and albums. Calligraphic inscriptions became fashionable wall decorations from the eighteenth century onwards, gradually taking over from manuscripts as the most common application of illuminated decoration. The ground of the inscription was usually decorated with gilt motifs in the style known as "halkar", or might be filled in entirely with painted decoration. Halkar consisted of motifs outlined with watered-down gold paint to produce a shadowed effect. (Tezman 25)

Bindings were another important area of tezhip decoration, and from the fifteenth century onwards halkar type stylistic decoration combined with naturalistic flower motifs and bauquets known as "Shukufe" were gilt tooled. (Tezman 25)
Although Turkish illumination dates back to the Uighurs, the earliest surviving examples were Seljuk work of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These simple motifs and designs developed in early Ottoman times into the complex scrollwork designs known as Hatayi and Rumi, the former floral and the latter thought to derive from Seljuk period zoological motifs. At this time the main colours were gold, dark blue and blue, and secondary colours white, black, green and red. The greatest illuminator of the fifteenth century was the court painter Baba Nakkash. The interest taken in art by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror (1451-1481) played a major role in advances which took place during his reign. Illumination continued to gain in complexity and diversity of motifs during the reign of Beyazid II (1481-1512). Cloud motifs were added to Hatayi and Rumi, but the principal colours were still gold and dark blue. Hasan bin Abdullah was the leading illuminator of this era. The golden age of illumination, like so many Turkish arts, was the reign of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent (1520-1560). As well as masterful use of classical motifs, garden flowers such as tulips, roses, carnations and hyacinths, cypress trees, blossom and other realistically depicted plants were introduced into book illumination by the great artist Karamemi.

Plate 57 - The one pattern of illumination art (fifteenth century)

From the second half of the seventeenth century western influence on illumination began, characterised by naturalistic bouquets of flowers. The most celebrated illuminator of this period, which lasted until the end of the eighteenth
century, was Ali Uskudari. Pictures of Mecca and Medina also begin to appear around this time. At the end of the eighteenth century came the style known as Turkish rococo, with baskets of flowers, long palmetters and ribbons, a style whose most famous representative was Hezagradli Seyyid Ahmet Ataullah. (Türk El Sanatlari, 12)

In our own century illumination was largely been reserved for calligraphic inscriptions of various kinds. “Halkar” decoration was more common than filled ground decoration around inscriptions. The most famous modern illuminators were Muhsin Demironat (1907-1983) and Rikkat Kunt (1903-1986).

3.5.2 Marbled Paper (Ebru)
“Ebr” means cloud in Persian and indeed some marbled papers resemble clouds and waves in form. This art was employed in decorating books and manuscripts. First a basin, the size of the paper to be marbled is prepared. Gum tragacanth (citron) is mixed with water to form a thick liquid and poured into the basin. The required dyes are pounded with a substance named “Destezenk” upon marble, the gum mixture is added until a liquid with the thickness of old ink is obtained, then some aloes are added. The density of the gum mixture keeps the sprinkled dyes floating, which form various designs. Each marbled figure is a nonfigurative picture varying according to the imagination of the artists.
The design formed on the surface of the water transferred to paper by means of the following method; a piece of suitably thick paper is gently applied upon the water. Attention must be paid not to leave any air bubbles. After a brief application the paper is peeled very carefully and hung upon a taut string diagonally, to dry. After it is dry, the paper is polished with a paper polisher (Türk El Sanatları, 17).

Marbling designs are given various names such as prophyr, sandy, orator, streaked, oversized and flowered. Today, there are still masters who create wonderful marbled work, worthy of the past masters of these arts (Aslanapa 392) (Eti, “Soyut Resim ve Ebru” 27).

3.6 The conclusion

In the preceding pages, we have briefly dealt with the historical development of the most popular writing forms of Islamic calligraphy and the calligraphers. Kufic script was popularly used until the eleventh and twelfth centuries, leaving the stage to other Arabic forms of writing from then on. The scripts to follow Kufic are described in the schedule of “Aklam-I Sitte”, the six Pens. Since “Aklam-I Sitte” is a reference point in the Islamic arts of calligraphy, we can easily track the scripts developed after the Kufic as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kufic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muhakkaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reyhani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thuluth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nesih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tevki’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Rik’a       | (Yazır, 75)

Following the Kufic period, Yakut El-Mustasimi has been the founder of the first school of calligraphy and the first important calligrapher. Although we have insufficient information as to his life, we know very well that he had a preliminary role on the foundation of the scripts to follow the Kufic and that he created rules to provide calligraphy with much beauty and aesthetics. Numerous calligraphic forms have been either created or perfected with in the
boundaries of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, established in 13th century, was at the time one of the most powerful states of the world which was directly reflected unto the field of culture and arts. The Islamic arts have been successfully applied and developed during the Ottoman Empire. The majority of calligraphers following Yakut El-Mustasimi were nationals of the Ottoman Empire as artist who carried the art of calligraphy to the summit. The Persian writing form of "Ta’lik" was also much popular in the Ottoman Empire.

The formal correspondence, laws, Sultan’s Decrees and manuscripts as writings are of much importance to the Ottoman culture thanks to the structure of the state in the Empire. The writing forms used in formal letters vary greatly from those used in daily life or literary writings which resulted in the calligraphy having a great variety in the Ottoman Empire. Almost each of the calligraphers was an expert on one or more of the forms. Use of various scripts resulted in the different forms having certain rules within themselves. In this chapter, we have briefly delivered the seven centuries of development of the calligraphy in the Ottoman Empire, its rules and the reasons for its being that popular throughout the empire. This explanation shall be useful in providing us with an understanding of the new graphic compositions by Latin script inspired by the works of the Arabic script. In the next chapter, we will briefly conduct info on the historical and structural development of the Latin alphabet. It will be useful to explain the issue in order to better understand the compositions by the Latin alphabet and to see the differences between the Arabic script and the structural features of the Latin alphabet.
CHAPTER IV

THE SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN ALPHABET,
EVOLUTION OF GRAPHIC CONCEPTS AND TURKISH GRAPHIC ART
HISTORY
This chapter discusses the history of Latin characters and their complex development, with some examples. My purpose is to demonstrate that the conditions that formed and enriched Islamic calligraphy are very different to the western civilizations that formed the Latin alphabet. In this chapter I will take a brief look at the structural development of the Latin alphabet and then give evidence to show that the influence of Latin forms on contemporary Turkish compositions in the Kufic style. A central topic matter of my thesis is possible is the probable effects of such collaborations between the Kufic style and the Latin alphabet in compositions of contemporary graphics and visual arts.

It is accepted that the purposes attributed to the alphabet in both Islamic and Christian civilizations are integral to the philosophies of both. Similar to the Christian art of painting that was fostered by the Church, the Islamic art of calligraphy has been supported by the Islamic religion and evolved due to the prohibition of description by this religion. Over many centuries the art of calligraphy became the dominant one among the Islamic arts with many styles and variations. Under the influence of the Islamic philosophy that attributes a mystic and divine purpose to the art of calligraphy and a prohibition of description, the calligraphers have been able to create such compositions that range in scale from intricate books to powerful architectural compositions that have the force of an abstract painting for the contemporary spectator. Today, Latin characters are designed by graphics and typographical experts. The use of computers with advanced graphic programs has given these experts access to unlimited design possibilities. This gives rise to the idea that forms of writing can be seen more and more in the field of art as aesthetic units in their own right.
To appreciate this use of Islamic structures in contemporary Latin fonts in Turkey, I shall give a background to the development of the Latin alphabet which contrasts to the Islamic history I have discussed in the previous chapters. However, the twentieth century has started with protest art currents together with the changing social and cultural conditions in the society. These currents of art are developed with a counter-taste for the economic or social conservatism as opposed to the classical branches of art. For instance, in nineteenth century, block-sheriff fonts have been interpreted with a cat design in “psychedelic design” current. Likewise, there are numerous protest currents have created their own aesthetic structures making use of the existent design elements. Setting out from the Kufic compositions, our subject matter in this thesis study, in a way, it is possible to regard the compositions by Latin script as one of the protest currents of art. Thus, in the second section of Chapter IV, we will linger on the issue of protest currents of art that have greatly influenced the twentieth century graphic arts. The Turk, who have worked on the mystical Islamic calligraphy for one thousand years, have adopted the Latin alphabet in 1928 and Western philosophy of arts and culture ever since, which results in the application of contemporary graphic arts for 71 years now. Thus, we will see examples as to the historical development of Turkish graphic arts which will help us see the point that a nation has reached in contemporary graphic arts with the background of Islamic art of calligraphy. Thus, we can better understand the importance of the background of the Turkish art of graphics in the modern graphical compositions making use of the classical Islamic calligraphy forms.

4.1 Structural development of the Latin alphabet

a) Roman Capitals: The Latin alphabet, adapted from the Greeks by the Romans, started practice long before the birth of Christ. The Trajan capital letters that were inscribed on the Trajan column in Rome in 114 B.C. were the predecessors of the contemporary Latin alphabet and were used as a model. Even today, the style and sizes of letters in these early monumental columns can be seen in contemporary
fonts. The structural similarities between the sharp geometrical forms of “Roman square capital” engravings and the checquered or square Kufi form is quite interesting. The basic difference between Kufi and Roman square capital is the graphic compositions created with the connection of the letter extensions in checquered Kufi arrangements. These compositions had been widely used during the reign of Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates in ornamentations in the form of more organic key-patterns (tenth and thirteenth centuries).

The Roman alphabet had twenty three characters. The letters were cut into the surface of the inscriptions and they were characterized by a geometry which is based on the simple forms of the square, circle and triangle. This form of writing kept to certain geometric criteria and had three dimensions in the monuments that have survived, such as Trajan’s Column. These Latin letters were accepted as the predecessors and models of the contemporary Latin alphabet.

![Plate 59 - Inscription of square Roman capitals](image)

b) **Cursive Writing**: While the capital letter forms continued developing on stone surfaces (first to fifth centuries A.D.), daily life developed its own practical and faster media. The form that we call today as the “Early Roman Cursive” developed for the texts of daily life and was written on wax plates, and also on papyrus and parchment. using a bar called a “stylus”. Due to fast hand-writing, the vertical lines
tended to incline to the right or the left. The inclination resembled an action of running and thus, the style was given the name “Cursive”, deriving from the Latin word “currere” (to run). By comparison, the Islamic cursive script developed in the ninth and tenth centuries on leather and paper (Tubaro A. & I., 16-17)

In addition, “cursive” script has structural similarities with Arabic script forms that emerged after “Kufi” form. The “cursive” style in Latin alphabet which was used in the writing of manuscripts until the invention of the printing-press, have resemblances in the characteristics of forms with the Arabic scripts developed after “Kufi”. In other words, flexible characteristics might also be observed at the Latin letters written with inclined reed pens. However, in contrast to the latin cursive style, the other Arabic scripts of cursive style such as “thuluth” and “nesih” which emerged after “Kufi” form, the letter extensions are prolonged and knitted one within the other to obtain abstract graphic forms.

c) Roman Rustic Script
d) Uncial and Half-Uncial Script
e) National Scripts
f) Carolingian Minuscule
g) Gothic script

Plate 60 - Roman script (left) and Roman Rustic script (right)
Plate 61 - Unicial (right) and half-uncial (left) scripts
4.2 The typography, its development and newer forms of writing through the invention of printing machine

With the invention of the printing-press the “cursive” style script forms written with inclined reed pens has left their place to the mechanical typefaces which are more easily readable compared to the manuscripts and created totally with typographic concerns. The replacement of manuscripts with printing-presses resulted in the production of many kind of publications through printing. Starting from nineteenth century, the importance of advertisement gradually increased and typefaces became an element of graphic designs. Mechanical typefaces are the elements of contemporary designs using the Latin characters which constitutes particularly the subject and aim of my thesis. Moreover, together with the historical development of typefaces, geometric formation and basic design differences of Latin letters are to be dealt with.

4.2.2 The forms of writing that evolved after the invention of printing machine

A new era was opened when Johann Gensfleisch Guttenberg invented the printing machine. Gutenberg and Schöffer, his assistant, provided a much faster and delicate text laying process with help from metal matrixes in production of a single letter, that was also applied in previous years. Gutenberg and his colleagues tended
to print religious books that were on the topic, choosing the manuscript characters that they knew well and that suited best for “binding edge” in the letters to be printed, preparing the patterns and dealing personally with the laying and the printing. In other words, all of the typographic production was dealt with by a single source. Starting in the sixteenth century, individual printing houses developed. There came about books on characters and their areas of use and even in the first copies of these books, the word Typography had its place. This is also the time that hand-outs of a single page would be produced as well as books. Printing job shaped through its technical development and today, it exists in groups such as laying, reproduction, printing and binding. Today, typography and graphic design are separate branches as the first steps of printing (Erden 48), (Biçer, “Notes for Turkish Calligraphy” 29)

The classical forms became popular with the Renaissance in writing. The forms of letters were set upon mathematics in geometrical forms. The artist and mathematicians even went so far as to analyze the square capitals of the Latin alphabet in terms of the form involved. Despite the fact that this new alphabet lacked definitive typographical analysis, it was a prominent source of reference for the letter designers. In fifteenth century, some German and French designers opened the first workshops of typography in Rome and Venice. The typographers of the day produced their pieces with the “Old Style” geometrical proportions. Printing job was introduced by Germans in France in 1470 and Gothic style had its reign until the Italian Renaissance poured out its cultural influences. It is during this period that most of the typefaces were shaped for printing (Erden 48).
Plate 64 - The historical table of typefaces
(https://www.subnetwork.com/typo/timeline)

Transitional

Modern

Bauhaus/Swiss Modern

Contemporary

- 1722: Philippe Gravé creates the first transitional typeface of the eighteenth century.
- 1750: John Baskerville creates transitional typefaces.
- 1766: William Caslon dies.
- 1768: Claude Gillot designs the first slab-serif typeface.
- 1816: William Caslon IV designs the first sans serif typeface.
- 1878: Paul Renner is born.
- 1930: Paul Renner releases prospectus for Futura.
- 1928: Adrian Frutiger is born.
- 1961: Adobe releases the PostScript format.
- 2000:

Classical/Oldstyle

- 1658: Jean Jannon dies.
- 1501: Francesco Grillo creates the first italic typeface. It is based on chancery handwriting.
- 1450: Johanna Gutenberg invents movable type. By 1455, he had completed his forty-two line bible.
- 1465: Swynhen and Vanartz create the first typeface designed in Italy.
- 1450: Francesco Grillo is born.
- 1501: Francesco Grillo dies.
- 1561: Claude Garamond dies.
- 1606: Christoffel van Dijck is born.
- 1669: Christoffel van Dijck dies.
- 1622: Jan Tschichold is born.
- 1928: Jan Tschichold publishes Neue Typographie.
- 1882: Eric Gill is born.
- 1994: Jan Tschichold dies.
- 1995: Adobe introduces the PostScript format.
After the invention of the printing-press, new typefaces were developed until now. Those are the chronological history of typefaces as indicated above;

Plate 65 - F. Griffo and Garamond typefaces (left) and Baroque scripts (right).

a) French Old Style:

b) Garamond:

c) Baroque Scripts:

d) Neoclassical French Typefaces:

e) Bodoni:

f) Dutch-English Typefaces:

Plate 66 - Neoclassical French typefaces (left) and Dutch-English typefaces (right)
g) Nineteenth Century Typography: Graphic design has been severely influenced by the industrial revolution and rather profound changes were to come is both design and printing products. Periodicals were the ultimate result of the developments in the production of paper, the “fourdrinier” method and the steam-powered machinery. Newspapers and periodicals increased in number. Thus, flamboyant typefaces became a necessity and the concept of advertising emerged. The invention of new machinery to shape typefaces helped printers get over with the bottleneck caused by the need for skill on cutting typefaces by hand. Thus, display typefaces emerged in the nineteenth century typography. These were the new typefaces that were flamboyant, lopsized, deformed in terms of geometry involved and three-dimensional (Tubaro 30), (Gates 15) and they were the reason why even-width system was established. In the meantime, it is worth remembering that an ellipse and a rectangle are unlimited sources as opposed to the former system (style). The triangular form of the older style as in the letter A is replaced by a conic form. The neoclassical typefaces soon began to leave their place for bolder and more contrasting ones. The most familiar of these is the “Fat Faces” typeface of Robert Thorne (http://www.redsun.com/type/abriefhistoryoftype/).

Plate 68 - nineteenth century typography (Fat Face, Egyptian, stencil) (left), and Art Nouveau typefaces (“A” of Böcklin & Larisch and “Bifur”, “Theda Bara”, “Broadway” typefaces) (right).
h) **Art Nouveau Typefaces**: “Art Nouveau”, that emerged between 1890-1910, was influential in Europe and America in architecture, industrial design and graphic arts. This current of “New Art”, that was called “Art Nouveau” in France and “Jugendstil” in Germany, was based on repulsion and reformation. The current, that was also influential on the texts on posters prepared by sensitive photographic emulsions and lithography techniques, has been of particular contribution in the concept of creative graphics and typographic design in the twentieth century. The logotypes of “American General Electric” and “Coca Cola” are effective graphic designs that have reached us until today as the creation of that period. The German “Art Nouveau” movement, that was called “Jugendstil” after the name of a periodical titled “Jugend” in Germany of 1896, did not let go of the traditional effects and used Gothic characters together with the “Art Nouveau” motifs. The best examples of letter characters and printing technique were developed in Germany. It is also during the Art Nouveau current that emblem and logotype designs became prominent and widespread. The names to remember with this current are Peter Behrens, Walter Tiemann and Will Bradley in the USA (Tubaro 26-29), (Gates 14)

Plate 69 - The logotypes of “American General Electric” and “Coca Cola”

Plate 70 - Jugend still
Most of the artists who have a place in the establishment of contemporary Turkish art of graphics have been educated in Germany and thus predominantly inspired by the German and Bauhaus schools of art around 1930-1950. It is thanks to the State School of Applied Fine Arts, established in Istanbul in 1957-1958, where German tutors instructed in a major portion that a considerable number of new designers have been introduced into the contemporary Turkish graphics sector. Thus, we can say that Bauhaus school has immensely influenced the Turkish graphic arts.

When the Turkish Republic was established, the only academic institution giving fine arts education was the current University of Mimar Sinan, Fine Arts Department. This institution, established by Osman Hamdi towards the end of the nineteenth century, was offering a classical academic art education, and the main art branches were the only general ones such as painting and sculpture. In the academic approach, art was for art. Such branches as ceramics, handicrafts and textile were considered as semi-crafts generally practised in research workshops. In 1957, with the establishment of the Applied Fine Arts Institute in İstanbul, by the contribution of German artists and teachers, the idea that art can have aesthetic functions in all areas of industry aroused in Turkey. This institute was launched by the influence of the Bauhaus school, and the educational methods were based on the Bauhaus. The fundamental arts, which did not have a place in the academic education, were introduced with all their branches in the Applied Fine Arts Institute. Many branches such as ceramics, graphics, textile, industrial design and interior decoration were promoted as fundamental art branches. Designs were used in the industrial production process. In many areas of the industry, the old fashioned and dull presentation of the products had gone through a change by the use of these designs from the packing to the functional form of the product. Thanks to the Applied Fine Arts Institute, arts in Turkey did not stay as just confined within visuality, and began contributing to the formation of the aesthetic taste in everyday
life. Among the prominent artists who studied in Germany and gave the
first examples of this approach in Turkey, are Prof. Mustafa Asher, Sait
Yada, Hakkı İzet and Reyhan Kaya.

j) Experimental Typefaces of the Bauhaus: Bauhaus school and current are one
of the phenomena to considerably affect the typographic design in the first quarter
of the twentieth century and the aftermath. Weimar Arts and Crafts School was
reopened after the 1st World War by Walter Gropius, an architect, and transformed
into Weimar Academy of Arts. Later on, the school announced its new principles
with the “Bauhaus Manifesto” under the name of “Das Staatliche Bauhaus” The
main purpose of Bauhaus school was re-establishing the bonds among the artist,
architect, craftsman and industry in a manner to bind art with industry. Arts and
the industry would be bound to encourage designing in order to increase the
aesthetic quality of especially the cheaper consumer goods and batch production.
The numerous ideas brought about by Bauhaus influenced twentieth century life
and design in terms of product designs, steel furniture, functional architecture and
typography. The objective combination of writing and photography in this period
was called the “new visual literature”. Through the current, the idea was formed
that writing was not necessarily placed horizontally but may be applied in all
directions. (Erden 67), (Biçer, “Notes for Turkish Calligraphy” 30).

k) Futura, Times: Bauhaus was followed by many in terms of prominent
contribution on the area of writing, one of them being Futura developed by Paul
Renner, which is highly influenced by the Bauhaus school. Its optical correction,
together with its clear and simple overall form ease the perception of letters.
Stanley Morrison, a consultant at the Cambridge University Printing House, was assigned to act as a consultant at the design of the characters to be used by The Times prints. This new script, characterized by small and sharp serifs, was given the name of “Times New Roman” and is still popularly used thanks to its legibility and net vision in many of its versions (Erden 69).

4.3 Geometric formation of a latin letter

All the letters have basic abstract letter structures that are reformations of pictographic writing through the history. The fundament under the design of an alphabet is the proportion system that builds the relation between the form and measurement among all the letters in an alphabet. But in the Islamic calligraphy, we see this geometrical structure only in Kufic script. Thus, especially in architecture, the Kufic script was preferred with its geometrical features. In latin alphabet this system of proportion establishes the geometry of a letter. In other words, the geometry of a letter depicts the systematic formation in the design of an alphabet. When we take a look at the historic development of the Latin alphabets, we notice that the letter forms, that have a systematic order, are built on two basic geometric systems. These two geometric systems are the “Old Style” and “Even-Width”. Those geometric structures that are not covered by these two are called the Free System.

The Old Style System is structured upon the triangle, circle and square, which are the basic geometric elements. Some letters are composed of a single form in terms of their geometric structures while some others are a combination of two geometric forms. Geometric structure within the Old Style System are thoroughly simple and coherent. The Old Style System is built upon the “Tranjan Columns” of the second century AD. The capital letters scratched upon the marble columns are called the “Tranjan Capitals” and from the basic source of the Latin alphabet. Some of the scripts we use today, such as Trajan, Jenson, Garamond, Palatino, Futura and Avant Garde, were inspired by the geometric system of the Old Style.
However, the alphabets built by the even-width system are formed on rectangles, ellipses, and trapezoids. The main logic in this system is that each letter should be equally perceived visually. However, this equality is merely in the visual perception during the letter arrangements. The basic property of the system is its variability in terms of geometric structuring because rectangles, ellipses and trapezoids are far too variable geometric structures as compared with squares, triangles and circles. Among its examples are the double-weight scripts with serifs such as Bodoni, Bookman, Clarendon as well as the single-weight scripts with no serifs such as Helvetica and Univers (Gates 22).

4.3.1 Basic design differences of Latin letter
The reason why we have briefly dealt with the design features of the Latin alphabet here is that they are the main design elements in the compositions the examples of
which will be seen mainly in the last chapter.

a) **Structural Properties:** The structural property of a letter is among the basic differences that tell a character from another. As opposed to the geometric infrastructure, they are very minor structural differences which may be listed as stroke, weight (mass), serif, width, style, structural element and formation.

b) **Difference of stroke:** like single-weight, double-weight or variable weight.

c) **Difference of Serif:** like triangular, linear, ancient, tuscan and decorative serifs.

d) **Difference of weight:** like thin, normal or thick weights. The difference of weight affects the geometric structure of a letter.

e) **Difference of width:** Narrow, normal, wide, etc, depends on the geometric infrastructure of the letter.

f) **Structural differences:** It is the setting of the structure of a letter on geometric shapes other than the fundamental structure, depends on which geometric shape the letter is shaped on.

g) **Difference of formation:** The structural effect on a letter caused by the writing or drawing tools such as marble carving, paint brush, charcoal, metal cutting, stencil blow and computer filters (Sarikavak 9, 10-14).

Plate 74 - Basic components of letters (left) and Optical corrections of letters (right).
4.4 The conclusion for the development Latin alphabet

While the design of typefaces evolved as a realm of expertise and art, the printing became a thoroughly technological industry. The currents of art and the “high-tech” of the twentieth century made typography a branch of art that is closely linked with graphics. Despite the fact that functionality, that is legibility, is of great importance within the art of typography, page layout and form designs of the text is also a visually important factor. It has become quickly appreciated as of the invention of the printing machine and is probably among the greatest factors in the Renaissance and the development of the western civilization. The printing job started out with the reproduction of the religious books, moved on to the reproduction of all the other types of books and thus, contributed in great extent to the increase of readers in number and the access to information. Since the invention was not regarded as “evil” by the clergy and the society, the European society had the chance to take a greater-than-ever step towards social enlightenment.

As can easily be seen here, the design of writing forms in the western philosophy, especially after the Renaissance, was highly functional. In other words, as in the case of Islamic arts, the visual aesthetics of the writing forms to deliver God’s words to humanity are of great importance but they are used merely as tools. In contrast, a beautiful writing and beautiful composition in the Islamic calligraphy had a particular purpose. Western philosophy art developed enormously especially after the Renaissance as a continuum of improvement thanks to the contributions by the current of philosophy and philosophers like Decartes, Spinosa, Locke, Hume, Berkeley and Kant in the Baroque period and Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, Darwin and Freud in the Romantic period. In the meantime, in Islamic countries, the ideas of the last 500 years were regarded divine, many of which had become philosophies to particular sects by the time and any idea suspected of being new was fiercely rejected in this closed world. Naturally, the situation was reflected on the Islamic arts as a vicious circle that couldn’t help repeating itself. Painting was forbidden and the Islamic artist could only deal with architecture, miniature, calligraphy and hand-crafts. The west increased the pace of cultural currents with the invention of printing machine and writing became a powerful tool. Typography
became an important branch of art with its rules and aesthetic principles among the visual arts. The prominent purpose in typography was the legibility and aesthetic presentation of a writing in terms of its function. So, the development of Latin characters in history covers not only aesthetic concerns but also technological solutions. The invention and development of the printing machine was among the major reasons why typography developed and the writing forms became such a powerful means of communication.

This improvement of technics and aesthetics in the contemporary graphical arts have had a great contribution in the cultural and economic development processes of the western society. Thanks to the development of printing press, culture and social life in the western world has developed enormously. The changing life in the world has also caused changes in economy and society. The currents of art in the twentieth century have also been influenced by these changes. In the next part of Chapter IV, we will see the evolution of graphic notions, the protest currents of art related to graphic arts and the historical development of Turkish graphic arts.

4.5 The Evolution of the Graphic Concepts

The evolution of the graphic concepts is parallel to socio-economical and socio-psychological conditions. In primitive societies, the communicative problems were limited and simple in direct proportion to the society's needs. The function of an expressive language or a communication system was fulfilled by a kind of "graphic language" constituted by signs and symbols as the vocabulary. Some interesting examples are graphic symbols from Paleolithic Age, wall paintings and miniatures. Emblematic symbols arisen from the synthesis of the letters, cylindrical moulds of Uygurs, Mesopotamian stamps using the painting language, symbolic cylindrical stamps with letters or emblems and the first prints replacing manuscripts: all these examples are steps in the evolution of the graphic works (Sebük 241). Through time, the constitution of greater societies and the development of the commercial life had imposed the presence of common elements of communication. With the invention of the printing machine, the rise in literacy level, the superiority of the trade over agriculture, the accelerated life rhythm and the shortened duration of
perception, it is necessary now that the communication mechanism, which aims to transmit a message above all, operates through clear and definite visual forms, easy to perceive. This communication mechanism is the art of graphics (Özsezgin 7).

If we are to give a general definition of the graphic design, it is: an art, originating from drawing, which uses such elements as colour and writing, and such techniques as printing and photography in order to offer simple solutions about the promotion of production or consumption materials, communication problems and artistic expressions. (Bayık 187)

The art of graphics has a myriad of applications. The design of the letters and the regulations of the page and the text may be subsumed under the category called typography. Typography is one of the main design elements in the art of graphics. Other than that, the main application fields of the graphics are emblem and logotype designs, packing design, graphics of commercials and, with the technological improvement, digital graphic design. These are standard elements of the graphic design.

Together with changing ideologies and socio-economical, hence socio-cultural, processes, some new trends differing from the ordinary life style and established artistic views had arisen. In almost all areas, some different protestant movements have been initiated by new generations against social traditions and conservatism. The expression of these socio-political movements were influential on the improvement of the arts as well. This expression had marked social life from music to clothing. Similarly to the case of the blues, the dissident music of the oppressed black people, in 1960s, by the guidance of Marxist thoughts, such ideas as social equality and pacifism engendered new artistic currents. It had been argued about whether these can be considered as artistic movements, but it is true that they had been influential on contemporary art (Brereton 34). For example, wall writings called graffiti, rebellious punk trend and different designs produced in the process of new pursuits evading social norms or ordinary design works are now subjects of academic investigation.
There had been some debates about whether such currents which influenced graphic arts as graffiti, 1960s psychedelic design and 1970s punk trend can be considered as arts; and this resulted in many different researches from sociology to arts. But nowadays it is widely admitted that these new pursuits were protestant artistic trends. For instance, *Psychedelic design spawned its own aesthetic or style that reworked art deco, late nineteenth century block-serif typography and poster design* (Brereton 36). As a matter of fact, these trends, which deny any dependence on aesthetic rules and use colours and letter forms in a different way from the ordinary style, created their own aesthetics. Probably Van Gogh’s marginal painting, which at the turn of the century, manifested itself in a non-ordinary manner, had confronted with similar reactions as today’s protestant artists do. The birth and the development of Pop Art is also a similar example. Hence, the evolutionary process of arts is parallel to socio-cultural changes (Tunali 256).
Plate 77 - Joint Show: a moment's grace for all those who live on the razor's edge and a new spectre for those alive on the shores of the Pacific: See Wes Wilson, Victor Moscoso and Baby Blue, Stanley Mouse, Alton Kelly and Rick Griffin, in the flesh: Also Country Joe and the Fish Moore Gallery, San Francisco, California, 1967. (Left)

Plate 78 - Bill Graham presents in dance-concert, Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Dino Valenti, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, February 3,4,5, Fillmore Auditorium, 1967 (Right)

As it is obvious from these very short remarks about dissident movements, their impacts on the evolutionary process of the arts is a deep subject to be explored. On the other hand, in such countries as Turkey where generally the classical art education prevails, such protestant art movements are ignored with the claim that they are advocated by unauthorized people not conforming to aesthetical norms, and educators or researchers interested in them have to confront the strict educational program of the schools. (Halis Biger, conversation, 16 May. 1999) When we consider the artistic background in Turkey, we see a structure established on 1000 years of Islamic culture, but which since 75 years, from the foundation of the Republic on, has turned towards Western philosophy and art. Modernism in Turkish contemporary art differs from the orientalist traditionalism in the sociocultural structure. So because of this different social structure, in Turkish arts, it is
not observed a similar flourishing of liberating, protestant movements from sexuality to women rights or peace advocation as in the West. However due to media and Internet, communication and interaction between societies had been increased and even in most conservative cultures, the norms adopted by particularly the young generation have begun to manifest a differentiation as regards to traditions. This unlimited interaction will play a great role in the formation of the future aesthetic norms.

If these protestant tendencies are emphasised above, it is because new composition experiments with Roman letter forms inspired on Islamic calligraphy of centuries old are refused by the conservative classical-art-oriented circles. Although new writing compositions by Roman letters presented in this thesis are not the result of a sharp and uncompromised reaction as is the case with protestant art movements in the West, they are clearly refused by conservative Islamic calligraphy circles where traditionalism is adopted as a necessary condition. Some classical Islamic calligraphers (teachers of Traditional Turkish Handcraft Departments at the University of Marmara and Mimar Sinan and some Arabic calligraphy artists in USA and Iran), whom I have consulted about my calligraphic works produced by Roman letters, told that the Kufi is a script pertinent to the Arabic and that these kinds of compositions as mine should be evaluated in the realm of modern graphic arts. On the other hand, I believe that classical Kufic style Arabic writing compositions are the inspiration of my works and that it is possible that we, who use Roman alphabet, can pursue new experiments in graphic norms by taking advantage of the graphic productivity of old Kufic forms. Such artists with expertise in classical Islamic calligraphy as Prof. Emin Barin, Prof. Halis Biçer and Prof. Ali Alpaslan defend that such new pursuits in design are positive in that they can enrich the visions in calligraphy and graphics (conversations with Biçer and Alpaslan, 14-16 May 1999).

The Islamic calligraphy is an art based on the Arabic alphabet. The Arabic language has a rich hoard of alphabetic characters which ensured the emergence of the geometrical Kufic script after the birth of Islam, as well as it possesses many organic script styles such as cursive style which appeared after the Kufi. The
calligraphy, which is appreciated particularly because it renders the sacred messages of God, has a mystical place in Islamic arts. This mystical impact engendered traditionalism in Islamic arts. So every script in Islamic calligraphy has its own writing rules to be obeyed in prose works or plate and writing compositions. Hence, although techniques become differentiated in contemporary Islamic calligraphy works, the general writing rules remain the same.

Thanks to the structure of the letters and the presence of different scripts, Islamic calligraphy is rather flexible in that it can produce many different aesthetic presentations. Particularly in the Arabic world, of which political and administrative structure depends on Islamic foundations, it is the widespread belief that holy messages could only be presented through the Arabic letters. For this reason, artists under the influence of the Arabic culture advocate that calligraphic works produced in the Arabic alphabet should not be applied in other languages. Most probably, the main reason for this is only an established habit arising from the fact that Islamic words and writings have until now been produced only in Arabic. In the contemporary debates concerning the status of the calligraphy in the Islamic world, it is seen that the general belief is that in such countries which adopted by now the Roman alphabet as Turkey, the classical calligraphic aesthetics has been dramatically reduced. In a conference and
exhibition entitled “Inscription as Art in the World of Islam”, which transpired at Hofstra University in Hemstead, New York, similar thoughts had been expressed:

As the conference and the exhibition explored various aspects of the Muslim ethos within the construct of the aesthetic realm, a variety of concerns and questions arose. What is the future of this inscription based art? Is it a fossil without a future or is it an energetic element that is very significant in various Muslim societies? What is the aftermath or the result of the status of inscription in those countries where the Arabic based script has been replaced by the Roman script? Particularly Turkey, followed by Indonesia, Malaysia and Tadjikistan, fall into this category. In the case of Indonesia, it was discussed that with the introduction of the Roman script, the incidence of the use of the Arabic and its aesthetic context has dramatically reduced over the years. Though not pertinent per se to the context of the conference but still of pivotal apprehension was the loss of centuries of literature as a result of the change in script (Rahim 47).

However the universality of the art conflicts with the fact that some branch of art is confined to the monopoly of one culture. Interactions between cultures bring about that different branches of art influence each other. These interactions provide the art scene with new activities and trends, and put it into motion.

In Turkey, with Atatürk’s reforms, among which is the promotion of the Roman alphabet in 1928, for the first time, even the call for prayer has begun to be pronounced in Turkish instead of Arabic, which was reacted heavily by Arabic countries and conservative circles in Turkey. This conservative reaction would be similar to the hypothetical requirement that the Bible should be read only in Latin. Atatürk defended that the religion cannot be under the yoke of any unique culture and proved this with the best executions. So it can be questioned why the Islamic calligraphy should only be executed with Arabic letters. To my view, if in the mosques and all the other holy places in the countries which abandoned the Arabic alphabet 71 years ago like Turkey, Qur’anic passages and the words of the Prophet are written in the alphabet we actually use, that is in Roman letters, instead of the Arabic we do not understand, it could be a good occasion for the religion to be
grasped better and to be interpreted philosophically. If people can understand what they read, they can be better informed and think freely, hence this prevents conservatism and fundamentalism. Proper communication is the easiest way of being informed. Furthermore, in the artistic context, to permanently repeat a work produced in the past is nothing but copying. What really counts is, by taking advantage of the legacy of the past culture, to produce new works in contemporary artistic norms. This is the real progress for a society.

Plate 80 – Shirin Neshat's works; Untitled, 1996 black and white photo and ink 75 x 42 in. (left), Untitled, 1996 black and white photo and ink (right)

In this respect, it can naturally be thought that in the Islamic world as well, there may be similar protestant movements as the ones which had flourished in the Western world since 1950s. However in these societies, which due to the experience of the Islamic philosophy for thousands of years, have different socio-cultural structures, it cannot be expected the emergence of such movements advocating pacifism, Marxism and women rights as in the West. The artists of Islamic origins who live in the West produce different works with the influence of their own background. In these works, Islamic motifs are presented with much more liberating and different techniques. To give one example, Shirin Neshat who lives
in USA, produces works that can be defined as protestant in the intellectual freedom of the Western world. In Neshat's works, the image of woman in Iran, where a strict Islamic regime prevails, is interpreted in different ways through photographic techniques. She widely uses in her photographs Arabic letters and Islamic motifs. The holy image of the Arabic due to its being the most important expressive tool of the Islamic philosophy and the language of the Qur'an, represents the religious influence in Neshat's works. Such works are the counterparts of the Western protestant art movements, only with Islamic motifs.

In the first chapter, the important status of the calligraphy in cultures of Islamic background and its place in the Islamic philosophy have been exposed. Writing or typography have an important place in contemporary art as well. To produce new and contemporary art works by taking advantage of the aesthetic legacy of thousands of years of the Islamic calligraphy and by using the design characters of the Kufic script compositions, in my view, may bring about a different interpretation in contemporary graphic arts. Before passing to works in this area, it would be useful to consider the history of the graphic arts in Turkey, which undergone a great social and cultural change after the establishment of the Republic in 1923. This small summary may give an idea about the evolution of the graphic arts of a society which had passed from Arabic to Roman alphabet.

4.6 The history of Turkish graphic arts

*That which emphasises the importance of the graphics in the art education of Turkey is the tradition of great calligraphy masters of the past.*

(Sezer Tansuğ 236)

Considering that the graphics is one of the most important activities ensuring exchanges of knowledge among the layers of the society, the history of Turkish graphic arts cannot be thought apart from the history of printing in Turkey. The graphic arts exist as long as its products are printed and spread out. Hence the story of Turkish graphics begins with the foundation of the first printing house in our country.
The establishment of the first printing house was provoked by the late influence of the Renaissance in a self-preserving cultural environment and by the introduction of materialism which begins to undermine religious-oriented patterns of thought and behaviour. The first dwelling of our contemporary graphic arts, the first printing house was formed under the reign of Sultan Ahmet III with the cooperation of İbrahim Efendi and Said Çelebi (?-1761), the son of Yirmisekiz Mehmet Çelebi (?-1732) who had worked for a short period at the French Embassy (1674-1745) (Büyük Larousse, V:11, 5536).

İbrahim Müteferrika printed three maps and sixteen books between 1729 and 1745. Several of them have a particular importance in our graphics history: “Vankulu Lugati” was the first book applied in letter set in order to print the Arabic writing used for eight hundred years by Muslim Turks; “Tarih-i Hind-i Garbi” was the first illustration book; “Cihannûma” was the first book with maps and drawings; and Grammaire Turque was the first book in which the Roman alphabet had been used. It was not easy to cast letters from the Arabic alphabet because the letter case had to consist of five hundred pieces. It should be remembered that letter cases with Roman letters consisted only of about one hundred pieces. The only reason for the late development of printing in our country, two hundred years after Gutenberg, was the unbelievable amount of pieces constituting a case and not religious constraints as some still claim.

Following the printing house of Müteferrika, Mühendishane Basimevi was built at Hasköy (İstanbul) in 1796 and “Dar-ut-tibaa” at Üsküdar (İstanbul) in 1802. A big and coloured Turkish geographic atlas, the “Cedid Atlas Tercemesi” from Mahmut Raif Efendi, was printed here. This book was a wonderful piece of printing and drawing. Another graphically valuable work from the same author, “Tableaux des Nouveaux Reglements de l’Empire Ottoman”, included twenty eight drawings.

In order to print the first official newspaper “Takvim-i Vekayi”, the printing house of Takvimhane-i Amire was founded in 1831. The same year the first lithography printer started to work. This could be regarded as a revolution in our printing history. Lithography would be used in the future years in more books and printed
products, leading to illustrated folk books and folk pictures decorating coffee house walls. The first newspapers in Turkish were published in the 1890s. Some advertisements of poor quality were found in them. We know the first official banknote had been printed in the same years. During this period, more than fifty printing houses had been functioning in different sections of İstanbul, moreover printing had been entering the business sector in some cities of Anatolia (Buyuk Larousse, V:23, 11858).

A new and original era had prospered in the graphics history with Ebüzziya Tevfik (1849-1913). He acquired a respectful place in the field with his tasteful and meticulous products as he was a many talented person with accomplishments as calligrapher, writer, journalist, historian and printer. The first postage stamps were put in use after the 1850s. Postcards also manifested a rich variety towards the end of the century. A new field opened up for graphic products by the initiation of the magazine publication with “Vekayi-i Tibbiye” at 1850 and “Mecmua-i Fünun” at 1862; we also observe an increase in the use of drawings accompanying written passages. Announcements by illustrations were published quite often in newspapers and magazines after the 1880s. The printing of the “Salname” (Annual) that began in 1867 had soon spread through the cities of the empire, and then had led to the printing of private annuals followed by calendars. Ebüzziya Tevfik gave the most successful examples in this field.

Pioneers of our printing history like Ahmet Mithat, Şinasi and Ahmet İhsan contributed a great deal in spreading around the graphic products at the end of the century with newspapers like “Tercüman-i Ahval”, “Tasvir-i Efkar”, “Tercüman-i Hakikat”, and magazines like “Mecmua-i Ebüzziya” and “Servet-i Fünun”. Another important graphics event of the time was the introduction of the caricature to the Turkish press. We owe this to the humour magazine “Diyojen” which Teodor Kasap published first in 1870.

Announcements by illustrations both in newspapers and magazines increased a great deal with the freedom of the press following Meşrutiyet reforms in 1908. It could be said that the promotion firms of today originated with the appearance of
the first advertising firm in 1909. Due to the economic collapse stemming from the
Balkan wars, First World War and the Independence War, the promotion graphics
that recently blossomed dried out (Maden 1).

Meanwhile graphics of book covers had begun simultaneously with the first
products of the Turkish book publication, and it had given quite successful products
in the hands of unknown artists. Ebüzziya Tevfik had signed the first known
examples in this field. Let us also give credit to Ahmet İhsan for the success of the
covers of the “Servet-i Fünun” magazines and book publications. Notably Münif
Fehim had brought a particular flavour to book covers for more than forty years.
After the reform in language, İh ap Hulusi and Ali Süavi were the most productive
cover designers.

Plate 81 – İh ap Hulusi’s two posters. On the left, Turkish Aircraft Institution, and on the right, a
medicine advertisement.
During that period, when the Republic was approved as the administrative system, large state institutions such as the State Railroads, the Maritime Lines, Sümerbank, the State Monopolies, the Red Crescent, Turkish Aircraft Institution and the Child Welfare Institution were in need of multi-dimensional graphic products to announce their functions to the public. İhap Hulusi was the only artist to be remembered from this period that ended with the beginning of the Second World War. Illustrations of books, magazines, newspapers did not give forth quality products till recent years. During this period, elements and ideas were frequently transferred from foreign publications. Cevat Şakir and Münif Fehim had original works of their own in this field.

The first posters in our country must have been done in the first fifteen years of this century. We do not know which are the first examples and who did them. İhap Hulusi was again the true specialist of the topic. After having returned from Germany in 1925, from his education in graphics, he was the only person in this field until 1960s. Mithat Özer, who was educated in arts in France, raised the first poster designers at the Fine Arts Academy where he established a studio in 1932. These graduates gave products between 1940 and 1950. After the 1950's artists like Mesut Manioglu and Selçuk Oral had better and more competent works compared to former artists (Maden 2).

İhap Hulusi, due to his education in Germany, has been engaged with a schematic discipline in poster designing. It can be said that in Turkish graphic arts of the Republican period, graphic designs akin to North European and Bauhaus schools had been initiated by İhap Hulusi and Kenan Temizhan. In both artists’ works, a principle of design, which presents the German graphics’ scriptural and pictorial elements within a structural unity, is predominant. These two artists, in order to render the message of the poster strong, composed the graphic elements with a drawing language which the Turkish people are attuned to. In this respect, it can be said that the early Turkish graphic artists had been insistent in preserving their connections to the past. However they abstained from using local motifs pertinent to the social structure of the Turkish society. In their works, elements of the Western graphic arts prevail. The main reason for that is that through the
promotion of the Roman alphabet in 1928, the Western graphic arts were seen as a way out in designs making use of these letters. However with the spread of the industry and graphic arts accompanying it, traditional or national motifs more pertinent to the social structure had begun to be introduced. This early period under the influence of the German graphics was followed by another period when these Western elements were gradually replaced by local ones, and then came a period of pursuits which aimed to provide the Turkish graphic arts with an international character (Tansuğ 332,333).

The graphics, in all branches, opened out to the public in coherent forms and adequate applications after the 1960s. The basic reason was the assortment of products and consequently requirements of the marketing fact. These circumstances as well as the efforts of a few artists who took their profession seriously, assigned graphics a place within the scope of the plastic arts. Today the graphics reached its peak, uniting the novelties of the printing technology with the experiences of advertisement agencies.

The main graphic artists who contributed to this process for thirty years were: Emin Barin, an expert skilled particularly in calligraphy and typography; Sait Maden, who produced in all branches of graphics but became famous by drawing over six thousand book and magazine covers; Yurdaer Altıntaş, who executed a new aesthetics in his posters for theater which he started to draw in the 60s; Mengü Ertel, who successfully produced only posters for theater; Erkal Yavi, Bülent Erkmen, Sadi Pektaş, Aydin Erkmen, Cemalettin Mutver, Aydın Ülken, Sadık Karamustafa, Fahri Karagözoğlu, Emre Senan, Savaş Çevik... who showed efficiency in many branches like poster, book cover, emblem, packing design and art directorship. (Maden 2)

Emin Barin’s works, where the old Arabic letters are presented within a new graphic order, are his modern calligraphy works. On the other hand, some of his works are based on the repeating of the old calligraphic schemes, which can be considered as temporary amateur exercises. But Emin Barin’s works, where the old religious writing compositions are applied to a modern composition structure, are
the best examples of the contemporary graphic development of the old calligraphy. Such artists as Halis Bicer were encouraged by Emin Barin's works to apply these contemporary calligraphic forms to their own designs in the Latin alphabet (Tansug 334).

Plate 82 – Erkal Yavi's book cover (left), and Mesut Manioglu's stamp design (right), and Sait Maden's book cover (below)

At present graphics is quite a popular occupation. It is activated further under the mutual influence of many advertisement agencies' increasing business volumes, of many corporations' increase in quantity and need for graphic products, and of many artists of richer experiences, technical knowledge and equipment (Maden 3).
Plate 83 – Namık Bayık’s stamp design (left) and Ömer Erduran’s book cover design (right).

Plate 84 – Book cover and an emblem (Mediterranean Textile and Fashion Festival) of Bülent Erkmen (1980’s).
Plate 85 – Yurdaer Altuntaş, watercolour Turkish shadow puppet figures.

Plate 86 – Turhan Selçuk's book cover illustration (left) and a sample of Mengü Ertel's poster designs (right).
The liberal market economy, which particularly in 15 years became widespread in Turkey, led to a development in industry and trade, which consequently resulted in a dramatic progress in advertisement and graphics sectors. It would be wrong to think that graphic arts serve in Turkey only to advertisement purposes proportionate to the developments in trade and industry. However book covers, theatre posters and other posters for cultural activities are not yet at a level to satisfy graphics artists. Turkish artists do not have enough material subsistence means to produce works concerning art as their counterparts in USA and Europe.

Also movie and TV advertisement animations, which prospered in Turkey since 1960's, are one of the basic fields of the Turkish graphic arts. These animations were initiated first by caricaturists, and then some graphic artists began to specialize on this field. Caricature and humour have an important place in Turkey’s contemporary art life. If we are to consider caricature as a branch of the graphics, it can be said that it is much improved due to the Turkish society’s attunement to humour. Turkey, despite of a population of 60 millions, is the country where the biggest amount of humour magazines are printed and read. There are many worldwide famous Turkish caricaturists among whom are Turhan Selçuk, Ferruh Doğan, Ali Ulvi, Semih Balcioğlu, Tonguç Yaşar and Oğuz Aral (Tansuğ 335).

Talking about the contributions made by caricaturists to the graphic arts, it must be remembered that Tonguç Yaşar had the worldwide acclaim by a cartoon where he used the elements of the classical calligraphy. These drawings were also used on the book cover of the famous “The Splendour of Calligraphy”, a book about the Islamic calligraphy. The worldwide acclaim acquired by Turkish graphic and caricature artists on the international communication and interaction arena is perhaps interestingly due to the simple use of drawings and colours (Tansuğ 338, 339).

Another important contribution to the development in Turkish graphic arts is the influence of the Fine Arts Faculty of the Marmara University, established in 1957 in the line of the Bauhaus school. Furthermore, in institutions which give fine arts education, old Turkish arts are still taught in Traditional Turkish Handcraft
Departments. Some of the artistic branches taught in these departments are calligraphy, tapestry and illuminations art. Hence a graphic or textile designer graduated from a Fine Arts Faculty in Turkey, while producing his works in contemporary art, can also take advantage of the art legacy of the past and present different interpretations based on this tradition.

Contemporary Turkish art of graphics that has its roots in the ancient art of calligraphy of the Ottoman Empire is today more interested and involved with the advertisement sector with its contemporary designs. The benefits of the sector and the concern to make good money have greatly hindered the artists from creating very original works making use of the tradition. However, we can create a new point of view about contemporary graphic designs if we can work on new pieces via the use of the traditional calligraphy. In the next chapter, the visual similarity of Kufic characters to Roman letters and whether the graphic compositions applied to Kufic script may be applied to the Roman letters will be discussed. The applicability of current Roman letters in relation to Kufic decorations will be investigated as a step on the way to contemporary calligraphy. And the writing compositions produced through Latin alphabet forms by the inspiration of Kufic compositions will be presented.
CHAPTER V

creating new arrangements by using latin alphabet forms
upon an inspiration of kufic arrangements
CREATING NEW ARRANGEMENTS BY USING LATIN ALPHABET FORMS UPON AN INSPIRATION OF KUFIC ARRANGEMENTS

My master thesis was on Turkish shadow puppets as a long-forgotten branch of art and also one of the building stones of the Turkish theater today. My total aim was showing that the traditional arts may be evaluated as a complimentary element into the contemporary arts, instead of regarding them out-of-time and functionless. I set out my studies with the idea that the pieces of art prepared using the Kufic forms, that can be regarded as the starting point of Islamic calligraphy, and giving us the taste of an abstract painting, could give us an idea about the same arrangements being performed upon the western letters. In my opinion, the ancient and forgotten branches of art are quite likely to provide us with new attempts in many different ways.

For example, the arts of the ancient times have been forgotten with the Announcement of the Republic in Turkey regarding the Schools of Art in 1923. There is a steady tendency towards the western arts starting during that period. Adaptation of the western philosophy of art seemed like a good way of becoming a modern country. The young republic opted for the Latin alphabet in 1928 through the Revolution of Alphabet.

However, it lead into a gap between today and the cultural and artistic accumulation of the last thousand years. This chapter investigates the gap between the cultural and mystical aims of Turkish calligraphy, the difficulty of crossing between an Arabic, Islamic art and secular Western society. The Turkish artists really have signed under a great many successes during the seventy-five years of the republic. However, when it comes to mentioning the traditional (meant to cover the pre-republican times) Turkish arts, the educators
seem to think about the branches of art that are out-of-fashion and can only be seen in the museums. (Conversation with Textile and Graphic departments' teachers at Fine Art Faculties of Mimar Sinan and Marmara Universities) There are only a few research programs in Turkish universities today regarding the Traditional Turkish Hand-Crafts and they are more generally concerned with restoration and history of arts. This thesis argues that and believe that the traditional arts will open the road to a new horizon in our contemporary arts with the condition that the artist shall make use of the historical accumulation of the branches of art as well as preparing for the future in terms of both the technique involved and creativity.

I would like to cite the words of Mustafa Aslier, who was the head for many years to one of the oldest two faculties (Fine Art Faculties of Mimar Sinan and Marmara Universities) of art in Turkey:

*The main action of humankind, which gains his social attitudes and goes in line with his basic instincts like surviving and reproduction, is creating and bringing about changes. While arriving for the novelty, it is not necessary to destroy the old. Finding the values of the old, which is going to be the source of the new, is also a novelty, like looking at the already existing things with a new eye when we get up in the morning.*

(Aslier, cover page of exhibition catalogue 1997)

In this section discusses the compositions formed of letters, rather than individual font styles. By giving examples from contemporary artists, I will demonstrate that and explain that the compositions created using the Kufic forms of a thousand years with enriched plastic values may also be created using the Latin alphabet. My purpose is to contemplate the fact that the Latin letters may be used in compositions similar to those of the calligraphers who sought to express their skill in compositions of combinations of letters that sometimes resembled figurative or abstract motifs. This artwork fills the gap caused by the prohibition on painting during the 1500 years of Islamic history and demonstrates that new compositions after a vital contribution to the contemporary graphic and visual arts.
These compositions of names or words that are totally based on typographical elements provide a typographical solution and aesthetically present the visual perception. The forms made up of letters and their composition in these designs, that reflect the forms of letters in a very different dimension, are but experimental fiction as in the case of the Kufic script. These compositions that cannot be repeated try to present the writing or the matter through the use of aesthetic functions of typography in a conceptual manner. Such compositions require original typographical solutions.

Keeping up to certain aesthetical principles while creating such designs using the new Latin letters is highly important for the visual quality we will get. The general design principles must be taken in consideration in a composition of letters such as:

a) The adapting of composition to Latin letters, combined groups of writing and prose compositions
b) Variation in design
c) Contrasts or the opposite elements
d) Phenomenon of balance
e) Phenomenon of dynamics

These matter above will be explained in the general conclusion of thesis in next chapter. Also readers can observe these matters samples in this chapter.

5.1 The constitutions of Kufi composition

On his web page Sakkal explains in detail the composition of two Kufic design by using drawings (Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/instrctn/Kufi01.html>):

The overall layout is very well done. The symmetry is natural, and the distribution of letters is well balanced. The position of the two “Allah” words is well handled, being placed above the other words.
Plate 87 – The constitution levels of a knotted Kufi composition (Fig 1, 2, 3 below) (Sakkal, http://www.sakkal.com/instrctn/Kufi01.html)

Notes and Corrections:
1. and 2. : Breading or interlacing of lines should be consistent in all areas of the design. The interlacing of three vertical lines is usually avoided by leaving one of the three as a free line.
3. Shape of letter “Dal” is not traditional and is confusing because it looks more like “Ha.”
4., 5, and 6. : thickness or width of line should be consistent in all areas of the design. It should appear as if drawn with simple strokes of a pen.
7. This shape of letter “Ha” is acceptable, however it seems that a more appropriate shape here is one that fills more of the space and moves away from the word above it.
8. and 9. : These extensions are not traditional or natural. If you want to have an extension before the letter “Meem” then use a Meem drawn above the line which accepts this type of extension.
10. Turning the hook away from the adjacent line gives a more balanced space around it.
11. Raising this horizontal line gives a more balanced space around it.
12. Extending the first tooth of the letter “Seen” gives it a more natural appearance and prevents its confusion with other letter shapes.
(Sakkal, <http://www.sakkal.com/instrctn/Kufi01.html>)
Square Designs:

To create a square design, start with a band of square Kufi calligraphy, then divides the words along the four sides of the square. Next, create a central pattern to tie the ends of the letters and fill the center of the square (figs. 1, 2, 3).

(Sakkal <http://www.sakkal.com/Instrctn/Square_Kufi01.html>)

Plate 88 – The constitution levels of square (Chequered) Kufi composition.


In Plate 87 and 88, the calligraphy and graphic artist of Arab origin, Mamoun Sakkal, explains the phases of formation of a knotted Kufi and a square (chequered) Kufi composition. As it can be clearly seen on this schematic explanation the connection of writings are in the form of a knot and they are used together with round forms. These round connections supply the design with an organic movement. In the Middle East this type of ornamentation had
been widely used (ninth-thirteenth centuries). In Plate 88 the formation of a chequered or square Kufi composition is demonstrated. It is schematically explained how to form a square Kufi design, how to adapt the writing to fit within the square and finally how to make the connections between the repeating words. In the next chapters, the explanations in Plate 87 and 88 will help us to have a better understanding of the phases above the designing of the writing compositions with Arabic letters or with Latin letter forms.

5.2 Creating new arrangements in contemporary graphic forms

The illustrations provide a clear relationship between Kufic style and contemporary art in my exhibition at University of Wollongong in May 1997. All the works shown here were designed in 1996-98 and exhibited in the Spark Gallery, University of Wollongong (May 7-23 1998). I showed works on this theme. The inspiration is the ancient Kufic illumination. The designs, different in style and geometric structures, are composed in fully Latin characters.

Plate 89 – Enis Tan’s name design with Latin characters, 1994, indian ink on paper 54 x 54 cm (left), and Mamoun Sakkal’s Arabic name design (right)
Plate 89 is an example of a double chequered Kufic composition. On the left is my name design with Latin characters (Size: 54 x 54 cm. Indian ink on paper 1996). On the right is Mamoun Sakkal’s who is famous contemporary Islamic calligrapher, composition of the same style but in Arabic script. These examples show that (especially the chequered Kufic) is the Kufic style compatible in terms of the form with the Latin characters with no serifs. It is possible in both of the alphabets to use the letters in the form of squares and make a braid of the extensions of the letters in the center of the composition. This system of braids is typical of the chequered Kufic compositions, which were popularly used in the tiles or the early Seljuki architecture. Examples are still abundant at minaret faces and mosque gate frontals and in works of steel, clothes textile, carpets and wood-carving. The modular formation of the design has greatly affected the popularity of chequered Kufic in architecture and the like. In other words, the width of the letters in the composition are equal to the gaps in between, just like the equal width of the white and black squares in a chess set. This is especially true when we notice that the bricks in the architectural structures are easy to be used as modules to create the letters and gaps in between. We can see many examples in the Seljuki architecture. In addition to that the chequered Kufic style was easily created at carpet-weaving.

Plate 90 – On right, characteristic of Seljuk minaret (teenth or eleventh century) and Interwoven floral Kufic script (left).
Plate 91 is the quadruple Allah composition by Halis Bicer (1940-), an expert on contemporary typography and Ottoman calligraphy. In such compositions, the same word is placed into an area of a square in a geometrical order. The writing may be placed straight or upside down, the reason being the artist’s concern for creating the braid system in the center of the comparison with the extensions of the letters. For instance, the artist tends to use letters as y, g, j, p, f, n, m, l (extending downwards) in a way to place the extended piece of the writing inside the square form. Similarly, letters like l, h, k, t, I, b (extending upwards) are generally placed outside the square form. Thus, the extensions are used as decorative elements for the center of the square form. The width of the letters in the composition is equal to the gaps within. This is the most characteristic feature of chequered Kufic compositions. This symmetric design, the basic property of which is the static movement and a stable geometric form effect provided by the repetition involved. The complementary and supporting elements join as separate modules and involve in a repetition within a certain geometric structure. This gives the design a lively movement and the spectator can easily follow the repetition effect.
The two compositions plate 92 are among Emin Barın’s (1970s) latest works in Latin script. He has produced contemporary graphic compositions using the classical Arabic script since 1940s. With the new ideas introduced by Biçer, he has also proven his skill on the Latin script. It is especially interesting that in the “Allah” composition (above left), the name is lined up in a centrifugal form without the use of a braid effect in the center, as well as the employment of all the classical chequered Kufic design elements. However, the letter extensions are the complementary elements that unite the modules. This is a required solution both in aesthetic concerns and for the preservation of the unity in the piece. In addition, the very popular Ottoman ornamental elements are skilfully employed in the design in order to fill the gaps arriving at a balance in itself. The experience of many years provides Barın with that skill. This is maybe among the best examples of the search for novelty.
Plate 93 – Halis Bicer’s own name composition using Latin characters similar square Kufi form
(1972, the original 22 x 22 cm, Indian ink on paper) (computerized by Enis Tan 1998)

Plate 93, Prof Halis Bicer’s name composition resembling Kufi form, though using the Latin script, is a good example in case. Bicer’s work is a dual replication of name and surname groupings rather than four repetitions of the name. For this reason the middle composition is an inverted symmetric bond.

Other examples by Barin but in the Arabic script show how he has made use of the same aesthetic and design elements before starting out with the compositions in Latin script, plate 94 and 95 will be good examples to prove that the very same aesthetic gusto and design elements as in compositions of Arabic script may just as well be employed in Latin script compositions.

Plate 94 - Barin – “Mashallah” Quartet repetition in Arabic script (left), Barin – “Allah” Quartet repetition in Arabic script (right)
The classical calligraphers in general used the name of the Prophet “Mohammed”, God’s name, “Allah”, and the religious terms like the “Besmele” and “masallah” in their compositions. Classical calligraphy is greatly concerned with the compositions of important lines from the Holy Book or the sayings of the prophet that are called “levha” (means; plate), and that follow the Kufic age. Most are produced by Arabic characters like Thuluth, Talik, and Nesih and in free hand-writing skills. Instead of the repetition of the modules of a name or a word as in the Kufic compositions, levhas are formed of a complete sentence of the prophet or in the Holy Book.

On plate 96 the stowed (composed) Jeli Thuluth “levha” of Abdülfettah Efendi,
one of the late Ottoman calligraphers. The towing technique is commonly practices in levhas in order to present long sentences in the form of a composition. This is characteristic of levhas. The geometrical or symmetrical compositions in Kufic designs are seldom used in levhas. The use of geometric design elements in Kufic is one of the distinguishing feature of Kufic compositions among other forms in Arabic script.

The reason why I wanted to introduce levha, a type of composition that uses scripts following Kufic, is that it differs in aesthetic structures from the compositions by Kufic scripts that constitute my topic matter. It is essential that the less informed spectator contemplates the Islamic arts with this difference taken into consideration. Ottoman calligraphy rarely employs Kufic script in compositions. This is because the Kufic script, that was used during the Umayyad Caliphate (661-750), Abbasid Caliphate (750-1517) and Seljuk Empire (tenth-thirteenth centuries) Empires, is the origin of all the other forms and ruled its reign during these periods. The Ottoman Empire did not popularly make use of the Kufic form except for some of the famous works of Karahisari, the calligrapher discussed in Chapter III, page 71 during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent (1495-1566).

Plate 97 - by Halis Bicer Straight “Allah” composition in Latin script (left), and decomposition of the same piece (1981, 30 x 21 cm, mixed media), (computerized and re-design by Enis Tan 1998)

Plate 97 you can see an example of a straight or asymmetrical design that is used in addition to the Kufic compositions that are symmetrical. The embroidered braid element of symmetrical letter extensions is not to be found
in this example. However, a well-balanced piece is created by taking into consideration the visual aesthetic harmony and uniting the upper extensions of the letters. The upper extensions are twice the size of the letter “a” add to the legibility of the writing as well as the visual impression. By contrast to symmetrical compositions, designing a name as a single module or unit and balancing its extensions geometrically or optically is a much more harder task to accomplish. It is harder to provide an aesthetic view to a stagnant structure as opposed to the dynamic structures in repetitive compositions. However, in order to obtain a certain movement in the straight Kufi designs, the Kufi style known as the Western Kufi where the letter extensions are rounded was preferred. In other words, instead of using the equal thickness system, the empty spaces are squeezed to achieve coherence in the design. This kind of asymmetrical Kufi compositions were used in architecture, metal works and weaving during the reign of Umayyad (661-750) and Abbasid (750-1258) caliphates.

Plate 98 - Barin –Right, “Elhamdülillah” and left, “Ah Minel Ashk” (Private collection Istanbul)

The examples in plate 98 are all traditional compositions originating from classical cornered Kufic script compositions. They are also examples of the Latin script being used in a Kufic form properties as inspired from original Kufic compositions.
In plate 99 a variant Latin composition. However, the effect resembles that of a classical quarter chequered Kufic composition. You can easily see that the letter structure here is different although it reminds us of the western Kufic script with the exception that the rounded shape in letter extensions of the western Kufic have been used in the bodies of the letter structures. The purpose here is to express at individual forms in letter structures which refer back to Kufic compositions. The equality between the width of letter structures and the gaps that is mostly employed by chequered Kufic compositions is not to be found here which resembles the straight compositions of the western Kufic. The width of a letter is approximately three times the gap in between letters. The purpose is to arrive at a form balance of the letter forms around the central square. In other words, I wanted to produce a contemporary and different composition out of the ancient compositions instead of simply imitating the older examples.
The design in Plate 100, reminds the classical square Kufi composition just as in the preceding composition. The original letter forms and the ornamentation in the middle of the composition gives the design its unity. Thanks to the lower extension of the letter “I” in the composition “Ali Oto”, the writing group is unified with a knot pattern. The black colour is dominant in this design. There is almost no space between the letters and this is a feature underlining the design. The red dot in the middle of the composition balances the suffocating effect of black.
Plate 101 a composition by Halis Biçer in Latin script, that was designed as a logo for a privately owned company. The compositions of this kind are very relevant in employment in graphics business where they contribute a new point of view to the contemporary graphic designs inspired by ancient Kufic compositions.

The single copy of a name composition in Latin script that was also designed as a personal logo differs from the previous examples in that it is more of a modern graphic presentation. Plate 102 The centre remains less decorated in terms of ornaments and the units are united with the square form in the middle. The design has also been divided into sections with the help of a computer to provide with a shadow on each unit that brings visual depth to the piece.

Plate 102 - “Aylin Tan” as logotype by Enis Tan, 1998, 38 x 38 cm. Indian ink on paper.

Another graphically stylized name composition Plate 103 in Latin script uses a structure laid in a triangular form that is constituted of four name compositions, one in the middle and the remaining three on the corners. In order to achieve a balance of colour-stain in the central piece, a different colour (red) is added in. It is also a demonstrates an individual character in the use of font. It is essential that the graphics expert creates the character of letters to be used in such geometric structures. This is also a personal logo design.
Plate 104 is an example of “Ahmet” quartet in a square form. The groups are united by the lower extension of the letter “h”. Differing from the classical Kufic compositions, an individual rounded letter structure is created for this example that is inspired by the classical Kufic compositions such as repetitive. Computer technology has been incorporated into the creation of this design in order to facilitate optic perception and provide visual depth to the writing.

Plate 105 is another name composition in the form of a rectangle. The groups are not completely united. Only the lower extensions of the letter “y” of the upper and lower groups are used for union. The groups on the two sides are not united. The colour-spot composition in the centre provides the design with a sense of balance despite the fact that the form is not a perfect square.
The composition in plate 106 is the symbolic expression of Istanbul, which is a city memorable for its glorious mosques and minarets that have been incorporated into the design through to the structures of the letters. Its functions as an emblem within graphic design including the classical quartet repetition of the word of Istanbul. The lower extensions of “I”s make way for the central block. The letter “N”s are provided with symbolic mosque forms, whereas the initial “I”s and “N”s are given the shape of domes in mosques and the “alems” one in minarets.
The composition, plate 107, which is the name of Hasan Gürbüz, differs in terms of its graphic presentation. It is made up of two squares that are set in different angles. Letter “R” in the inner square unites the four sides with its extensions that reminds us of the classical Kufic script. The difference lies in the fact that an outer square is designed on top of the inner one, the reason being that the length of the composition would be far too much had the names been written on a single line. In the outer group, the words are colour-spot united at the initial and final points which causes an optically diverted perception. It is a very good example of arriving at contemporary graphic design out of classical Kufic forms.

In plate 108 is the name of Australia composed in a square form as a quartet. The characters are original. The difference between the width of the letters provides for the exit into the central geometric formation. The letter “U” is replaced by the form of a kangaroo, symbol of Australia. The massive ink-spot effect of black is somewhat alleviated by the red effect.
The design on plate 109 is created in a triangular form as opposed to the classical square form. The name picked specifically is “Queen”. The grouping is such that the writing is sort of inclined instead of being simply straight. In other words, the inclination is that the letter “U” that follows the letter “Q” is larger and the letter “E” is the largest although it is the third letter. The underlying reason here is that the gap to be formed among the group must be prevented. The massive ink-spot effect of black in the center figure is somewhat alleviated by the red effect on the sides.
Another geometric composition plate 110 of a hexagon, far from being classical, provides for the design of the word "Europe". The composition constitutes of six blocks, each of which is situated in half a circle and which unite to create the hexagon. Since there are more than four groups of words as in the case of a quartet, two different colours are used to create a balance of groups. Taking a complete look at the figure at a distance, it looks more like a flower with six petals, since each side is in the form of half a circle.

The circular composition of the balance of two different colours is based on the foundation of the borders of two circles that go like a chain in somewhat the form of a spiral. Four words of "love" are repeated. Since the white part outside the writing groups fails to keep the colour-spot balance, spots had to be formed on the circular keylines in a different colour, that creates the spot balance and the dynamics in the totality of the design. The small round shape in the center supports the dynamics of the design. (Plate 111)
Plate 111 – “Love” by Enis Tan, 1997, 42 x 42 cm. mixed media.

Plate 112-113 are two circular examples by Emin Barin, one of which is in Arabic (plate 112) and the other in Latin scripts (Plate 113). Plate 114 is the example of a square form by Emin Barin again for the name “Atatürk” in original Latin characters as a simple form. Plate 115 is his own creation for his name in a classical chequered Kufic style. The composition of “Allah” by Emin Barin is shown in Plate 116 in a round structure, illuminated by chequered Kufic style of Latin characters.

Plate 112 – “Allah - Mohammed” round Kufic composition in Arabic letter by Emin Barin (left)
Plate 113 – “Allah bir” circular composition in Latin letter by Emin Barin (right)
Plate 114 – “Atatürk” by Emin Barın

Plate 115 – “Emin” by Emin Barın

Plate 116 – “Allah” Kufi style Latin characters by Emin Barın
5.3 The conclusion

There are certain principal points in a design process or an inspiration of classical Kufic compositions, that is, the classical Kufic compositions provide a number of principal points that can be useful in today's designs. We can classify them in 4 groups:

a) Legibility and Symbolic Features
b) Colour, spot and the attempt of creating the Rhythm
c) Possibility of creating a logo or an emblem to a person or a subject
d) Creating pictorial effects via graphic elements

How classical Kufic compositions may open the road for similar contemporary designs, we can move on to see to what extent the contemporary compositions may contribute to the visual arts of today.

a) Setting out from the early Islamic perception of graphics to develop these features on contemporary graphical composition
b) Creating original forms of letters
c) Contribution to the education of arts in contemporary compositions
d) Presenting comprehensible compositions in Latin forms instead of the Arabic script

In this chapter, I have presented examples by Turkish artists using Latin characters. It is pertinent to remember that the countries that have a common Islamic history of arts are all Muslims and the only Muslim country that uses Latin alphabet is Turkey. It is beyond discussion that there are many artists throughout the world who are inspired by the classical Kufic script and produce their works in that direction. However, all are examples of the Arabic script. The first attempts in Turkey, where the Latin alphabet has been used since 1928, for performing researches on a new design method of adapting classical Kufic compositions on contemporary graphic arts were carried out by Prof. Halis Biçer and Prof. Emin Barın, who could produce but a limited number of pieces of examples. This essay also covers compositions in Arabic script so the reader may compare and comprehend the origins of the designs.
The examples and descriptions present contemporary graphic compositions inspired by the Kufic script works of the seventh-eleventh centuries. The examples are produced by myself, Prof. Halis Biçer and Prof. Emin Barin. The designs are produced after a thorough scrutiny of original Kufic samples and then, incorporated into modern graphic elements. The work of the ancient calligraphers was composed of specific religious words or names (Allah, Mohamed, Masallah, Elhamdulillah etc.) Modern works can be inspired by the forms of the ancient pieces to become emblems. The designs in Latin script, when compared with those of Arabic, show us the origins of the modern designs. In addition to that, the new designs created with Latin script are by no means imitations, nor re-generations of the classical Kufic script. The purpose here is simply to be inspired by the old and embellishing it with the norms of the contemporary graphic arts in order to visually present the spectator the features of the newer designs that may contribute to the contemporary arts.

To sum up, we can say that the concern for presenting religious texts in a very impressive visual method lead into the massive development of Arabic characters, that first emerged in the case of the Kufic script, then caused the origin of newer scripts. The rather flexible and changeable form of the Arabic letters made it possible for such compositions to appear in all areas and platforms (from architecture to wood-engravings). The evolution of Kufic, acquired different types of scripts. The compositions of a sort of a braid systematics of interrelated letters are very attractive today. But the main interesting point is that Kufic is the script that is the closest structure to the Latin alphabet. Compositions were formed like abstract paintings regarding its importance within Islamic arts. In other words, the form of Kufic script is the closest to that of the Latin alphabet when compared with all the latter and flexible forms of writing like Thuluth that followed Kufic in popularity. The visual effect of a composition in Kufic may be copied using Latin letters.
I would like to quote the words of an expert, Halis Biçer:

"I strongly believe that it is a very wrong idea that the ancient pieces of art are out-of-fashion, have completed their function and are only to be seen in museums, and that the ancient pieces are primitive with a rather conservative opinion. Instead of looking at them with admiration, we may choose to become constructive beings upon the re-evaluation of the design experience of hundreds of years during the creation of a novelty as but a resource."

(Conversation with Halis Biçer, November, 12, 1998, Kazasker, Istanbul.)
CHAPTER VI

GENERAL CONCLUSION OF THE THESIS
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6.1 The beginning of the Islamic art of calligraphy and the Kufic script. The impact of Tasawwuf (Islamic philosophy) on the art of calligraphy

This thesis describes how Kufic script emerged in early Islamic period and gained its importance as it was used for the reproduction of the Koran. If we are to distinguish writing from drawing, we can say that the Kufic script is the one among all the Arabic scripts that is the closest to drawing. It can never be considered as a static, stagnant style because the characteristic horizontal lines of the letters are extended. This difference of form provide Kufic with certain dynamism. The fact that Kufic letters are combined in this form of sharpness and long horizontal lines provides visual dynamism. The use of letters in this form also symbolises that the Lord’s words are exact and unchangeable. The script contains a cryptic message. In other words, it look as if the writing means to explain a Divine dimension in addition to its essence. As words are formed up of letters in this script, some letters are written separately although they may be in the same word. The reason here maybe to focus on the content of a Divine message.

During the period when Islam turned in to a religious empire and continued enlarging its realm of influence, Kufic happened to be the legal form of writing, and became the first divine writing form to be introduced to newly converted nations. This also resulted in the use of Kufic by these nations as a way to symbolize the divinity of the new religion. Thus, the script itself became very popular and developed is every country where the religion went (661-750). In time the styles differed from one another as in the case of Andalucian Kufic in Spain and Horasan Kufic in Iran (eighth-tenth centuries) and they were called the Western and Eastern Kufic scripts. The Arabic scripts that followed were inspired by the Kufic in terms of aesthetical solutions. Besides, Kufic was popularly used, thanks to its formal features during the most lively and
invading periods of the religion, especially in architecture (tile engravings, mosque portals and interiors) and metal and textile products. Among all the Islamic arts, calligraphy acquired softer forms of writing with the rise of Kufic to be more organic and legible. Kufic was firstly used at tombstones and developed during the next 500 years to be differentiated among itself (Western and Eastern Kufic scripts). As in all the other Islamic arts, we can say that Tasawwuf had much with the improvement of this style. That is, the fact that integrity of forms and aesthetics were highly important in Kufic and that its use in reproduction of Koran has contributed considerably during its development and origin. The focus is that this form of writing symbolised messages from God. Everything around was seen as a statement and piece of God. In writing of Koran, the visual impression of a spectator was more important than the legibility. Anyone who can not read or write must be able to feel that the context is divine simply by looking at it. Style and aesthetics were very important here because the Arabic culture thinks highly of orientalist illuminations and was used as a means of communicating Godly messages.

If we were to consider that all the post-Kufic Arabic scripts (Thuluth, Thalik, Nesih, etc.) of Islamic calligraphy were designed with the very same visual concern, the writing should have been a plastic visual value as well as the meaning it conveys and must give the spectator a mystical feeling of the Divine messages. When we consider the issue in this respect, there are definite differences between the conservative mystical orientalism in the eastern arts and the contemporary western philosophy of art that emerged out of the schools of philosophy especially after the Renaissance.

The first chapter was an explanation of importance of the mystic impacts on calligraphy and the reasons why the art of calligraphy was as prominent among Islamic arts. Since description or drawing was forbidden by religion, the Islam artists chose to satisfy the inner need for creation via geometrical and abstract techniques instead of directly describing the nature. In the meantime, the art of calligraphy naturally gained a prominent status among Islamic arts and developed since it could also convey divine messages. It was after the seventh
century and the death of the Prophet that it was discovered that the Koran should be reproduced and distributed so that the religion would not be spoilt. But the topic matter here is the Holy Book where God's words were cited and it must be handled with care during reproduction. The form of writing used must also visually display Godly messages. As a result of the decease of the Prophet and all the other men and women who knew Koran by heart, orally, at various wars, it was decided that the Koran must be written down in copies at the reign of Osman, the Caliph (death: 656). The need to reproduce The Koran also lead into the aesthetic concerns regarding calligraphy. The concern was that the form of writing to be used in the written manuscripts had to have some standards. It was because of hand-writing process that there were no limitations on style or form and there was no standard or benchmark. It is at this point that the Kufic was accepted as the form to be used in Koran texts. Thus, we can say that the Islamic art of calligraphy emerged simultaneously with the Kufic form. Similar to the art of painting in Christianity that evolved thanks to the Church, the art of Calligraphy in Islam was highly supported due to the prohibition of description. The Islamic calligrapher was under the influence of Tasawwuf philosophy, thus created miracles with the moral satisfaction that he received God's favours. In such a media, a variety of writing forms evolved and developed. We can even say that the art of calligraphy turned into somewhat a graphic abstract art, almost like painting that could convey messages.

It is a visual miracle that is beyond discussion what we see in the flamboyancy of tombstones, exterior illuminations of architectural structures, ceramic pieces, even wood-engravings and plates in which divine messages of Koran are presented to the spectator in the form of an abstract painting which is more valid when compared to the simple manuscripts of Koran and other books. (Naci, "Elif Naci" 21)

The comments of Şevket Rado and Suut Kemal Yetkin on this issue are also in the same direction. For Şevket Rado, the Islamic art of calligraphy is: Although the art of calligraphy used to be regarded merely as a skill of good handwriting that regards the letters because it was based on them, in fact, it is a
mystic art of painting that improved in a very mystical air of a thousand years ago. (Rado, "Türkiyemiz" 5)

Suut Kemal Yetkin has a very interesting comparison with the abstract painting of Hans Van Boesburg, a western artist:

A Kufic composition made up of repetition of the word "Mohamed", and a composition by Hans Van Boesburg from 1918, obviously based on the same aesthetic (Yetkin, "Sanat Dünyamız" 11).

Plate 117 - One square or Checquered Kufi (left) and Hans Van Boesburg's painting from 1918

Nurullah Berk, a Turkish artist of the early Republican period, (1906-1982) explains that the art of calligraphy is an aesthetic presentation inspiring modern paintings, instead of merely an illumination art of the religion and continues:

The contemporary western art, that detached from religious matters and historical scenes and headed towards the near and far east, started creating newer forms out of the abstract compositions of Arabic letters and writings. Inspired by Arabian miniatures, Matisse, Kandinsky, Kloe, Hartung, Miro, Herbin and Morallet are among those to create linear compositions using Arabic script. Writing, most prominent art of the East, has been embellished with the different, prosperous abstract expressions of the West. (Berk, "Emin Bari, Toplu Sergiler" 4)
Obviously, the quotations above are by the artist of the early Republican period outstanding artists who know the prosperity of the Ottoman period as well as the contemporary European arts. The comments of Turkish artists, who grew up amidst eastern arts and received their education completely on European arts (all have spent school years in France, Berlin and various European countries) after the announcement of Turkish Republic as a secular country, are worth consideration. Among these artists are: Elif Naci, Nurullah Berk, Emin Barin (1941-1987), Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu (1911-1975), Abidin Dino (1913-1997), Fikret Mualla (1904-1967), Şevket Rado and even Mustafa Ashier (1929-).

Plate 118 - On the left Islamic calligraphy (Maghribi style) and on the right one of painting from Paul Klee

Likewise, the graphic arts became increasingly important thanks to typography as the Latin alphabet of the western world retained its rich status with the invention of the printing machine, printing techniques improved and printed materials were given its respected fora within the society. Before the invention, all the books including the religious ones were reproduced by had-writing as manuscripts. At the time that the art of calligraphy emerged in the east, it was an important branch of art in the western world but it was not under the mystical influence of the religious world as in the case of the Islamic world. Manuscripts were functioning after all as a means of distributing information.
Again, writing of religious texts and illumination was still given much importance. However, the invention of the printing machine was very welcome in the west and soon, it was all around Europe. We cannot say the same thing for the Muslim countries. One of the reasons why the printing machine was not used in the Ottoman Empire (1299-1922) until very late (1727) is the mystical influence of the religion on writing and the other reason is the influence of calligraphers who would otherwise lose their jobs. Thus, the printing machine was not in Istanbul before the second half of the eighteenth century.

Plate 119 - In this “Muhammad” composition dated 828, it can be seen that integrity of colour and form.

To sum up, we can say that the concern for presenting religious texts in a very impressive visual method lead into the massive development of Arabic characters, that first emerged in the case of the Kufic script, then caused the origin of newer scripts. The rather flexible and changeable form of the Arabic letters made it possible for such compositions to appear in all areas and platforms (from architecture to wood-engravings). The evolution of Kufic, acquired different types of scripts. The compositions of a sort of a braid systematics of interrelated letters are very attractive in today. But, the main interesting point is that Kufic is the script that is the closest structure to the Latin alphabet. Compositions were formed like abstract paintings regarding its importance within Islamic arts. In other words, the form of Kufic script is the
closest to that of the Latin alphabet when compared with all the latter and flexible forms of writing like Thuluth that followed Kufic in popularity. The visual effect of a composition in Kufic may be copied using Latin letters.

6.2 Modern compositions of Latin alphabet inspired by ancient Kufic models
These compositions of names or words that are totally based on typographical elements provide a typographical solution and aesthetically present the visual perception. The forms made up of letters and their composition in these designs, that reflect the forms of letters in a very different dimension, are but experimental fiction as in the case of the Kufic script. These compositions that cannot be repeated try to present the writing or the matter through the use of aesthetic functions of typography in a conceptual manner. Such compositions require original typographical solutions. They are produced by restructuring the letter forms as may be necessary to fit the layout just like the calligraphers a thousand years ago would do. In my designs, instead of using the existing Latin character forms, I tried to create and use new and original forms of writing that could adapt to the composition. My compositions are the result of process that have as a principle experimental drafts and setting of letters in various layouts trying to solve how best to visualize the form of writing to be used. Such compositions have only very rarely been used in the turn of the century in graphical designs when the idea of advertisement was becoming popular and only in order to emphasise the topic matter in a simple way. What I am trying to do here is making use of the graphical and typographical elements as a pictorial element of expression with a concern for aesthetics and I base my studies on Kufic compositions that are the closest to the Latin alphabet forms.

Prohibition on description in Islam resulted in the emergence of calligraphy a important as it is and the artists have had to present their works in geometrical forms or letter compositions. In the period after the birth of Islam, forms of writing have come to be used as a visual means of expression. Thus, I used the writing and letter forms in the Islamic arts as a design object to create compositions of Latin alphabet for my thesis matter. Doing so, I work on Kufic compositions in Kufic letters that are the closest to the Latin alphabet.
Keeping up to certain aesthetical principles while creating such designs using the new Latin letters is highly important for the visual quality we will get. The general design principles must be taken in consideration in a composition of letters such as:

A) **The adapting of composition to Latin letters, combined groups of writing and prose compositions:** There are two primary design forms in composing design elements, namely the composition of groups of writing and prose. A composition of groups of writing is certain to create a sound and dynamic effect. Repeating and supporting elements combine to make up a whole. The interrelation of the repeating elements creates a more profound composition. The interrelation generally takes place in the middle of a geometric composition in the form of a square, triangle, hexagon or a circle. As concerns the prose writings, there is stagnancy and thus, compositions as in the case of symmetrical designs are out of use and there is always a sense of simplicity. In other words, only one of the separate repetitive units can be used on its own.

B) **Variation in design:** This is merely trying to use the same content in different design possibilities. There cannot be a single design solution for any one content. Thus, producing variations in design while sticking to the content will provide us with richer compositions. We can reach at variations via a number of design phenomena such as static and dynamic designs (like symmetrical and asymmetrical ones), dimensional differences between elements and the figure of design elements.

C) **Contrasts or the opposite elements:** Contrast suggests oppositeness which does not suggest a positive content in daily usage, however, it is a very important phenomena in design, music and all the visual arts. The most balances composition is a result of the best harmony of contrasts. When it comes to compositions of writing, there must also be a harmony of combination between the elements like large and small, thin and thick or those facing
different directions. In my symmetrical compositions, the red point placed in the center not only builds a contract in the design but also provides visual dynamics to distract the monotony in the design.

D) **Phenomenon of balance:** Balance suggests equality of quality or quantity. In terms of design, it is also a type of balance when two forms of equal shape, size and tone content are placed next to one another. A triangle standing on its base creates a visually balanced impression whereas one that stands on one of its perpendicular edges looks unbalanced. A symmetrical design is balanced because reciprocal and equal weights stand on a common axis. Especially this aspect of balance can frequently be seen in chequered Kufic compositions. The same thing can be found in Latin compositions.

E) **Phenomenon of rhythm:** The word derives from the Latin word “rhythmus” for flowing or being like a flow. It can be described as the quality of a phenomenon to be periodically repeated. The lining of letters as words, lines and blocks has a rhythmic feel to it. It is a must that the forms in the writing are in harmony with one another. That is, the visual contrast of a letter to the others simple disrupts the rhythm. There has to be the phenomenon of rhythm in the layout of letters within the composition area, their distribution and connecting or separating interior areas.

F) **Phenomenon of dynamics:** The visual effect of the design by its original layout makes up a feeling of dynamics, that is a feature caused by a variety of factors ranging from the design being symmetrical or asymmetrical to it being a square or a circular form. It helps the emphasis and affectivity and directs design elements in a manner a achieve dynamics within the design. Moreover, another factor to develop a sense of dynamism is the interrelation between the elements (letter, groups of words, geometric graphical elements, colour drops, borders) in the composition.
6.3 The principal points in the classical Kufic compositions to be used in contemporary designs

The contemporary compositions covered in Chapter VI were inspired by the original Kufic compositions. There are certain principal points in a design process or an inspiration of classical Kufic compositions, that is, the classical Kufic compositions provide a number of principal points that can be useful in today’s designs. We can classify them in 4 groups:

A) **Legibility and Symbolic Features**: It is a very important functional obligation that the composition is comprehensible in terms of the content. Easy perception of the writing by the reader is one of the important features of design. In especially “levhas” (plates), long compositions of prose, created in ancient Arabic script, the method of stowing created compositions that were even too hard to understand for the speakers of Arabic. The purpose there would be visual aesthetics more than an attempt of conveying a message. What mattered in presentation of religious messages used to be aesthetics but not comprehension. However, we know that Kufic is more legible in comparison to the latter Arabic characters thanks to its structure. In addition to that, the geometrical structure of Kufic letters is very similar to that of the Latin alphabet. Thus, it is possible to create legible and visually prosperous designs in both symmetrical and asymmetrical compositions using the Latin script.

B) **Colour, spot and the attempt of creating the Rhythm**: As you know, Kufic is divided into two as the Eastern and the Western types, both of which have sharp corners. The eastern Kufic divides into three in terms of the developmental phases: The first is the plain Kufic which was used in the early reproductions of Koran, the second is the illuminated Kufic that has figures of flowers and geometrical forms, and the third is the chequered Kufic that is either called Kufi-i benal or Kufi-i makuli. The western Kufic is called as the North-west African Kufic as it is accepted to be created in Kayrevan of Tunisia. It differs in Andalusia, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria. Although it does have some similarities to the Eastern Kufic, it is different in terms of the letter bodies being short and thick and its small circles on top of the vertical letters (Büyük
Larousse, 7135). Kufic compositions and illuminations have certain design features to them. The most popular among them, namely the property of equal thickness, that is much applied in design had to be changed in asymmetrical or prose compositions in order to develop dynamism. However, no matter what type of Kufic is being used, the spot mass formed up of letter forms is an important element of balance in the design. Predominantly, two different colours have been used in the compositions of this period depending on the surface and letter structures (Like the minarets built with two different types of tiles). But, a third colour had to be added in the centre of my Latin compositions to provide the design with an extra sense of dynamism. Other than that, my compositions, a new style is created by using original Latin characters. It is also important to note that special emphasis is made on the rhythm to fit the design’s geometrical structure in these new forms.

C) Possibility of creating a logo or an emblem to a person or a subject: By nature, one longs for a special signature or an emblem to express one’s self. It is through these symbols that we easily remember the persons or the companies. Logos and emblems have much with the memory. It is only for you or a company like the print of your thumb. As we can see in the history, all rulers or states had a specific sign or an emblem that was printed on every order or instruction. This is an important principal point for the contemporary design both in my designs and classical Kufic compositions. In compositions where a holy word or an ordinary name might be cited, there is definitely a symbolic expression. When we take a look at the modern applications, in Halis Biçer’s, Emin Barin’s and my examples, we can say that these designs are granted a different function thanks to the use of these samples as symbols (as in the case of logo and emblem designs) in the graphical representations of a name or a word. Moreover, these designs, symmetrical or asymmetrical, are pretty harmonious for use in terms of their structures.
D) Creating pictorial effects via graphic elements: The Islamic artist who could not make paintings due to the strict prohibition on description, could move to creating compositions of writings without breaking the law. The compositions used not only Kufic script but also the later forms of scripts that followed Kufic. We can create logotype designs today taking inspiration from the ancient examples. For instance, a form that represents a place or a product may be the object of such a composition. Plate 119 the picture of a mosque in the form of chequered Kufic and a Jely Thuluth composition of a caique from the period after Kufic.
6.4 Possible contributions of contemporary compositions to the visual arts of today

How classical Kufic compositions may open the road for similar contemporary designs, we can move on to see to what extent the contemporary compositions may contribute to the visual arts of today.

A) Setting out from the early Islamic perception of graphics to develop these features on contemporary graphical compositions: The classical Kufic compositions were used merely on tombstones until the seventh century when the reproduction of Koran became dominant and spread out and especially during the Ommiad Empire, Kufic was the most popular script. The reign of Kufic lasted approximately fivehundreds years and was pushed aside by the newer forms of writing. As was described in the previous essays, it was around this period of time that the eastern and western Kufic scripts differentiated. The Kufic compositions from the seventh-eleventh centuries, when the script itself reigned its full power, were applies in different forms and on different media to produce incredible precious pieces of art. Today, we can produce modern and different compositions using the Kufic form that is so suitable for, especially, the graphical applications. In producing contemporary designs, we may take advantage of the ancient pieces of art as a starting point. It is a novelty on its own when we use the experience of the old to produce the new designs and making use of our heritage to arrive at a novelty. These designs may be prosperous possibilities in newer designs in visual presentations of visual purposes and formation of graphical compositions like emblems or logotypes as we search for different typographical applications.

B) Creating original forms of letters: The everyday fonts cannot be used in compositions of this type. We have to create new characters to adapt the design itself and the geometrical structure of a composition. The newly created forms will only help make the composition an even original one. Every new character created will only help enrich the Latin alphabet and inspire the ones to follow.
C) Contribution to the education of arts in contemporary compositions: In schools of art, the children are taught many hours of history of arts as well as the other applied courses. The purpose herein is teaching the student about the cultural heritage and making use of it. The Turkish Faculties of Fine Arts have departments of painting, graphics, textile, ceramics, interior design, cinema and traditional Turkish handcrafts. This final department seeks to teach the tradition of arts in the Turkish culture and restore the pieces of art. However, the students get to imitate the ancient pieces during the applied courses. In my opinion, the main purpose in these courses should be research on contemporary applications by learning the ancient values of art and avoiding all forms of imitation. The contemporary compositions that are inspired by the classical Islamic Kufic compositions may somewhat establish examples to the tutors of art. Besides, compositions of this type would probably contribute in new impressions to visual branches of art like painting and graphics. It may help us remember that art is universal, cannot be aged and the historical heritage may be used even today.

D) Presenting comprehensible compositions in Latin forms instead of the Arabic script: We may have the purpose of re-creating the ancient Arabic compositions in Latin script in countries like Turkey where the population is largely Muslim and the alphabet is Latin to promote these works of art to the new generations who cannot read Arabic. The last three generations of Turkey, as a country that adapted the Latin alphabet 75 years ago, would not read or understand Arabic. However, mosques and similar religious buildings are still illuminated by undeniably valuable Arabic texts. The visitors are simply affected by the visual glamour in these pieces. We can consider that the similar Latin compositions of these pieces, where the content would be clear, would impress the spectator with its legibility in Turkey as a country where the religion is still an important factor. This should be considered with a view to promoting and attracting the attention to Latin compositions.
APPENDIX

THE MATERIALS USED IN TURKISH CALLIGRAPHY ART
THE MATERIALS USED IN TURKISH CALLIGRAPHY ART

In this chapter, the materials used in calligraphy which are among the major factors for the success of calligraphy will be described. Here, I will mention the paper itself and the materials to be put on it. All decorations on architectural structures and religious buildings were first designed on paper. Thus, the paper itself and the materials to be put on it are the major components of calligraphy. Besides, the pieces of calligraphy which are hundreds of years old but still look brand new are worthwhile studying in terms of the quality of the material used.

The role that religious mystic factors played in the plastic formation of calligraphy can be seen on the materials used, too. The composition of many of the material was kept as a secret and each school of calligraphy invented its own material. If mysticism is perceived as the spirit of calligraphy, than the material is its body.

7.1 Materials used in the art of calligraphy

Just as painting or other arts have their proper tools, the calligraphic art also had its own materials. The fact that a calligraphy of 500 years is today as if it is composed just yesterday is due to those special materials. The paper to be used had to be dressed by such materials as the white of eggs and starch. Thus the quality of the paper challenged time and furthermore, whenever something was miswritten, the writing could be erased out of it without injuring the leaf. Another principal material was the ink made by mixing specific soots (generally soot of wax) with the Arabian glue melted by keeping it inside water for years and this was to be applied on the leaf by special reed pens. Mixing the ink is another matter. As an interesting example which points out to the importance
of the materials and the patience necessary for their preparation, we can cite the fact that the ink bottle, in order to be well mixed used to be attached onto the back of a camel in a caravan making its way of pilgrimage to Mecca, hence the ink would be mixed throughout the whole pilgrimage journey.

Quoted from the interview between Mahmud Bedreddin Yazir, one of the famous Turkish calligraphers of the Republican period and Talik Hulusi Efendi, one of the famous “talik” writing masters of the Ottoman period:

...We passed to the writing room, he took his place, opened the lock of his drawer, produced his writing materials. Taking my writing and having sat down on the writing table, with the intention of making a service, I opened the lid of his inkstand. He said smiling: “Thank you, you gave yourself pains by hastening” and without allowing me to ask the reason he continued: “For I did not check the pen’s cutting yet. From now on watch carefully what I say and what I do and act accordingly. The ink in this inkstand is dark. It is used especially for important writings. In order to show well the motions of the pen, the formation features of letters and words while teaching writing, the ink should be a little watery.”

Then he uncovered the curtain on the wall, took a pretty big inkstand called “Mecma” and opened its lid. He stirred the ink with the thistle of hedgehog and spake me thus: “Before writing, one should stir it so that water and ink fuse into each other properly. Hence it will flow from the pen better, the writing won’t be wavy and sprinkled. Moreover, the homogeneous flow of the ink adds a beauty to the writing. Beware two things: may the edge of the pen be of a docile sharpness and may the ink not intervene to the natural beauty engendered by that. Now you won’t understand these very well, still keep them in mind. The so-called mystery of the pen is understood in this way by seeing, by listening, by writing. I have been writing for all those years and still I did not achieve to establish the harmony I wish between the pen and the ink!

Consider also the tricks played by paper, your wrist and things you know in these affairs. As Ismail Zühdi (Ismail Zühdi who is one of the masters with a
style of their own in “Tuluth-nesih” writings (d.1806) is the brother and teacher of Mustafa Rakim (1757-1826) who made radical innovations in “Jaly-Tuluth” and ornamental Sultan monograms) has said: “calligrapher should be carefree, but not in the equipment affairs! More you treat them with fastidiousness, more the art will submit to you”. Speaking thus, he took once again his writing pad and his woolen cloth, while with the cloth on which he put some chalk cleaning the empty space under my writing, spake thus: “The chalk removes the excess of grease from the paper, makes easy the fluency of the pen and the ink. This is just like to be penitent, that is, before removing the damage of a former neglect, we cannot perhaps have the opportunity of establishing the beauty construction we will build upon it. Never forget, there is no place in this art for neglect. Always attention, total attention, for both teacher and student...

Don't ever say “this is just enough as it is, it is not supposed to be a plate at all”. Write everything you write as if it will be a plate. If not today, it will be tomorrow... Keep that in mind, namely to produce a letter in just a motion of pen is not an act of neglect, rather it is an act of an attentive carefree soul required by art. “Carefree” I say, for you to be able to resist to all negative flows influencing you from inside or outside, to material or spiritual obstacles, you are not supposed to wrestle with them like wrestlers, are you? As long as you harden, the pen and the writing harden as well. So while writing you should be as if you are not on the world at all. Just as some carefree person who is not interested in anything, by focusing on a point, you should yield not only your pen, but your being, your self as well to an utmost sacrifice, to a zealous effort which will sweat you. This is how it goes in these affairs, my dear.”

While opening the slit of the pen (the cleavage made at the top of the pen for the ink flow) by pressing it on the nail of his left hand thumb, he said: “To open the slit of the pen. If you cannot open the slit properly, if you press the pen promptly and unmeasurably, what surprising tricks will that pen play to you, so that failing to handle it, you will have to cut the pen and open the slit anew. In order to fit the thickness of the pen you will cut anew to the thickness of the writing you are working on, maybe you will have to cut the pen for numberless times. The reason for that is the unthoughtful act. This art involves not thriftiness,
rather the co-operation of balanced behaviours. You will ask, what need for all these subtle calculations? I hope you will pass the roads that we have passed and becoming a calligrapher, you will feel the necessity for more subtler calculations and then you will remember us with thanks. This is the lesson we had from our teachers and now we give what we received. Yesari used to say to his student: “don't forget that while writing you are walking on a bridge thinner than hair, sharper than blade.”

The master arranged himself once again in his position, looked at my writing, immersed the pen in the ink. He tried his pen by putting two dots on one side of the paper. He pronounced 'by God's name' and began to write slowly under the letters he considered as false. He was describing how they should be. He was not passing again with pen on the letter he wrote, only he was just touching with the point of the pen where he sees defect. At the end of the lesson, while cleaning his pen, he said: “Don't forget that there are mysterious sides of pen, paper and ink. So choose the best of them and use them properly and carefully. (Yazır 135-136)

Above, I had quoted a saying about the value of the techniques and the material of calligraphy. Below, I will describe the material of calligraphy and its composition.
7.2 Materials used

7.2.1 The Pen

It can be assumed that the pen is invented with the invention of writing. However, just like the writing, the pen also has various meanings and accordingly, descriptions. For example, in hieroglyph writing, the pen as the instrument of engraving, is an iron with sharp point. With the invention of Phoenician writing, pens made out of bone, wood, quill feather, hedgehog thistle have in their turn been used.

According to the “Kügük Kurun-i” encyclopedia, ancient Greeks used to write with the reed called “Kalamos”. This has passed to Romans as “Kalamus” and to Indians as “Kalama”. These reeds' points used to be with or without slit.

Given that the writing arrived in Arabia later, it is possible that the word “kalem” (pen) passed them from thereon. As the writing and the civilization improved, the roles and the varieties of the pen have been multiplied, in “Kaamus” (The dictionary compiled by the Persian philologist Ebu Tahir Muhammed Ibn Yakup el-firuza Badi (1329-1414). It was the model and the base for many classical Arabic dictionaries.), and there are about 40 meanings of the pen.

Plate 123 - Different type of reed pens
In the dictionary, the pen represents a reed and according to some sources, a chipped one. The cut one is called “mizber” and the uncut one is called “kasab yerea”. In Persian, it is “hame, kilk”. If “kat’ “ and “katt” (in Arabic, kat’ means “to cut” and “katt” means “to cut laterally” or “to cut a pen”) is not done, that is, it is not done by cutting its point, it is called in Arabic “enbub” and in Persian “garva”.

7.2.1.1 Pens that are used in Calligraphy

Reed Pen: Reed pens was generally of dark maroon colour. There are also yellow and speckled ones. Iraqiian, Iranian, Java and Indian kinds are famous. The hardest one is Java and the most revered ones are the Iraquian and Iranian pens. The more the bright part on a pen is harder, the more enduring is the pen. Some pens, though inside they are hard, the outside is weak, are easily spoiled. Pens which are crooked, warped, inside which are found channels and thin veins, however their outside may be hard, are not used. Because when the reed is pointed, they assume a crooked posture, they prevent the pen slit from being straight and proper.

1) Spear Pen: For the thick and “Jaly” writings for which the thickness of reed pens is not appropriate, it is used bigger reeds called spears.

2) Wooden Pen: They are made out of lime or alder tree by pointing in the thickness wished. There are various sorts of wooden pen. While some has only in the middle a slit, in some, at both sides of the slit are found, according to the thickness, two or more circular holes. If the pen's edge is quite wide, thin canals
from these holes to the slit are opened. The ink accumulates at these holes and flows from the canals to the slit and from thereon to the edge. If the edge is too big, then in order to yield much ink, sponges are put into these holes.

3) **Double Pen:** Two reed pens are held together in the hand and simultaneously lines are drawn on the paper. Then the space between two lines is filled with brush.

4) **Iron pen:** In thin writings such as “nesih”, in order to preserve the pen's thickness and sharpness quality from the beginning to the end of a work with a rich content or not to spoil the pen's point quickly, metal pen points of which edges are sharpened as much as one wants and which are put into the reed pen, are used.

5) **Pencil and Coloured Pens:** These are used for such trivial tasks as drawing straight lines (since the papers are empty, in order for the writing to be written straightly on a line, vague lines are drawn with pencil), making sketches, making copies, composing the ordering and making outlines.

6) **Shading Pen:** These are used especially in drawing “Jaly” writings, making copies, correcting the copies and the margins.

7) **Ruler Pen:** This is the instrument which is found in ruler utensils, which is of the form of beak and which is used by spreading paint in between, in drawing straight lines.

### 7.1.2.2 Pointing and Cutting Pens

To prepare a pen for writing involves two operations which are “naht” (pointing) and “katt” (cutting).

1) **Pointing pens:** “Naht-i kalem” (pointing pen) is the thinning of the pen's edge by pointing until it becomes ready to be cut; “katt-i kalem” (cutting pen) is the cutting of the edge in the way it can write. First, the two heads of the pen are cut and the the long fibers inside are cleaned away. It is held between thumb and the forefinger so that the thin side is on the left hand palm and the pen is horizontal, and with the penknife in the right hand, the pen's edge, beginning from two fingers backward, is pointed as if the half is going away towards us. The edge right in the middle is crooked with knife into two equal halves.
2) **Cutting pens:** As in the picture, after thinning out the pen's point in the right degree, the pen should be put in the bed on the plane ("makta"), and by holding both in the left hand and by pressing on it with the thumb, so that the hard part upside is vertical to the edge of the penknife, it should be cut in one strike.

3) **Pen edges and slits:** The curved part of the pen after it is cut is called "fem-i kalem" (pen's edge or pen's cut). The edge consists of two parts, the short part, "ünsi" and the longer part, "vahsi".

4) **Some advices concerning cutting pens:** Indeed a newly invented special style of writing requires that the cutting of its pen be different from others. The writing acquires a style of its own in virtue of the special cutting of the pen. If the pen's edge is cut too curved, then the writing will appear, though weak, soft and aesthetically beautiful. In the writings written with a pen the edge of which is cut flat, the stress is considerable. Hard pen, even though it is enduring, because it does not let the ink flow easily, causes difficulties in writing. Similarly, the soft pen which is too much flexible and which cannot be effective in the same way in vertical and horizontal aspects, gives the writing such an impression as if it is written with two pens. The extreme flexibility of the pen has another damage, namely that because it lets the ink flow too much, handling the motion becomes difficult. Since the soft pen's exterior part is generally weak, its point spoils easily. Inasmuch as it will be necessary to cut it frequently, it is difficult to keep the pen's thickness in the writing at the same level.

7.2.2 The Penknife
This is the name given to instruments which serve to point and correct the edge of the pen. As the calligraphy improved on, the penknives have been varied as well. Hence the word penknife has mainly two senses for the calligraphers: One is used for pointing and cutting pens, on the other hand the other is used for correcting the writing. The first is called penknife, cutter or pointer and the second one is called correction knife.
7.2.2.1 The plain Penknives

As it is seen in the picture, the handles of these knives are constant. The iron part is called “namlu” (blade), the sharp part is called “agiz” (edge), its point is called “burun” (nose), the part where the handle and the blade are connected is called “parazvana” or clamping iron. “Parazvana” may also be of brass, copper, silver or gold. In the penknives which are the product of precious masters, somewhere in the blade close to “parazvana” is found the producer's signature engraved or in relief. The blade is neither short nor long, in the middle size. The handle is twice as long as the blade. Handles, according to the worth of the blade, are made out of ivory, horn, bone or wood. Sometimes they may be incrusted with gold, silver or precious stones, instances of which may be observed in many museums. The metal of the blades is fairly hard. Penknives are of mainly four kinds, namely “blunt”, “cypress”, “broken glass”, “willow leaf”, of which names are clearly suggestive of their similarity to the named objects.
The blunt one's point is rather curved and it is mostly for pointing pen. Cypress is used for cutting pens. The upper little edge of the broken glass penknife is used for cutting two heads of the pen and removing its superflousness, pointing pencil, cutting paper; and its lower part is used in pointing thick and hard pens. Penknives are generally proper to reed pens. They are not used in spear or wooden pens, otherwise their edge spoils.

7.2.2.2 Writing Penknives

These are called “migfere”, that is, scraping instruments. These are of two kinds: one is of the form of willow leaf and is smaller than the penknives used to point pens. Its point is sharp and not flexible. All its worth lies in its point, it serves to erase and remove small irregularities on the margins of the letters. Because its point is sharp, the smallest carelessness in using leads to tear the paper. The other one, though dull pointed, the part between the edge and the nose is quite sharp. It is used in removing thick irregularities and serves also to cut pens.

Plate 127 – The sharpening reed pen

7.2.3 “Makta” (Plane)

It is a word derived from the Arabic word “katt” meaning “to cut something hard”. It means the plane on which the pen when it will be cut is placed. As it is seen in the picture, “makta”s width is generally 2-3 cm., its length 15-20 cm., its height about 1-2 mm. They are used generally for cutting reed pens. Because they are not appropriate to cut thick-edged spear and wooden pens, it is necessary to cut the pens on a flat and hard wood and then to adjust its cut by rubbing its edge against a hard paper, marble or glass.
7.2.4 “Hokka” (Inkstand)

Inkstand is the name of the vessel in which the pen is immersed to take some ink. It is also called “divit”, “mihbere”, “mecma”, “furza” or “demlik”. It is variously made of earth, walnut, ebony, olive tree, brass, silver and gold. Some of them involve merely a bottle of ink, inkstand is in fact refers to these. And some of them consist of a lidded case of pens combined with the inkstand. These are called “divit” (inkhorn). Inkhorns were usually cast out of brass. There is another kind in which the pen case part can be put and removed by a groove over the inkstand, these are called “kubur” (This is the name given to cylindric recipients interior of which is narrow and long, with one or two extremes open. For example, the boxes in which the fleshes are preserved used to be called “flesh kubur” as well.).
On some “kubur”s, it is found a small box with a lid and holes on it called “rikdan” (“Rikdan” in Persian means “sand recipient”. Another sense is the “pouring recipient”. According to “Tuhfe-i Hattatin” (page 623), clerks used to put in it some sort of mineral earth called “rik” which is poured on the still wet writing in order to dry it right away and which could be dyed into different colours.). These kinds of “kubur” were used by clerks and the seminary students.

Inkstands are of various kinds. Some are glass inside and covered with metal or wood outside and their lids are constant; some are earthen. There are others made of wood and metal and with constant or screwed up lids. And some involve two or three inkstands and a “rikdan” on a plate. These are called generally inkstand utensils or writing utensils. If in inkstands, inkhorns and “kubur”s, the interior part of the tank in which the ink is put is not polished, a rosin and wax mix was heated in fire and spread in these parts. This mix which eventually freezes used to prevent inkstands from cracking and leaking the ink out and the metal ones from rusting.

Plate 130 – Closed and opened metallic “kubur”
A)”Rihdan”, B)”Rih”, C)”Hokka”, D)
Body of the kubur

7.2.5 “Lika” (Silk refuse)
“Lika” is the name of the raw silk put into inkstands. It has a fringed appearance. “Lika” helps the ink to fill into pen. It prevents the pen’s edge from getting spoiled by hitting the harsh ground in the inkstand. Raw silk was preferred since it decays late. After teasing and puffing it out, it is placed in the inkstand and with the addition of ink on it is mixed.
7.2.6 Lampblack Ink

The black blue colour used for writing was called “siyahi” (blackish), “Zerkab” and “Zakab” in Persian and “Mürekkeb” (ink) in Turkish. Different type of ink have been given names according to the material they are made of, such as garnet ink, Surh ink, orpiment ink, golden ink and China ink. In addition, the name might also derive from the origin of the ink such as thich ink, light ink, sour ink, frozen ink, and clean ink. Ancient Ottoman resources claim that ink was invented in Egypt and was also used on the Island of Crete between 2000 BC and 1000 BC.

History of Islamic Civilisation (Vol:1, 235) reads that the Arabs made ink by mixing coal-dust with some Arabic glue or an adhesive substance with the smoke of oil lamp even before the introduction of Islam. Ink was given importance in Islam at the same level as the writing had been given. Especially during the Ottoman times, ink had its golden age.

"Midadin cumle eczasinin seri,
Gerektir Dude-i halis ü tari,
Zamigdir midadin kivam-i medari,
Cumle eczaya verir iktidari,
Zac ü mazi suyu kim ola ari,
Bu çar unsurdur midadin karari."
The meaning of this poem is: For ink, you must find high quality black soot. The glue makes the ink concentrated and sturdy. Zak and Mazi water must be clean. These four are components of ink. (Yazır, 152)

7.2.6.1 Components of ink

1) Soot: The ink used in calligraphy is not like the one we used today which is highly chemical and liquid. The calligraphic ink does not ruin the paper after centuries and stays lively as in the first day. The sturdiness is thanks to the components of ink, which are but natural. The soot that gave ink its true colour was made of linseed-oil, wax, oil of turpentine, and in later times, paraffin oil. It is well known that Mimar Sinan (Most famous Ottoman architect) built his mosques with small chambers around the main dome where the soot of the candles in the mosque would gather thanks to the air circulation inside, and then the calligraphers would wipe the soot out to use in art. (Osman Efendi, 27) Before the above material was invented for the use in making of ink, Ibn-Mukle and Ibn-Bevvab used to burn the hair of black goats not to wait until it turned into ashes, added glue and Zac and made ink in the tenth and eleventh centuries. (Biğer 36)

2) Glue: The best ink that was used in making of ink was the Arabian Ink that came from Sudan, called “Cellabi” (Gome Arabique). A good glue should melt in one nght when properly moistened with cold water. Hot water would destroy it. Generally, glue would be soaked in water for months to be filtered by the help of a thin piece of cloth at the and. The soaking time might even take years, thus, there emerged a working class to work solely on calligraphy material production during the Ottoman Empire. (M.U.G.S.F. “Study Notes” 8-9)

3) Other Material: Mazi water juices of pomegranate shell, rose water, henna water, juice of myrtle fruit, saffron, greenish rust on copper, vinegar, verjuice, indigo, sarcocola, and stalks. All of the above are materials used in the production of black ink and have been mentioned in many books. However, today we hardly known what they really are and what they are used for. The
vital fluid of plants as mentioned among the first above were used to make the ink more fluid but later on it was recognised that pure water would work much better. (Saadettin 89-106), (Yazir 153-154), (Biçer 29-35), (Derman, “Ders Notlari” 8-10)

As the scholar Mr Ugur Derman has written on Sabanci Web page

7.2.6.2 Coloured Ink

The most common among the many different coloured inks used in Turkish calligraphy in the past are yellow (zirnik: orpiment or yellow arsenic), red (lál), white (üstübeç: white lead), and gold (zer). Yellow ink: The natural pigment known as orpiment or yellow arsenic is ground with sodium, then mixed with a solution of gum arabic. Red ink: Lotur (this substance has not been identified), soapwort, alum and water are boiled together, then the strained water is mixed with dried and finely ground cochineal. This is boiled again, and produces ink of a beautiful glowing red. White ink: This is made in the same way as yellow ink, except that white lead is substituted for orpiment. White ink is principally used to write the sūrah headings on a gold ground in illuminated Qur'ans.

7.2.6.3 Gold Ink

High carat gold leaf is ground to a fine powder in a thick solution of gum arabic or honey as a binder, in a porcelain dish. Once this laborious task is over, it is rinsed in water to remove the binder. The gold dust precipitated in another bowl is mixed with water containing gelatine when it is needed. The gold ink is brushed onto the pen nib. Gold ink applied in this way to manuscripts is known as “zer-endûd”.

7.2.7 Paper

In the past, paper was not ready to use when it was bought as it is today. Whether it came from China, India, Bukhara or Europe, or from Turkish paper mills at Kâgidhâne (literally “paper mill”, a district of Istanbul), Yalova, Bursa or Beykoz, paper had a rough surface which did not permit a pen to move over the surface smoothly, and on some types the ink would seep across the surface. Before it could be used, the paper had to be treated. Because this “raw paper”, which was generally white, tired the eyes, it was first dyed the desired colour
before being sized (āhar) and finally polished (mühre), a process of vigorous rubbing to fix the size and smooth down the surface, which thus becomes as glossy as if it had been ironed. Mainly vegetable colours are used to dye the paper. The dye material is boiled in water, and then the dye solution is poured into a pan. The paper is then dipped into the dye, which it absorbs, and set aside to dry. Alternatively, the dye can be applied with a sponge or cottonwool, but this method can result in an unevenly coloured surface revealing each stroke of the sponge. Some of the substances used for this purpose and the colours they produce are as follows: tea (cream), white logwood (red), purple logwood (purple), confectioner's soot (off-white), and onion skin (reddish). The most popular colour is cream. Once the paper has been dyed it is time to size it.

Plate 132 – “Mühre” - Shells can be used polishing

Although modern papers are sold ready polished, once something has been written on them in ink, it is impossible to remove it because the ink is absorbed by the paper. The size applied to paper in the past, however, formed a protective coating which prevented the ink soaking into the paper itself, and meant that mistakes could be erased by wiping with a piece of damp cottonwool, scraping or licking. The latter is the origin of the expression still used in Turkish today to describe a well educated person: “He has licked a lot of ink.”

The commonest method of sizing paper was to spread one or two layers of alum mixed with eggwhite over the surface. A thin mixture of starch or flour boiled with water could also be used. If the raw paper is not polished within a week of being sized, it will begin to crack while being rubbed, so wasting all the effort put into treating the paper. The “çakmak mühre” used to polish paper is an instrument with two handles on either side of a raised section, into which a very smooth prismatic flintstone is set. A sheet of paper is placed on a large wooden
board known as a “mühre tahtasi” or pesterk, which is preferably made of linden wood because of its fine grain. It is essential that this board be perfectly smooth, slightly concave and without any joints. So that the mühre glides easily over the surface, the paper is first rubbed with a piece of woollen fabric rubbed with dry soap, then gripping it by the two wooden handles so that the flintstone is downwards, the “çakmak mühre” is rubbed hard over the paper in various directions, allowing the paper to shift freely in the process. The paper begins to shine immediately, and is ironed smooth. The polished sheets of paper are then stacked and weighted down. Since sized paper improves with age, it is then left for around the year, after which the pen will glide smoothly over the surface.

Only if the paper is allowed to age in this way does it become possible to correct errors by scraping, licking or wiping with a damp sponge. It is due to this property of sized paper that all official records in the Ottoman Empire were written on unsized but polished paper, so as to prevent falsification of documents. In order to write on sized paper it is necessary to wipe it lightly with a chalky broadcloth rag beforehand. The chalk eradicates the slippery finish created by the soap rubbed onto the paper when it was being polished, and removes any traces of grease transferred to the paper by handling, since ink will not take on a greasy surface.

7.2.8 “Mistar”

The positioning of letters and words and their arrangement along a straight line is subject to certain rules in calligraphy. In the past Turkish calligraphers employed a simple instrument known as a mistar to rule lines on the page. The spacing of lines on the manuscript page is calculated according to the size of a point produced by the reed pen which is to be used, and the lines are then drawn on a piece of cardboard matching the size of the pages to be used. Holes are made with a pin at the beginning and end of each line, and fine silk thread is then threaded through the holes and stretched taut. There must be no knots in the thread. The left and right margins are also marked by vertical threads.

The mistar is then placed with the horizontal threads marking the lines uppermost, and a sheet of sized paper placed on top of it. With newly washed
hands to remove all traces of grease, the paper is gently rubbed all over with the fingers. This produces slightly raised lines where the threads lay beneath the page, and these serve as guidelines when writing.

7.2.9 “Zir-i Meshk”

In the past, calligraphers did not work sitting at tables, but sat on a divan or floor cushion with their right knee raised, and wrote resting the paper against their knee. The paper was placed on a flexible pad consisting of several sheets of rough paper measuring approximately 20 x 25 cm called zir-i meshk. This supported the paper sufficiently to keep it at an angle of 90 degrees to the pen and prevented it bending under the pressure exerted while writing. The use of a hard board was deliberately avoided so as to ensure the free movement of the hand over the paper. The quality of all these pieces of equipment and materials was a vital factor in enabling the calligrapher to produce faultless work.


Note*

* The explanations for the clauses on Coloured Ink, Gold Ink, Paper, Mistar and Zir-I Meshk are directly taken from the writings of classical Turkish calligraphy specialist Ugur Derman, who is at the same time a scholar at the University of Marmara, Istanbul, which were placed on the internet site of famous businessman and collector Mr. Sakip Sabanci. The reason for this, is to provide in the appendix, the most recent information on the materials used in classical Turkish calligraphy art which is directly linked to the theme of this thesis, to readers unfamiliar with the subject. The information given before the sections on Coloured Ink, Gold Ink, Paper, Mistar and Zir-I Meshk were gathered from different sources, as clearly stated in the foot notes, and explained in detail by the author.
ART WORKS

Sample of the Art Works by Enis Timucin Tan
190 “Enis Tan” 54 x 54 cm. Ink on paper, 1994
191 “Allah” 36 x 36 cm. Digital media, 1998
192 “Selim Şahin” 38 x 38 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1994
193 “Yürekli” 30 x 30 cm. Digital media, 1998
194 “Ali Oto” 52 x 52 cm. Coloured ink on paper, 1997
195 “Aylin Tan” 38 x 38 cm. Digital media, 1998
196 “Azize” 40 x 34 cm. Mixed media, 1995
197 “Ahmet” 44 x 44 cm. Digital media, 1998
198 “Adnan Yalim” 50 x 50 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1996
199 “Istanbul” 38 x 38 cm. Digital media, 1996
200 “Hasan Gürbüz” 42 x 36 cm. Coloured ink on paper, 1997
201 “Australia” 35 x 35 cm. Digital media, 1997
202 “Queen” 40 x 34 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1996
203 “Europe” 60 x 60 cm. Mixed media, 1997
204 “Love” 42 x 42 cm. Mixed media, 1997
“ENIS TAN” (54 x 54 cm. Ink on paper, 1994)

This artwork is my name design with Latin characters (Size: 54 x 54 cm. Indian ink on paper 1996) and this design is an example of a chequered Kufic composition. This example show that (especially the chequered Kufic) is the Kufic style compatible in terms of the form with the Latin characters with no serifs. It is possible in both of the alphabets to use the letters in the form of squares and make a braid of the extensions of the letters in the center of the composition. This system of braids is typical of the chequered Kufic compositions, which were popularly used in the tiles or the early Seljuki architecture. Examples are still abundant at minaret faces and mosque gate frontals (such as Konya Sahip Ata Mosque 1259, Konya İnce Minerali Mosque and mausoleum 1262 can be shown good samples for Seljuki period in Anatolia) and in works of steel, clothes textile, carpets and wood-carving.

The modular formation of the design has greatly affected the popularity of chequered Kufic in architecture and the like. In other words, the width of the letters in the composition are equal to the gaps in between, just like the equal width of the white and black squares in a chess set. This is especially true when we notice that the bricks in the architectural structures are easy to be used as modules to create the letters and gaps in between. We can see many examples in the Seljuki architecture. In addition to that the chequered Kufic style was easily created at carpet-weaving.
"ALLAH" (36 x 36 cm. Digital media, 1998)

This design is the quadruple Allah composition of contemporary designer Halis Biçer (1940-), and re-composed by Enis Tan on computer. In such compositions, the same word is placed into an area of a square in a geometrical order. The writing may be placed straight or upside down, the reason being the artist's concern for creating the braid system in the center of the comparison with the extensions of the letters. For instance, the artist tends to use letters as y, g, j, p, f, n, m, l (extending downwards) in a way to place the extended piece of the writing inside the square form. Similarly, letters like l, h, k, t, I, b (extending upwards) are generally placed outside the square form. Thus, the extensions are used as decorative elements for the center of the square form. The width of the letters in the composition is equal to the gaps within. This is the most characteristic feature of chequered Kufic compositions. This symmetric design, the basic property of which is the static movement and a stable geometric form effect provided by the repetition involved. The complementary and supporting elements join as separate modules and involve in a repetition within a certain geometric structure. This gives the design a lively movement and the spectator can easily follow the repetition effect.
“SELİM ŞAHİN” (38 x 38 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1994)

This design is a variant Latin composition. However, the effect resembles that of a classical quarter chequered Kufic composition. The letter structure here is very different although it is reminiscent of the western Kufic script with the exception that the rounded shape in letter extensions of the western Kufic have been used in the bodies of the letter structures. The purpose here is arriving at sui generis forms in letter structures setting out on Kufic compositions. The equality between the width of letter structures and the gaps that is mostly employed by chequered Kufic compositions is not to be found here which resembles the straight compositions of the western Kufic. The width of a letter is approximately three times the gap in between letters. The purpose is to arrive at a form balance of the letter forms around the central square. In other words, the artist aimed at producing a contemporary and different composition out of the ancient compositions instead of simply imitating the older examples. The example is inspired by two traditional Kufic structures (Chequered and Western).
“YÜREKLİ” (30 x 30 cm. Digital media, 1998)

This composition was designed by Halis Biçer in Latin script, that was designed as a logo for a privately owned company. It was re-designed and composed by Enis Tan using computer facilities. It is worth considering that such compositions may just as well be employed in a commercial graphics business where they might contribute a new point of view to the contemporary graphics design inspired by ancient Kufic compositions.
“ALİ OTO” (34 x 34 cm. Indian on paper, 1995)

This design reminds the classical square Kufi composition just as in the preceding composition. The original letter forms and the ornamentation in the middle of the composition gives the design its unity. Thanks to the lower extension of the letter “I” in the composition “Ali Oto”, the writing group is unified with a knot pattern. The black colour is dominant in this design. There is almost no space between the letters and this is a feature underlining the design. The red dot in the middle of the composition balances the suffocating effect of black.
“AYLİN TAN” (38 x 38 cm. Digital media, 1998)

This design is the single copy of a name composition in Latin script that was also designed as a personal logo differing from the previous examples in that it is more of a modern graphic presentation. The centre remains less decorated in terms of ornaments and the units are united with the square form in the middle. The design has also been divided into sections with the help of a computer to provide with a shadow on each unit that brings visual depth to the piece.
"AZİZE" (40 x 34 cm. Mixed media, 1995)

This design is another graphically stylized name composition in Latin script where the structure is laid in a triangular form that is constituted of four name compositions, one in the middle and the remaining three on the corners. In order to achieve a balance of colour-stain in the central piece, a different colour (red) is added in. It is also a sui generis character of letters. It is necessary that the graphics expert creates the character of letters to be used in such geometric structures. This is also a personal logo design.
"AHMET" (44 x 44 cm. Digital media, 1998)

This is an example of "Ahmet" quartet in a square form. The groups are united by the lower extension of the letter "h". Differing from the classical Kufic compositions, a sui generis rounded letter structure is created for this example that is inspired by the classical Kufic compositions to arrive at a contemporary graphic design. Computer technology has been incorporated into the creation of this design in order to facilitate optic perception and provide visual depth to the writing.
"ADNAN YALIM" (50 x 50 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1996)

This is another name composition in the form of a rectangle. The groups are not completely united. Only the lower extensions of the letter "y" of the upper and lower groups are used for union. The groups on the two sides are not united. The spot composition in the centre provides the design with a sense of balance despite the fact that the form is not a perfect square.
“İSTANBUL” (38 x 38 cm. Digital media, 1996)

This composition is the symbolic expression of Istanbul, which is a city memorable for its glorious mosques and minarets that have been incorporated into the design through to the structures of the letters. It can be accepted as an emblem within graphic design including the classical quartet repetition of the word of Istanbul. The lower extensions of “I”s make way for the central block. The letter “N”s are provided with symbolic mosque forms, whereas the initial “I”s and “N”s are given the shape of domes in mosques and the “alems” (crescents) one in minarets.
“HASAN GÜRBÜZ” (42 x 36 cm. Coloured ink on paper, 1997)

The composition, which is the name of Hasan Gürbüz, differs in terms of its graphic presentation. It is made up of two squares that are set in different angles. Letter “R” in the inner square unites the four sides with its extensions that reminds us of the classical Kufic script. The difference lies in the fact that an outer square is designed on top of the inner one, the reason being that the length of the composition would be far too much had the names been written on a single line. In the outer group, the words are spot united at the initial and final points which causes an optically diverted perception. It is a very good example of arriving at contemporary graphic design out of classical Kufic forms.
“AUSTRALIA” (35 x 35 cm. Digital media, 1998)

This design is the name of Australia composed in a square form as a quartet. The characters are original. The difference between the width of the letters provides for the exit into the central geometric formation. The letter “U” is replaced by the form of a kangaroo, symbol of Australia. The massive ink-spot effect of black is somewhat alleviated by the red effect.
“QUEEN” (40 x 34 cm. Indian ink on paper, 1996)

This design was created in a triangular form as opposed to the classical square form. The name picked specifically is “Queen”. The grouping is such that the writing is sort of inclined instead of being simply straight. In other words, the inclination is that the letter “U” that follows the letter “Q” is larger and the letter “E” is the largest although it is the third letter. The underlying reason here is that the gap to be formed among the group must be prevented. The massive ink-spot effect of black in the center figure is somewhat alleviated by the red effect on the sides.
“EUROPE” (60 x 60 cm. Mixed media, 1997)

Another geometric composition of a hexagon, far from being classical, provides for the design of the word “Europe”. The composition constitutes of six blocks, each of which is situated in half a circle and which unite to create the hexagon. Since there are more than four groups of words as in the case of a quartet, two different colours are used to create a balance of groups. Taking a complete look at the figure at a distance, it looks more like a flower with six petals, since each side is in the form of half a circle.
"LOVE" (42 x 42 cm. Mixed media, 1997)

The circular composition of the balance of two different colours is based on the foundation of the borders of two circles that go like a chain in somewhat the form of a spiral. Four words of "love" are repeated. Since the white part outside the writing groups fails to keep the colour-spot balance, spots had to be formed on the circular keylines in a different colour, that creates the spot balance and the dynamics in the totality of the design. The small round shape in the centre supports the dynamics of the design.
GLOSSARY

UNKNOWN TERMS
**Abbasid Caliphate:** Caliphate dynasty ruling from 750 until 1258. The Abbasids were all of one big family that claimed to descend from Abbas, an uncle of Muhammad. The Abbasids governed from Baghdad, a city the second Abbasid Caliph founded in 762, and Samara for some periods in the ninth century. The Abbasids took the power from the Ummawiys in 750, and stayed in power until the Mongols conquered Baghdad in 1258, and had the Caliph killed. For their first 100 years, the Abbasids were leaders, both of Islam and of the Muslim community. The Shi`is of the period rejected the legitimacy of the Abbasid leadership. The change came towards the end of the ninth century, and started with the takeover by Sunni scholars of religious leadership, of the cost of the Caliph. This change became especially clear after the Mihna of mid-ninth century. In political terms, the Abbasid Caliphs became puppets in the hands of the Turkish military troops, and in 935 the title Emiru l-Umara was transferred to the chief of the Turkish soldiers. The Persian Shi`i Buwayhids were the real rulers from 945 until the tenth century. The Buwayhids were so strong that they had the power to remove Caliphs at their own will. At the same time as the Caliphs lost the grip of power, the unity of the Caliphate also fell apart, and independent states were formed. These new states recognized the position of the Caliph, but it was only the symbolic value that survived. In 1055 the Turkish Seljuks conquered Baghdad, but this had little influence to the position of the Caliphs, who continued to play only his limited symbolical role. With the fall of the traditional Caliphate in 1258, when the Mongols took over Baghdad, a new line of Abbasid Caliphs continued in Cairo. In Cairo they played the same type of role as in Baghdad, but now even the symbolical role was limited by geography. This, the last branch of Abbasids, stayed in office until 1517. Harunu r-Rashid is the most famous of the Abbasid Caliphs. The Abbasid period, is recognized of being the one in Muslim history bringing the most elevated scientific works. The Muslim world continued the achievements of classical Europe (especially the ninth and tenth centuries), India and former science of the Middle East, during a period when Europe was unable contribute much to the cultural and scientific fields. The Abbasid era is often regarded as the golden age of Muslim civilization.


**Abbas:** Mecca around 568- Madina 652) Uncle of Muhammad.

Abbas was a successful merchant, and was known for the grandeur that he surrounded himself with during his travels. Stories tell that he was in charge of the Zamzam, while this was part of the pre-Islamic pilgrimage of the Ka`ba. His job was to put raisins into it. Abbas opposed Muhammad while he still lived in Mecca, but was not one of the fierce opponents, and he became the protector of Muhammad after Abu Talib died. But there are many unclear points in this part of his life, did he help Muhammad or fight him? There are indications of both. We know that he was captured among other Meccan fighters at the battle of Badr. Historians are uncertain to whether he did convert to Islam.
before returning from Badr to Mecca or not. If he did, he kept his conversion a secret. But we know that Abbas gave his sister-in-law Maimuna in marriage to Muhammad in 628 or 629, when the latter visited Mecca. Abbas helped washing Muhammad’s body after his death, but for the remaining 20 years of his life, we hear little from the historical sources. Through his son, Abdu llah, the line to the coming Caliphate dynasty of the Abbasids, runs.


**Abu Bakr:** (Owner of Camels), born Abdul Ka’aba (Slave of Ka’aba), was later given the name Abdullah (Slave of God) by Muhammad, as well as Siddiq – The Testifier of the Truth. In life, Abu Bakr was a fairly wealthy merchant, a respected character of amiable and compassionate demeanor. Most importantly, he was a close companion of the Prophet (pbuh). Because of this relationship, Abu Bakr was among the firsts to accept Islam. He withstood the same hardships in the early days of the Prophet’s mission, when the small group of Muslims were subjected to persecution and torture. When God’s permission came to emigrate from Mecca, he was the one chosen by the Prophet to accompany him on the dangerous journey to Medina. The two were in numerous battles, side by side.

As the news of Muhammad’s death spread, a number of tribes rebelled and refused to pay Zakat, or tax, arguing that this due was reserved only for the Prophet and some claimed to have inherited the prophethood. At the same time, two powerful empires, the Eastern Roman Empire and the Persian threatened the infant Islamic state of Medina. Contrary to the advice of his peers, Abu Bakr refused to curb the taxes insisting that under the Divine Law, Zakat would be just as important as Salat or prayer and the Laws are to be taken in totality. Attacking tribes were no harm on Medina with the Muslims prepared. Khalid bin Waleed, whose strategic genius climaxed during Abu Bakr’s caliphate, had been chosen to lead the Muslim armies against the Roman military. Throughout the First Caliph’s reign, Khalid led his troops from one victory into another.

(Cultural Academy http://hyperion.advaced.org/17137/Library/abu_bakr.html)

**Aklam-i Sitte:** The six scripts covered by this name can be treated in three groups, each consisting of two related scripts: Sülüs-nesih, muhakkak-reyhâni, and tevki'-rika'. The first in each of these groups (sülüs, muhakkak, and tevki) are written with broad-nibbed pens (around 2 mm), while the second (nesih, reyhâni and rika') are written with pens whose nib is around 1 mm wide. Where the form of the characters is concerned, muhakkak and tevki' are larger scale versions of reyhâni and rika' respectively. Sülüs and nesih, however, diverge substantially in form as well as scale, as will be seen in the illustrations. The very fine version of nesih is called gubârî (“like dust”) because it appears as small as motes of dust. Of all the aklâm-i sitte scripts, sülüs, which is termed ümmül-hat (“the mother of writing”) in historical sources, is the most amenable to artistic application. The rounded and taut style of the characters gives the greatest scope to calligraphers where variety of form and the creation of decorative compositions are concerned. These features are particularly striking in the case of cell sülüs, whether written with a very broad nibbed pen or enlarged by means of squaring, which is used for inscriptions on monuments so that they are legible from a distance. The word cell means “large” or
“obvious”. The cursive form of sūlūs or celi sūlūs in which the words or groups of letters are joined is known as müselsel and the device whereby a word or group of words are written twice as a symmetrical mirror image interlocking down the centre is known as müsennā. Both types have been widely used.


**Ali bin Abi Talib:** Ali was the first cousin of the Prophet Muhammad and the two had shared a common household. Ali later married Muhammad’s daughter, Fatima, and remained in close relations with him for nearly thirty years. In the years after he accepted Islam, Ali took part in the expedition of Tabuk and early battles of Islam, including Uhud. By Muhammad, he was given the name Asadullah or Lion of God a reminder of his bravery and distinction in battle. Other caliphs have consulted him frequently during their caliphates. ‘Umar had made him his vice-regent at Medina when he was away. Aside from these ambitions, Ali was a great scholar of Arabic literature and the field of grammar and rhetoric.

Ali accepted his caliphate with much reluctance. The turmoil of questions surrounding the assassination of Uthman had left both governmental confusion and civil strife. Ali, attempting to alleviate this chaos, replaced all of the governors Uthman had appointed during his caliphate. All the governors except Mu'awiya of Syria, obeyed. The Prophet’s widow, Aisha, insisted that the murderers of Uthman should be brought to trial, despite definite proof. Ali refused, finding it unwise to accuse suspects without substantial evidence.

The situation with Hijaz (the part of Arabia in which Mecca and Medina are located) became so troubling that Ali moved his capital to Iraq. Mu'awiya openly rebelled against Ali and a fierce battle was fought between their armies. Mu'awiya’s brilliant general Amr, after realizing that his side was losing, told his soldiers to put pages of the Koran on their weapons. They then shouted “the decision belongs to God alone!!” So Ali’s men stopped fighting. Ali then had to call off the war (his troops wouldn’t fight) and go into arbitration with Mu'awiya. When this happened, a group of people, now known as the Kharijites, said that the decision to stop fighting was God’s and not Ali’s. So when Ali stopped fighting, they said, he violated the will of God and must be forced to step down. And, in 661 C.E., a fanatical Kharijite killed Ali while he was praying. Then Mu'awiya took the caliphate - Ali never “accepted the government of Mu'awiya in Syria.”

(Cultural Academy, <http://hyperion.advaced.org/17137/Library/ali.html>)

**Barm Emin:** Prof. (1913-1987) A classical calligrapher in essence and has been educated in Arabic. Between 1938-1943, he has studied on writing and binding in Germany where he received his gusto for the ancient calligraphy and modern graphic arts. He worked for a long time at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Hand-Crafts and Graphics as an academician. Thus, he is among the experts who knew the structural differences and the similarities between the ancient Islamic script and the contemporary Latin alphabet.
**Bazin Andre:** Andre Bazin's impact on international cinema, as theorist and critic, is widely considered by many other critics to have been immense, yet his name is not nearly as widely known to other contemporary film buffs. Yet look at all his achievements! In 1951 he was the principal co-founder, and editor-in-Chief of the seminal film magazine: *Les Cahiers du Cinema*. Among the film critics who came under his tutelage were four who would go on to become the most famous directors of Post-War French cinema: Francois Truffaut, Jean Luc Godard, Jacques Rivette, and Claude Chabrol! Bazin can also be considered the principal instigator of the equally influential auteur theory. The idea which contends that since film is an art form, the director of a film must be perceived as the principal artistic creator of its unique and distinctive style.

Andre Bazin can in fact be considered the bridge between film critics and film theorists. He could write thematic essays concerning the art of film, but he also wrote reviews as a critic, one who just adored cinema as entertainment. He was a practicing film critic, he wrote about the actual film, not a theoretical essay which barely made mention of it - as many are now regrettably wont to do. Bazin wanted all of us to take the power of film seriously, but he also wanted people to have fun at the movies, and not to forget that cinema should also be considered entertainment.

**Berat, Ferman and Mensur:** Imperial decrees (ferman), warrants (berat) and patents (mensur) bore the tugra of whichever sultan was then on the throne. These documents, which used to be kept in the form of scrolls or folded, have become highly esteemed collectors' items in recent years, and are now often seen framed as a wall decoration. I will not examine the substance of these documents, but confine myself to a brief discussion of their calligraphy and illumination.


**Plate 133 - Ottoman Ferman from fifteenth century**

**Divani – Celi Divani:** The ta’liq script used for official correspondence in Persia was introduced to Ottoman Turkey by the Akkoyunlular (1467-1501) during the fifteenth century. Under the Ottomans, ta’lik underwent a radical change of form within a brief period, and under this new guise became known as divâni in reference to its use in the official documents of the Divân-i Hûmâyûn (Council of State). Although divâni was written without vowel signs, the ornate and imposing variety known as celi divâni which originated in Istanbul in the sixteenth century was written with vowel signs. Celi divâni was used in high level state correspondence, and contrary to other scripts
designated by the term cell, the term did not mean that it was large in size, but indicated its important status. Both forms of this script required considerable skill to read and write, and it was almost impossible to add extra letters or words, so the use of divâni and cell divâni for official papers made it easier to keep state affairs confidential and prevented fraudulent alteration. Both scripts are written in lines which curve up towards the end.


Plate 134 - “Divani” style writing

**Emir:** Honorary title, Arabic, for military or political leaders in Islam. Emir is often used as the Arabic equivalent to “prince”. Emir is one of a handful of designations on descendants of Muhammad. Emir is also used for tribal chiefs.

**al-Farabi, Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Tarkhan:** (870-950) He was Turkish origin and was born in Turkestan. A philosopher of the Islamic school, which integrates the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle into a single point of view. In Europe he was called al-Refabius (and also Avenasser). Among the Muslims he was called “al-mu'allim ath-thani” “the second teacher”, after Aristotle, whose works had become available in Arabic thanks to translations made at the academy of the Caliph al-Ma'mun in Baghdad.(Glasse Cyrill 121)

**Fatamid Caliphate (909-1171):** Islamic caliphs who ruled Egypt, Syria, and n. Africa 908-1169; claimed descent from Fatima, daughter of Muhammad; Fatimid age productive in architectural and handicraft treasures. It will be remembered that the Shiites are those Muslims who felt that the descendants of Ali should rule the Empire. They felt that the “Divine Spirit” which inspired the Prophet passed down through Ali and to his descendants, father-to-son. The person in whom the Spirit dwelt was known as the Iman. Al’s great-great-grandson, Jaafer the Truthful, had two sons. Here a split in the Shiite world occurred. Some felt that Musa, Jaafer's younger son, held the Spirit. His followers were known as the “Twelver Shiites.” Those who felt that the Spirit passed to Ismail were known as the Ismailis. In 893, and Ismaili missionary named Abu Abdulla went to Iriqiya to preach the ways of the Ismaili. He was very successful, and, within fifteen years, had converted most of the Iriqiys. At this time, the Aghlabid ruler of Iriqiya was a drunk who did little to stop the conversions. In 909, Abu Abdulla led the converts against the Aghlabids and took over the capital of Qairawan. At this time the Aghlabid Empire came to an end.
At this time, there was in Syria a pious and intelligent Ismaili named Saeed ibn Ahmad. Abu Abdulla asked him to come to Qairawan to rule the newly-formed Empire. When he arrived, he changed his name to Ubaidullah ("Prince of the Faithful and the Prophet who will one day establish peace on Earth"), declared the current Empire to be the Fátamids (claiming that the Ismaili's could trace their roots back to Fátamia, the daughter of the Prophet), and declared himself to be the new Caliph of the Islamic World. There were now two rival Caliphates, one with the Fátamids and one with the Abbasids. By 929, a third, rival Caliphate would be established in Andalus (Spain) under Abdul Rahman III.

(Cultural Academy http://hyperion.advanced.org/17137/Main/History/Other_Empires/fatamids.html)

al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid Muhammad: (1058-1111) Philosopher, theologian, jurist, and mystic; he was known in Europe as “Algazel”. He was born and died in Tús, Persia. An extraordinary figure, al-Ghazali was the architect of the latter development of Islam. (Cyrill 137)

Hadith: The promise made by Allah in Qur'an 15:9 is obviously fulfilled in the undisputed purity of the Qur'anic text throughout the fourteen centuries since its revelation. However, what is often forgotten by many Muslims is that the divine promise also includes, by necessity, the Sunnah of the Prophet, because the Sunnah is the practical example of the implementation of the Qur'anic guidance, the wisdom taught to the Prophet along with the scripture, and neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah can be understood correctly without the other. These practical examples (were done by the Prophet) were collected and written as hadith books. Most of the famous hadith books are, Bukhari's and Muslim's.

Hafiz: (present participle of the verb hafaza, “to protect”, “preserve” and by extension, “to memorize”). One who has memorized the the Qur'an. The goal of the Qur'anic school education is to commit the entire the Qur'an to memory, and many traditional Muslims have done so. (Cyrill 143)

Hafiz Osman 1642-1698: Hâfiz Osman Efendi was born in Istanbul, the son of Ali Efendi, müezzin of Haseki Mosque. He memorised the Koran at a young age, hence his cognomen Hâfiz. One of the great masters of calligraphy, he trained under the patronage of Grand Vezir Köprülüzâde Fâzil
Mustafa Pasa (1637-1691). He began by learning aklâm-i sitte from Dervis Ali, but soon Dervis Ali decided that he was too old to apply himself sufficiently to training this young genius, and sent him to his most distinguished pupil Suyolcüzâde Mustafa Eyyûbi.

Hâfiz Osman received his icázet from his new teacher at the age of eighteen, and went on to make a thorough study of the style of Seyh Hamdullah under Neveszâde Ismail Efendi (? -1090/1678). From 1678 onwards he abandoned this style for his own manner, and although he was condemned for this at first, it was not long before the criticism gave way to praise. Hâfiz Osman left behind him twenty-five korans and countless en'âm, delâilü'l-hayrât, cûz, kit'a and murakkâa. He was the first calligrapher to write hilye in the form of levha. Foremost among the fifty or so pupils he is known to have trained are Yedikuleli Seyyid Abdullah Efendi, Yusuf Rumî (? -1121/1709), Rodosizâde Abdullah (? -1116/1704), Yusuf Mecdi (? -1133/1721), Kevkeb Mehmed (? -1129/1717), Kürdâzâde Ibrahim and Hasan Üskûdarî (? -1145/1732). Hâfiz Osman is one of the best known Turkish calligraphers because his korans were printed and found their way all around the Islamic world in the nineteenth century. He taught the Ottoman sultans Mustafa II (lived 1664-1703) and Ahmed III (lived 1673-1736). Although Sultan Mustafa II held his teacher in such regard that he held his inkwell for him, Hâfiz Osman never lost his humility and lived the austere existence of a mystic all his life. He pursued his vocation with the joy of a man at worship and when he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1088/1677 wrote karalama all the way so as not to get out of practice. Hâfiz Osman's art was at its peak between 1090/1678 and 1100/1688. He suffered from a slight stroke towards the end of his life, and died three years later on 29 Cemâziyelewel 1110/3 December 1698. He was buried in the graveyard of Sünbül Efendi Dergâhi (dervish lodge) in the district of Kocamustafa-pasa in Istanbul.

**Hegira**: Muhammad's flight from Mecca (AD 622), from which Muslim dates are calculated

**Hilye**: Islamic doctrine abhors pictorial representation of anyone liable to be idolised, which is why, apart from a handful of inferior miniatures, no depictions of the Prophet Muhammed were ever made. Artists neither considered it necessary to draw the figure of the Prophet Muhammed, nor indeed would have risked recrimination by doing so. Instead of imaginary pictures according to an artist's preconception, verbal descriptions based on reliable contemporary accounts of Muhammed enable believers to envisage him as comes naturally to each individual. This is clearly more in keeping with a doctrine which is iconoclastic. Descriptions of the features of the Prophet Muhammed left by his contemporaries appear in several written works, but it is that of Ali which is most often taken as the text for hilye. This type of levha began to appear in 1678.

"IN THE NAME OF GOD, THE PROTECTOR AND FORGIVER"

The Lord Ali (may God bless him) described our Lord the Prophet (may God's prayer and salutation be upon him) in these words: Our Lord the Prophet was neither short nor tall, but of medium height. He had neither short curly hair, nor long straight hair; his hair was between the curly and straight. He had a round face, clear white skin, large black eyes and long eyelashes. He had large bones and broad shoulders. His chest was hairless in the lower part as far as the abdomen. His two palms and soles were full-fleshed. He strode forward as easily as if walking downhill. When he looked to right or left, he would turn his whole body.

"WE SENT YOU ONLY AS A BLESSING TO THE WORLDS"

Between his two shoulders was a "mark of prophecy", the sign that he was the last prophet. He was the most generous of heart, the most true-spoken, the kindest and most friendly of men. Those who saw him suddenly would be startled at his grandeur, but those who knew his qualities and conversed with him loved him above all. He who attempted to describe his greatness and fine qualities would admit failure, saying "I have seen none like the Apostle of God before or after." May God's prayer and salutation be upon him.

[The calligrapher's signature and date]
**Ihap Hulusi Gorey:** Ihap Hulusi Gorey launched the art of the poster in Turkey, and remains its greatest name. 1998 is the centenary of his birth, which will be marked by a series of commemorative events. Ihap Hulusi was born in Cairo in 1898, and completed his primary and secondary education at the British School in Cairo. His father Ahmed Hulusi was a famous architect, and his brother Yavuz Gorey one of Turkey's best known sculptors. His other brother Nihat Gorey became one of Egypt's leading museum curators. In 1920 Ihap Hulusi went to Munich, where he studied in the Heiman Schule for four years. Over the same period he studied graphic art for three years under the world famous poster artist Ludwig Hohlwein at the Kunstwerbe Schule. Six posters which he had painted in Germany were shown at the Galatasaray Exhibition which opened in 1923. These works attracted the attention of Abdulmecid - who was younger brother of the last reigning Ottoman Sultan and became caliph after the dissolution of the monarchy- and he invited Ihap Hulusi to Dolmabahce Palace. Excited by the reforms introduced by Ataturk he returned to Turkey in 1925. For the next fiftysix years he worked in Turkey, achieving recognition for the graphic arts. He designed tickets for the National Lottery, and posters for Sumerbank, Ziraat Bankasi, the Turkish Aviation Association and the State Monopolies, and labels for many products. His cartoons were published in humorous magazines such as Cem and Akbaba.

His work in Turkey won him an international reputation, and he designed posters and labels for the Bayer company, the Egyptian State Monopolies, and John Haig whisky. Some of his designs, such as the label for Kulup Raki are still being used today.

The centenary programme is being organised jointly by Mimar Sinan University, the Association of Advertising Agencies, and the Association of Graphic Artists. Events include the publication of biographical works, exhibitions of his work in Istanbul, Munich and Cairo, competitions and discussions. An archive of his work and a documentary film are in the process of preparation. Hulusi was an artist who represented the ideals of the Turkish Republic and the modern society to which it gave rise, and these events are of great significance in throwing light on his life and work, and his contribution to Turkish art.

**Ijtihad:** (lit. “effort”) The name comes from a hadith in which the Prophet asked one of his delegates, Mu'az, by what criteria he would administer the regions assigned to his control. “The Qur'an” the man replied:

“And then what?” the Prophet asked.

“The Sunnah” (or example of the Prophet).

“And then what?”

“Then I will make a personal effort (Ijtihad) and act according to that.”

And this the Prophet approved.

Ijtihad is applied to those questions which are not covered by the Qur'an or Sunnah, that is, by established precedent, nor by direct analog from known laws. Those equipped with the authority to
make such original judgement are called mujtahidun and in the Sunni world differst rank of mujtahidun (after the four Patriarchal Caliphs) are the founders of the four Schools of Law, or madhahib (sing. madhhab). Within dimishing doments of competence there are other ranks of Mujtahidun. Although the possiblity of a Mujtahid arising today is accepted in theory, the preliminery qualifications expected of him would be tantamount to perfect knowledge of the Laws expounded before him; this would surely be an insurmountable obstacle. Therefore it is said that “the door of Ijtihad is closed” as of some nine hundred years, and since than the tendency of jurisprudence has been to produce only commentaries and marginalia.

**Ibn ‘Arabi, Abu Bakr Muhammad Muhyi-d-Din:** (1165-1240) Mystic and teacher, he is considered by many as the greatest Muslim exponent of metaphysical doctrine. In recognition of this pre-eminence he was called “the greatest shaykh” (ash-shaykh al-akbar) and the “red sulphur” (al-kabrit al-ahmar), an alchemical reference implying that Ibn ‘Arabi could draw knowledge out of ignorance as sulphur “draws” gold out of lead. At the same time, there are clear ambiguities in his wrintting, and many a heretic could find support in him for a wide variety of extravagant beliefs. Ibn ‘Arabi often called a pantheist and, indeed, there is justification for this. What is important to bear in mind is that the school which upholds him would vehemently reject pantheism. Thus curiously, perhaps, if there is a fundemental metaphysical error in Ibn ‘Arabi, the majority of his followers, guided by their own orthodoxy, rectify it in practice and disregard the compromising elements. (Cyrill 167)

**Inal, Mahmud kemal:** (1870-1957 Istanbul) Turkish historian, calligrapher and editor. He is known particularly his books which are in biography field.

**Inscriptions:** The term kitabe refers to inscriptions on the exterior façade of any monument or public building (mosques, schools, medreses, hans, fountains, baths, libraries, target stones, tombstones etc) carved in relief on marble. As in the case of band inscriptions, these were sometimes gilded on a dark ground, but such decoration is vulnerable to weathering. Again the two most frequently used scripts are cei sülüs for Arabic, and cei ta'llik, which does not use diacritics, for Turkish inscriptions. The finest examples of both are to be seen in Istanbul, and date from Mustafa Râkim in the case of cei sülüs, and from Yesârî Es'ad Efendi in the case of cei ta'llik. Although calligraphy has been applied in a very wide range of Turkish arts over the centuries, appearing on wood, leather, seals, rings, ceramics, helmets, swords and a host of other objects both decorative and functional, the beauty of the original inscription is generally lost in the process of transferral.

**Istif:** A highly complex calligraphic composition in which the letters composing the words are arranged one on top of the other.

![Plate 137 - "Jeli thuluth" style istif levha Abdulfettah Efendi](image)

**Ka'bah:** (lit: “cube”) The large cubic stone structure, covered with a black cloth, which stands in the center of the Grand Mosque of Mecca. In one corner, the Ka'bah contains the Black Stone. Neither the stone nor the Ka'bah are objects of worship, but they represent a sanctuary consecrated to God since time immemorial, and it is towards the Ka'bah that Muslims orient themselves in prayer; thus the Ka'bah is a spiritual center, a support for the concentration of consciousness upon the Divine Presence. The Ka'bah is also called the “Holly house” (al-bayt al-haram) and the “ancient house” (al-bayt al-atiq). The Ka'bah was originally founded, tradition says, by Adam, and after his death rebuilt by his son Seth. When the time came, it was rebuilt by Abraham and his son Ishmael.

**Kazasker or Kadiasker:** The head of the Kadis (governors of the various districts) in the Ottoman state. The kazasker participated in the councils of the viziers held under the chairmanship of the Sadrazam (grand vizier or prime minister).

**Kit'a:** The term kit’a as applied to calligraphy should not be confused with the literary meaning of the word, which refers to a type of poem usually consisting of four lines. The dictionary definition “piece” or “part” is probably the derivation of the term as applied to calligraphy. Kit’as are classified according to the script (or scripts) used to write them, and named accordingly: Sülüs-nesih kit’a, muhakkak-reyhâni kit’a, ta'llik kit’a and so on. The common feature of every kit’a is first of all its rectangular form, the square being avoided wherever possible. This can probably be ascribed to aesthetic considerations, because there is no set rule to this effect. Who knows how many years, even centuries, of seeking beauty led calligraphers to reach this conclusion. A similar arrangement holds true for the pages of the Qur’an. The kit’as may be either a horizontal or vertical rectangle.

(Derman, [http://www.sabanci.com.tr/sergi/calig/more/a2.html])

![Plate 138 - Kit’a](image)
**Layla and Macnun:** The most famous traditional love story written by Fuzuli (D.1556 - Turkish poet and the most outstanding figure in the classical school of Turkish literature) who wrote in Arabic, Persian and Azeri Turkish.

**Levha:** Calligraphic compositions intended for framing and hanging on interior walls became popular over the last two centuries, particularly among the Ottomans. Known as levha, they were both intended to be read and to serve a decorative function. The hilye, another type of levha, will be discussed in a separate section. Levha were written in the magnified cell script forms with a large-nibbed pen, so that they were legible from a distance. Readers should note that since the illustrations of levha have had to be scaled down for reproduction in this book, the difference in script size is often unnoticeable.


**Plate 139 - “Talik” style levha from a Mawlawi dergah (nineteenth century)**

**Mawlana:** The name Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi stands for Love and ecstatic flight into the infinite. Mevlana is one of the great spiritual masters and poetical geniuses of mankind and was the founder of the Mevlevi Sufi order, a leading mystical brotherhood of Islam. Rumi was born in Balkh (Afghanistan) in 1207 to a family of learned theologians. Escaping the Mongol invasion, Rumi and his family travelled extensively in the Muslim lands, performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and finally settled in Konya, Anatolia (Turkey), where he succeeded his father in 1231 as professor in religious sciences.

He was introduced into the mystical path by a wandering dervish, Shamsuddin of Tabriz. His love and his bereavement for the death of Shams found their expression in a surge of music, dance and lyric poems, ‘Divani Samsi Tabrizzi’. Rumi is the author of a huge didactic work, The ‘Mathnawi’, and discourses, ‘Fihi ma Fihi’, written to introduce his disciples to metaphysics. If there is ‘Fihi ma Fihi’, written to introduce his disciples to metaphysics. If there is any general idea underlying Rumi’s poetry, it is the absolute love of God. His influence on thought, literature and all forms of aesthetic expression in the world of Islam cannot be overrated. Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi died on December 17, 1273. Men of five faiths followed his bier. That night was named Sebul Arus (Night of Union). Ever since, the Mevlevi dervishes have kept that date as a festival. The Mevlevi rites symbolise divine love and mystical ecstasy; they aim at union with the Divine. The music and the dance are designed to
induce meditation on the love of God. Mevlevi music contains some of the most valuable elements of Turkish classical music. It serves mainly as accompaniment for poems of Rumi and other Sufi poets. The music of the sema (ceremony) is generally conducted by the chief drummer. Percussion accompaniment is supplied by the kudums (small kettledrums) and cymbals; melody is provided by the ney (reed flute), the string instruments and the voice. The words and even syllables of the poetry are connected to the musical sentences. "Dervish music cannot be written in notes. Notes do not include the soul of the dervish." The dervishes turn timelessly and effortlessly. They whirl, turning round on their own axis and moving also in orbit. The right hand is turned up towards heaven to receive God's overflowing mercy which passes through the heart and is transmitted to earth with the downturned left hand. While one foot remains firmly on the ground, the other crosses it and propels the dancer round. The rising and falling of the right foot is kept constant by the inner rhythmic repetition of the name of "Allah-Al-lah, Al-lah..." The ceremony can be seen as a great crescendo in three stages: knowing God, seeing God and uniting with God.

**Mawlawi:** A sufi order in Türkiye founded by Mawlana (Mawlana) Jalal ad-Din Rūmi(672/1273). The members of this order are sometimes called "Whirling Dervishes" in West because part of their method of spiritual realisation consist of dancing in which they revolve to the music of flutes, drums and the chants of ilahis (Turkish sufi songs). the training of a Mawlawi Dervish includes exercises for the dance in which the first two toes of the right foot grasp a nail on the floor while the dervish pivots around it. The dervishes' turning requires a great deal of practice to master, but is extremely graceful when performed in a ritual meeting. The presence of the founder, Jalal ad-Din Rūmi, is strongly manifested in the order, and many dervishes experience intense personal relationship with him. Mawlawis are also found in Syria, Egypt, and other countries which were once part of the Ottoman Empire; however, at the present time only the branches in Konya and Istanbul in Türkiye are active. Mawlana said: "come, come whoever you are, unbeliever or fire-worshiper, come. Our convent is not of desperation. Even if you have broken your vows a hundred times, come, come again (Cyrill, P: 268-269).

**Masnawi:** A book which was located sufic ideas and poets was written by Mawlana.

**Mihna:** Mu'tazilite inquisition from 833-848, which finally represented the break between the short-lived cohabitation of religion and state in Islam. The inquisition was instituted by the permission of Caliph al-Ma'mun who supported the Mu'tazilite fraction. It started with a test of the qadis of Baghdad in their opinions of the creation of the Holy Koran. Those qadis that did pass this test, should themselves go on to test others. There was little willingness to pull this through, and the inquisition of Damascus had to be performed by the Caliph himself. During tests that were performed in the following years, the number of qadis expressing the view of Mu'tazilism, went down, and some qadis were imprisoned. The Mihna continued for some years into the Caliphate of al-Mutawakkil, but then
the spreading of the teaching that the Koran had been created was banned, and violations on this ban could result in death punishment.

(Muhammad: 570?-632), "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah." This is the fundamental statement of faith in Islam, and it declares that Muhammad is the founder of one of the world's major religions. He was also the founder of a state by his unification of Arabia. Within decades after his death his followers sent out armies that conquered the whole Middle East, North Africa, and Spain. This vast territory was unified, at least temporarily, in an Islamic. Eventually the Byzantine (Eastern Roman) Empire, too, fell to Islam. The religion Muhammad founded became one of the most potent cultural forces in the world, and it plays a decisive role in the politics of the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia.

Mecca, in what is now Saudi Arabia, is the holiest city of Islam. It was here that Muhammad was born in about 570. Most of the people in the Arabia of that day were members of clans, which were themselves parts of tribes. Muhammad was born into the Hashim clan of the Quraysh tribe. His father had died before Muhammad was born, and his mother died six years later. He was put into the care of the head of the clan, his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, then into the care of Abd al-Muttalib's successor, Abu Talib, Muhammad's uncle.

In 595 he met Khadijah, a rich woman fifteen years older than he. They soon married, and she bore six children. Two sons died in childhood. Of the four daughters, the best known is Fatima. She married Muhammad's cousin 'Ali, who is regarded by the Shi'ah branch of Islam as its founder and the legitimate successor of Muhammad. Khadijah also brought Muhammad wealth and social prominence. As long as she lived, he had only one wife. After her death, however, he took several. From among this expanded circle of relatives came his early successors as leaders of Islam.

From time to time Muhammad spent nights in a cave near Mecca reflecting on the social ills of the city. About 610 he had a vision, later described as the angel Gabriel, who assured him he was the messenger of God. He continued to receive inspired messages for the rest of his life. Many of them were put down in writing, while others were preserved in memory. Eventually these messages were collected into a book, the Koran (or Qur'an), now the holy book of Islam. The messages were understood by Muhammad to be generally identical with revelations that had come to the prophets of ancient Israel and to the founders of Christianity. It was not long before he acquired followers who accepted him as God's prophet, and in 613 he began preaching publicly in Mecca. His emphasis on the worship of one God contrasted with the Arab practice of worshiping many gods. The new religion soon came to be called Islam, meaning "submission to God," and its followers were Muslims, meaning "those who have submitted."

The new religion aroused opposition in Mecca. Those who believed in many gods feared their shrines might be demolished, and Muhammad's denunciations of greedy merchants won him enemies. When Khadijah and Muhammad's uncle both died in 619, an unfriendly uncle succeeded as head of the Hashem clan. This uncle withdrew the clan's protection from Muhammad, leaving him open to attack by his enemies. The hostilities aroused in Mecca led Muhammad to encourage his followers to
emigrate to the city of Medina. He left Mecca and reached Medina on Sept. 24, 622. This flight is called hijrah in Arabic and has come into English as Hegira. It provides the starting date for the history of Islam.

From that day until Muhammad was able to return to Mecca in January 630, he and his followers were in constant conflict with the merchant class and citizens of Mecca. He and his growing band of followers conducted raids on trading caravans from Mecca. Attempts by the Meccans to destroy Muhammad failed. Muhammad meanwhile became more conciliatory toward the enemy city. He was determined to unify the Arabs and turn their military prowess outward. Mecca began to decline as leading citizens moved to Medina to follow Islam.

In 630 Muhammad entered Mecca with a force of ten thousand and the city submitted to him. Within two years all of Arabia was united under Islam. Muhammad died on June eight, 632. He was succeeded as leader (caliph, from khalifah, meaning “successor”) by his father-in-law, Abu Bakr.

**Mosque Inscriptions:** Mosque interiors are decorated with cell inscriptions placed at points where they are visible to the congregation. Since the texts are most often verses from the Qur’an or hadis in Arabic, cell sülüs is preferred because it includes diacritical marks. The inscription band (kusak yazisi) which encircles the mosque wall or drum of the dome, and the inscription within the dome or semidomes (kubbe yazisi) are always in cell sülüs, with rare exceptions where the band inscription around the drum is in kufi, as for example at Çoban Mustafa Pasa Mosque in Gebze and Hamidiye Mosque at Yıldız. But these pale in comparison to cell sülüs. Among the loveliest examples of cell sülüs bands are those by Mustafa Râkim at Nusretiye Mosque in Istanbul, and by Halim Özyazıcı (1315-1384/1898-1964) at Maltepe Mosque in Ankara. Band inscriptions were either executed in gold leaf on a dark ground by decorators, or carved in marble, a method which ensured permanence. A very striking effect is achieved by gilding the relief characters, and by coating the cut-away surface with a dark colour. Until the seventeenth century, inscription bands executed on tiling were favoured, while paint or gold leaf was used for the inscriptions in the dome and above the fenestration. The ism-i celâl, ism-i nebi, ciharyar and Haseneyn levha were written in cell sülüs, usually on dark coloured oiled silk or metal plaques and then gilded.

**Ibn Muqlah:** Abu Ali Muhammed bin Ali bin Al-Hassan bin Abdullah bin Muqlah was a known writer, Calligrapher and a Wazir. He was born in Baghdad at 894. He was prosecuted and was a subject to an unlawful verdict which kept with one hand. After flooding the tyrant rulers of Baghdad with his poetry describing the oppression caused by the Iraqi rulers against him which was a reason for chopping his hand, he was then prosecuted again and this time his tongue was chopped. He died in 950 at an age of sixty five years. Due to his vast knowledge in Geometry, he had a lot of contributions to upgrade Arabic Calligraphy. At his time, the Quran was perpetually written using the Kufi script until Ibn Muqlah introduced the Naskh Script which was then favored and preferred due to it's beauty, simplicity and perspicuity. The Naskh script introduced by Ibn Muqlah then became a standardized script for transcribing the Holy Qur’an. The name of the Suras, however, remained written in Kufi.
**Murakka:** These names is given to a type of cardboard formed by sticking firm, rather thick sheets of paper one on top of the other. Kit’as or other pieces of writing are stuck on to these and the margins decorated. The term murak’ka is applied to a calligraphic album made up of a number of kit’as produced in the manner described above and connected to the another by joining the edges. Some of these are bound in the form of a book, others so as to open up in concertina form. (Derman, <http://www.sabanci.com.tr/sergi/calig/more/a3.html>)

Plate 140 - “Murakka”

**Musenna:** These are piece of writing, normally in the form of an istif, running from right to left and from left to right. This type of writing is employed in panels or inscriptions. It is also known as “mirror” writing.

**Muslim:** (lit. “one who has surrendered to God”) A Moslem, an adherent of Islam. The word implies complete surrender, submission, and resignation to God’s Will. The Muslim is submitted; ideally, therefore, it is not the Muslim who acts, but God, and the actions of the Muslim are an appearance due to his swift and spontaneous obedience to the decrees of fate. This is why the Sufis say that one must be like “a body in the hands of the washers of the dead”, moving without resistance to the divine Will. In this there is peace-salam, surrender, wholeness, security. The word “Islam” (“surrender”, “submission”) is the verbal noun corresponding to the adjective Muslim (“surrendered”, “submitted”). It is, incidentally, important to pronounce the s of Muslim sharply as in the English word “slim”; the voiced pronunciation with the s as in “chisel” or “nose”, produces a word which means - or sounds somewhat like a word which means - “benighted”, “cruel”, and which is therefore offensive.

**Mustafa Rakım 1758-1826:** Mustafa Efendi was born in Ünye in 1171/1758, and as a young boy was taken to Istanbul by his father Mehmed Kaptan to join his elder brother Ismail Zühdî who brought him up. As well as studying theology and canonical law, he studied calligraphy under his
brother and another calligrapher named Dervis Ali (? -1200/1786). When he received his icázet he was given the pseudonym of Râkim.

Mustafa Râkim was also an artist, and he presented a painting to Sultan Selim III (lived 1761-1808) who so admired it that he granted an audience to Mustafa Râkim and commissioned a portrait of himself (this is missing today). He was given the rank of müderris, and appointed designer for the Mint and of the imperial tugra or cipher. Subsequently Mustafa Râkim taught sulûs and celi sulûs to Sultan Mahmud II, and for a while held the titular post of kadi of Izmir. He was later appointed to the high ranking post of kadiasker of Anatolia, during which time he suffered a stroke in 1238/1823 and died on 15 Saban 1241/25 March 1826. In accordance with his will he was buried in his tomb next to the medrese built in his name at Karagümruk in Istanbul.

The revolution in celi sulûs and the design of the tugra initiated by Mustafa Râkim has been mentioned in the account of Turkish calligraphy. He wrote kit'a in ta'llik and designed lapidary inscriptions in the celi form of ta'llik but his achievement in this script was less impressive and fuelled by his command over the other scripts. Inspired by celi sulûs he experimented with calligraphic compositions (istik) in celi ta'llik, but this innovation was eclipsed by the school of Yesârîzâde (? - 1265/1849).

As well as his kit'a and levha, Râkim Efendi's inscriptions in celi sulûs arouse the admiration of visitors to such buildings as Naksidil Sultan Türbesi in Fatih, where he designed the inscription band (Surah LXXVI, "Man") and the inscriptions on the exterior and interior of the gates leading into the hazine precinct; the inscription band at Nusretiye Mosque in Tophane (Surah LXXXVIII "The Tidings") which he wrote during his last illness; and numerous tomb inscriptions.

Ottoman Empire (1299-1922): The Ottoman Empire established itself around 1300 and lasted until 1922. At its height, the Ottoman Empire controlled what is now Turkey, parts of Northern Africa, southwestern Asia, and southeastern Europe. The Ottomans were descendants of Turkoman nomads who entered Anatolia in the 11th century as mercenary soldiers. The term Ottoman comes from Osman, the founder and first sultan of the empire. At the end of the Byzantine Empire in 1453, the Ottomans conquered its capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul), which became the capital of the Ottoman Empire. By the mid-1500's the Balkans, present-day Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, all belonged to the Ottomans. The Empire suffered a slow decline during its last 300 years. When World War I began in 1914, the Ottoman Empire held only Asia Minor, parts of southwestern Asia, and a part of the Balkans. The Ottomans were defeated in war and the empire came to an end in 1922.

Birth and growth late thirteenth – fifteenth centuries
Around the late 1200's, a small group of Turkish tribes led by Osman settled in the province of Anatolia (Turkey). They had come primarily as settlers during the reign of the Seljuks. The original Ottomans were primarily mercenary soldiers for the Abbasids. The tribes began and captured the city of Bursa in 1326 and then began to attack the surrounding territory, including the Byzantine Empire. By the late 1300, the Ottomans formed a highly trained group of soldiers called the Janissaries. The Ottoman empire experienced almost continual expansion between the years 1300 and 1481. Under Osman and his successors, Orhan (ruled 1324-60), Murad I (1360-89) and Bayezid I (1389-1402), nearly
all of Anatolia was conquered. Alliances with various factions of the Byzantines won the Ottomans a foothold on Europe in about 1346, and from Gallipoli they moved into Thrace, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Serbia. Within a century, this dynasty had extended its domains into an empire stretching from the Danube to the Euphrates.

Ottoman troops, led by Sultan Muhammad II, succeeded in capturing Constantinople in 1453. The city, renamed Istanbul, then became the center of the Ottoman Empire. Under Muhammad II and Mehmed II, the Ottomans also conquered much of southeastern Europe and territory near the Black Sea. They took over Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517. The empire reached its peak of power and wealth under Sultan Suleiman I, who ruled from 1529 to 1566. His armies conquered Hungary, northern Africa, and territory on the east coast of the Red Sea.

The Ottoman Way of Life

The people of the Ottoman empire predominantly consisted of Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, and Slavs. The empire had two classes of people: the ruling class and the rayah, or literally, protected flock. The ruling class included the imperial family, owners of large estates, and military and religious leaders. These wealthy people lived in stone mansions. The rest of the people were considered rayah and they lived in homes made of brick and mud. The sultan had the responsibility of protecting them from invasion and other perils. It was not uncommon that a man of the Ottoman Empire to have more than one wife, or a harem. Islamic law permitted the practice and women were generally expected to leave somewhat secluded lives. However, some women gained power withing their harem and had great influence over their husbands and sons. Although Islam was the major religion in the Empire, the Ottomans tolerated other religions. Christians and Jews made up the largest non-Muslim groups.

The most important decisions of the Empire were made by sultans or appointed head-officials. They collect tax and keep peace within the empire. The rulers needed the support of the army to maintain their position. New laws were subject to the approval of the empire's chief religious judge, the grand mufti. After the death of a sultan, he was succeeded by his oldest or favorite son. There has been cases of threats and murders within a ruling family on account of this power. Ottoman Muslims attended neighborhood mosques as part of their religious and community duties, or millets. Much of education was based on religion and local school systems were designed for both boys and girls. People enjoyed carnivals and such sports as archery and wrestling. The Ottomans adopted many styles of Byzantine and Persian art and literature. Major Ottoman contributions came in the fields of architecture, carpet weaving, and tile making.

The decline and fall

A signal of slow decline began in 1571 when naval forces from Spain, Venice, and the Papal States of Italy almost destroyed the Ottoman fleet in the Battle of Lepanto. In 1683, Austrian and Polish troops turned back an Ottoman attack on Vienna, thus ending Ottoman expansion into Europe. The decline in general can be attributed to a number of factors. One important cause had been the triumph of the devshirme class, or Christian converts. The devshirme divided into many political parties that fought
for power and manipulated sultans. There was a prevalence of nepotism, corruption, and overall inefficiency of government. The empire survived the next 300 years through its religious millets and sporadic, conservative movements. A few members of the ruling class will temporarily remedy the decay by forcefully instilling old institutions. One such ruler was Murad IV (1623-40). During the 18th century, a series of wars with Russia and Austria aided the decline of the empire, as well as unrest within sections of the provinces.

Sultan Selim III attempted to reform the Ottoman system by replacing the Janissary army with a new army modeled after the West. This attempt so angered the Janissaries and traditionalists, that most of leaders of the reform were massacred and Selim was overthrown. There were an ever-growing nationalist movement in Greece and Serbia, trouble with Austria and Russia, and Egypt on the verge of independence, all to prove the ineffectiveness of the Janissaries. Sultan Mahmud II was able to massacre and destroy them in 1826. Mahmud instituted a series of modernistic reforms which required the destruction of more traditional institutions in order to make room for Western ideals in all areas of life.

A lack of proper financial management, along with national revolts in the Balkans and Eastern Anatolia, the French government occupation of Algeria and Tunisia, the British in Egypt, and the Italians in Libya threatened to end the existence of the empire. Temporary financial reforms by Sultan Abd al-Hamid II saved the empire from collapse at that moment. However, despotic ruling fired opposing liberal groups. Many rival parties (particularly the Young Turks had to flee to Europe to escape his police. In 1908, the Young Turks forced Hamid to restore the empire's constitution, which guaranteed an elected parliamentary government. After World War I ended in 1918, troops from several Allied nations, including Britain and Greece occupied the Ottoman empire. The Empire's forces had supported Germany during the war. A Turkish military hero named Mustafa Kemal (later known as Kemal Ataturk) led Turkey in a nationalist movement that ended the occupation of Turkey in 1922. The Turkish government abolished the Ottoman empire that year and created the Republic of Turkey in 1923.

(Cultural Academy, <http://hyperion.advanced.org/17137/Main/History/Ottoman/key_points.html>)

**Patriarchal Caliphs:** (Arabic: al-khulafa’ ar-rashidun) The so-called “rightly guided Caliphs" were the first four Caliphs, Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali, whose spiritual stations were commensurate with the dignity of being successors to the Prophet; all having been his close Companions during his prophethood. In the hands of later Caliphs, although there were some of true sanctity, the office became one of political authority, alone, although it carried the prestige of its religious connatations.

**Pilgrimage:** The hajj, "pilgrimage," is an annual Muslim rite that every believer is expected to take part in at least once in his lifetime. From the seventh to the tenth day in Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic (Arabic lunar) calendar, thousands of Muslims converge on the city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia to visit the holy shrine of the Kaaba in the Great Mosque. Tradition has it that the shrine was
built by Abraham, considered by Islam, Judaism, and Christianity to be a prophet and the founder of the faith. The pilgrimage is intended to reenact the hegira, the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622. Hence most travelers will visit both cities, in addition to performing a number of other ritual observances. The pilgrimage culminates with the feast of sacrifice, one of the two major festivals that are celebrated during the Islamic (Arabic lunar) year.

For centuries, the pilgrimage has brought together thousands of Muslims from many countries and has provided a valuable link between the centers of Islam. It also gives the believers a sense of belonging to a vast world community. In the 20th century all Muslim countries send official delegations to the hajj, providing for an interchange of ideas on all socio-political issues facing the Arab peoples.

**Rik'a:** Despite the close resemblance between their names, rik'a bears no resemblance of form to rika', which is the sixth of the aklâm-i sitte scripts. The rik'a script was that in daily use by every literate Ottoman Turk, and was written with a reed pen whose nib was a maximum of 1 mm in width. Until the 19th century, the style of rik'a depended entirely on the whim of each writer, but this situation ended with the advent of Babıiali rık'asi, which was originally devised by Mümtaz Efendi (1225-1287/1810-1872) and used by government offices. The speed of writing this script was increased by means of simplifying the characters. Later in the century, Mehmed Izzet Efendi (1257-1302/1841-1903) developed another form of rik'a based on strict rules. Known as Izzet Efendi rık'ası, this script was subsequently adopted widely in the Arab world.

![Plate 141 - Rik'a style writing](image)

**Quraysh:** Prophet Mohammad's tribe. Quraysh was the powerfull and largest tribe in Mecca in Mohammad's age.

**Sahabas:** (Ar. Ashab, sahabah) Companion. Strictly speaking, those followers of the Prophets who were closest to him in his lifetime, kept frequent company with him, and strove to assimilate his teachings. They memorized and transmitted Hadith and compiled. According to another view, anyone who had seen the Prophet during his life was a Companion, and by this definition the Companions would number tens or thousands. According to this larger view there are catagories or
"classes" of Companions depending upon the time of their conversion and the key events in which they took part.

**Sakkal, Mamoun**: Mamoun Sakkal is a native of Aleppo, Syria, who immigrated to the United States in 1978. He practices architecture, interior design, and graphic design as principal of Sakkal Design in Bothell, WA. He is a famous awarded contemporary Islamic calligrapher.

**Seljuk Empire**: Let us now review what has been happening in Iraq, Syria, and Persia. The Samanids, after nine Ameers (rulers), fell into decline after 999 C.E. The Buwaihids likewise, fell apart as anarchy replaced stability in the early part of eleventh century. The time was ripe for a new ruler. The Ghuzz were a nomadic tribe that grazed the area between the Aral and the Caspian Seas and the steppes north of the Aral Sea. They lived off their flocks, and their principal occupation was war. While most of the Ghuzz were not Muslim, the leader of the tribe, Tughril Beg the Seljuk, was a devout Sunni Muslim. It will be remembered that the Samanid Empire fell apart after the rebellion of Mahmood ibn Sabuktakeen. While Mahmood was a capable ruler, his son and successor was not. The Seljuk (now the common name of the Ghuzz), led by Tughril Beg, soon conquered the entire region by 1042 C.E.

By 1044 C.E. the Abbasid Caliph, Qaim, had heard of the Seljuks in the East. Because of the civil war that was taking place between the Buwaihid princes, Qaim felt that this was the perfect time to get rid of his Shiite rulers. He far preferred the Sunni Seljuk to the Shiite Buwaihid. Qaim sent emissaries to Tughril Beg in 1055. Being a Muslim, Tughril Beg received the emissaries with profound respect. That same year, Tughril Beg led his Seljuk army into Baghdad and took the city. While the Caliph still lacked any political power, under the Seljuks he was deeply respected as a religious figure. Tughril Beg was succeeded by his nephew Alp Arslan after his death in August, 1063. Alp Arslan was a shrewd man who quickly married off his children to the children of the Eastern princes - thereby amicably reuniting most of East Persia with the rest of the Empire. When Alp Arslan secured the East, he moved his attention to the Byzantines. On Friday, August 19th, 1071, the army of Alp Arslan utterly defeated the Byzantines at the battle of Lake Van. Asia minor was now in the hands of the Seljuk.

After these wars, Alp Arslan died. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Malik Shah. Under Malik Shah's rule, the Empire reached its pinnacle of glory. Malik Shah was educated, and passionately interested in the sciences, especially astronomy. He established an observatory in Persia, which he
placed under the administration of Omar Khayyam, the famous mathematician and author of the Rubaiyat. During Malik Shah's reign, the Seljuks kept control of Asia Minor. This denied the Byzantines the area from which they recruited soldiers. The Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus found himself short on men during the late 1080's. He asked the help of Pope Urban II in retaking Asia Minor. The Western Europeans knew little of Middle Eastern geography, and did not realize the importance of Asia Minor. The city of Jerusalem, however, was a familiar city to the Christians. In 1092, Malik Shah died, and the Seljuk Empire became torn by civil war. Christian pilgrimages to Jerusalem became impossible; the pilgrims were robbed and murdered in the anarchy (before the strife, pilgrims were allowed - Muslims were remarkably tolerant of the Jew and Christians).

Urban II's plea for help was dumbfoundingly successful. Tens of thousands of soldiers marched South from Constantinople into Asia Minor, the Syria, and then Jerusalem. But by this time, the Seljuk Empire had fallen apart. Finally, on July 15th, 1099, Jerusalem fell to the Christians. The Seljuks were unable to defeat the Crusaders. Instead, that task fell to Saladin of the Ayoubids (an Empire centered around Cairo, Egypt). Before we study the Ayoubids, however, we must learn about the history of North Africa from 800 to 1100 C.E.

**Sema:** The use of music by most Sufis as a means of inspiration or as an aid to contemplation. Music is forbidden in Islam, because it can bear the soul away, but is, nevertheless, practised everywhere. Despite the legal prohibition on music, it was, even from early times, and still is today a common practice among many Sufic turuç to use music together with religious poetry to call forth a contemplative attitude in the soul. In particular, music is used to create the appropriate state of mind for the performance of the hadrah, or sacred dance. It is because of this esoteric aspect of music that it was admitted by the Sufis even while being prohibited by exoterism (Cyrill 375-376).

**Seyh Hamdullah 1429-1520:** Seyh Hamdullah was born in Amasya in 833/1429 according to one source, and in 840/1436 according to another (I have taken the earlier date to be the true one on account of an undated koran [SK Pertevniyal 1] which he wrote at the age of 89). His father was Mustafa Dede, Seyh or leader of the Süreverdî mystic order, and a member of the Turkish community which migrated from Bukhara. This is why Hamdullah Efendi's signature includes the phrase "İbni's-Seyh" ("son of a seyh"). As well as studying the traditional disciplines in Amasya, he also learnt the aklâm-i sitte from Hayreddin Mar'ası (?) in the style of Yâkût (?-698/1298), and made a close study of the calligraphy of Abdullah Sayrafi (8th C/14th C). While Bayezid (1450-1512), elder son of Sultan Mehmed II and the future Bayezid II was serving as governor in Amasya, he became friends with Seyh Hamdullah, who gave him lessons in calligraphy. When Bayezid acceded to the Ottoman throne, Seyh Hamdullah moved to Istanbul where he was appointed teacher of calligraphy to the imperial palace.

Sultan Bayezid II held Seyh Hamdullah in such regard that he would hold his inkwell while he wrote and seat him in place of honour at the assembly of the ulêmâ (Islamic legists). The sultan's encouragement of Seyh Hamdullah's wish to develop a new style of Yâkût has already been mentioned in the section on Ottoman Turkish calligraphy. Seyh Hamdullah has been described as the "kibletü'l-kütťāb" ("most favoured of scribes"). He was a master of aklâm-i sitte and his life work
consisted of 47 korans, innumerable enâm-i serif and mushaf cûzû, prayer manuals, tomar, kit'a, murakkaa and mesk albums. Seyh Hamdullah was also an accomplished archer. Indeed, the title "Seyh" derives from the fact that he became seyh of Aticilar Tekkesi (Lodge of Archers) established at Ok Meydani, the main archery field in Istanbul, after the conquest of Istanbul.

We have no idea how many students he trained, but among those whose names we know were his own son Mustafa Dede (900-945/1495-1538) and his son-in-law Sûkrullah Halife (? - ?). His grandchildren and great-grandchildren also trained as calligraphers. Seyh Hamdullah was buried at Karacaahmed Cemetery upon his death in 926/1520. From that time on many calligraphers considered it an honour to be buried nearby, and the spot on which his tomb stood was known as Seyh Sofasi.

**Shi‘i:** The largest non Sunni branch of Islam, the Shi‘i, in their various forms represent some sixteen percent of the Muslim world. The term Shi‘i refers to the partisans of the fourth Caliph Ali, who was Muhammad’s son in law through his daughter Fatima, the last Caliph to be elected, as well as the last to be drawn from the original nucleus of converts from the Mecca-Medina period. The Shi‘i, in their various forms, are significant minorities in Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Bahrain, the Gulf States, Pakistan and India. They represent the largest religious group in Iraq, and the overwhelming majority eighty percent in Iran, where Shi‘i Islam has been the state religion since the sixteenth century AD.

After the murder of ‘Ali, his followers, called the Shi‘ites, demanded that the rule of the community be restored to the family of ‘Ali. By his marriage to Fatima, daughter of Muhammad, he was a kinsman of the Prophet; and the Shi‘ites claimed the divine right of the family of Muhammad to rule. In the course of its history, Shi‘ah developed some distinctive doctrines and a number of sects. Probably out of its reverence for ‘Ali, it came to regard the community leader, the imam, as an infallible being who alone knew the hidden and true meaning of the Koranic revelations. Orthodox Shi‘ites recognize 12 imams in their history, the last of whom (named Muhammad) disappeared in the 9th century. Orthodox Shi‘ites believe that the 12th imam will return near the end of time to inaugurate a reign of truth and justice. Until he returns, all law and doctrine are interpreted by scholars called mujtahids.

Since the divine knowledge was mediated through the infallible teachings of an imam, the Shi‘ites believed (in contrast to the Sunnites) that all knowledge derived from fallible, human sources was useless. It was not what the community thought, but what the imam proclaimed that counted. This narrowed the scope for toleration of divergent views.

Another major difference from Sunnite emphasis was the emergence of a "passion history" among the followers of Shi‘ah, comparable in many ways to the Passion plays about the life of Jesus. The violent death in 680 of ‘Ali’s son, Husein, is celebrated annually with orations, plays, and processions. These celebrations have influenced Sunnite believers in Afghanistan and India, who participate in similar passion plays. The influence of Shi‘ah is also felt in the veneration in which all Muslims hold ‘Ali and his family and in the respect that they show for his descendants.

In addition to the main body of Shi‘ite believers, there are a number of fairly extremist sects that have broken away. The largest group is the Isma‘ilis. The difference originates in the identity of the seventh imam. The main body of Shi‘ah accepted Musa, but the Isma‘ili recognized instead his brother Isma‘il. Since his disappearance, they await his return and hence are usually called Seveners, instead
of Twelvers, the name applied to orthodox Shi'ites. The seven imams recognized by the Isma'ilis are, in a sense, higher in excellence than the Prophet because they receive their teachings directly from God Himself. Isma'ilis may be found mainly in East Africa, Yemen, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The Isma'ilis are divided into two groups: the Nizaris and the Musta'lis. The head of the Nizaris is the Aga Khan, believed to be a direct descendant of 'Ali. The Musta'lis live mostly around Bombay, India, and have their own spiritual head.

A number of other sects arose out of the Shi'ite movement: the Nusayris, the Zaidis (Yezidis), and the Druzes. Only the Druzes have any considerable following, mostly in Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, the West Bank, and Syria.

There is also a worldwide, non-Muslim religion that grew out of Shi'ism in Iran in the 19th century. The Baha'i faith was inspired by a Shi'ite Muslim named 'Ali Mohammad; it was later founded by his follower Baha' Allah (Baha'i Faith). In the middle of the 19th century, there emerged in Persia (now Iran) a new religion--the Baha'i faith, which had its roots in Islam. Orthodox members of the Shi`ah sect of Islam believe that the 12th and last imam, or successor of Muhammad, disappeared in the year 878 and will one day reappear to save the world. For a short time after his disappearance there was a succession of people who assumed the title of the Bab (meaning "the gate") and acted as spokesmen for the imam. This tradition was revived in 1844 by a Persian named Mirza 'Ali Mohammad of Shiraz, who proclaimed himself the Bab. 

The total Shi'ite movement comprises probably less than 10 percent of the Islamic world. The greatest concentration is in Iran, where Shi'ah has long been the national religion and where 90 percent of the population is Shi'ite. It is in Iran that the conflict between the Shi'ites and the Sunnites became explosive in the late 20th century. Since the 1979 takeover of the government of Iran by the Islamic fundamentalist leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his followers, other Muslim nations in the Middle East have feared that their governments would be subverted by Shi'ite fundamentalism.

(Tore Kjeilen, < http://i-cias.com/cgi-bin/eo-direct-frame.pl? >
http://www.i-cias.com/e.o/abbasids.htm)

Siyakat: The script known as siyākat was reserved for Treasury documents and title deeds in the Ottoman Empire. It was so extremely difficult to read and write that it could more accurately perhaps be termed a cipher, and was intended as a prevention measure against forgery. It was never employed with artistic intent.

Sunni: Main group in Islam, making up ninety percent of the religion's adherents. Has been dominating almost continuously since 661, when the Shi'is departed from the main fold (the Kharijis left in 658). Sunni Islam claims to be the continuation of the Islam as it was defined through the revelations given to Muhammad and his life, a claim which is substantiated through the fact that Shi'i Islam for a number of decades had very little following and had no real, formal organisation. As for the theology, Sunni Islam represents no more of a continuation of Islam than the other orientations.
Sunni Islam has its name from its identification with the importance of the Sunna (the examples from the hadiths), which earlier than in Shi'i Islam was established as central to the true image of Islam. This was connected to the need of establishing a law, called Shari'a (for which the hadiths served as a central source), as Sunni Islam was the religious orientation of the rulers, while the Shi'is did not establish administrative organisations for yet a long time to come. The actual theological and ritual differences between Sunni and Shi'i Islam, came over a couple of centuries with development. For a long time, Sunni Islam was defined from Shi'i Islam by its adherence to the Caliph as the leader of the Muslim world. There are many smaller and some larger differences between Sunni and the two other orientations, in all aspects of the religion. Sunni and Shi'i Islam share only three core doctrines, oneness of God, the belief in the revelations of Muhammad, and the belief in resurrection on the Day of Judgment. Sunni Islam has a different set of hadiths from Shi'i Islam. In Sunni Islam, there are performed five prayers a day, while Shi'i Islam has only 3. Sunni Islam puts far more importance into the hajj to Mecca, while Shi'i Islam has some other central pilgrimages as well. Sunni Islam revere Ali, but does not hold him up the only true continuation of the tradition from Muhammad, and has no emphasis on him bringing on a divine light from the Prophet.

**Surah:** A chapter of the Qur'an of which there are a hundredfourteen. The names of the surahs frequently derive from some notable word mentioned in them, such as “the Cow”, “the Heights”, “the Emissaries”, etc. Others are named after the mysterious Arabic letters that appear at the head of certain surahs, such as Ya’sin and Ta Ha’.

**Ta'liq:** Ta’lik is the name given to a version of tevki’ originating in fourteenth century Persia, where it was mostly used in official documents. Later on a quite different script named nesh-i ta’lik because it superseded ta’lik emerged, and in time this name became corrupted to the more easily pronounced nes-ta’lik. This script appears in Istanbul in the second half of the fifteenth century under the name ta’lik, having dropped the “nes”, but confusingly has no relation to the original script of that name. This graceful, delicately formed script written without vowel points —which as in the case of Persian were unnecessary in Turkish— had a light and poetical air compared to the heavy, grandiose style of sülüs. The form of Ottoman ta’lik script known as hurde (“small”) or hafif was used for literary works and collections of poetry (divan), and was also the official hand used for writing fetva (opinions on canonical points of law). Celi ta’lik was the most common cell script used on Ottoman monuments after cell sülüs. Regular sized ta’lik written with a 2 mm pen was largely used for writing kit’a.


Plate 143 - “Talik” style (Ahmed Efendi nineteenth century)
**Tanzimat:** Tanzimat reforms 1839-1876 Enlightenment notions of reason, material progress and civilization among the Ottoman bureaucratic elite. Ideas of Mustafa Resid Pasha, Sadik Rifat Pasha and Cevdet Pasha. Islamist reaction against the Tanzimat-elite, introducing the ideals of constitutionalism and popular sovereignty.

**Tasawwuf:** Esoterism, Islamic mysticism, or Sufism. The word apparently originates from suf ("wool"), the preferred fabric, because of its simplicity, for the garments of the early ascetics. It is often noted that through abjad (the science of the relationship between the numeric values of letters and their meaning) tasawwuf corresponds to the value of the words "al-hikmah al-alahiyyah" (Divine Wisdom), (istighna), (Cyrill 398).

**Tezhib:** Illumination art.

**Tugra:** The tugra was the imperial Ottoman cipher or monogram used to authenticate documents of state, used instead of the sultan's signature. The earliest example was the simple tugra of Sultan Orhan Gazi (1334-1362). The monogram consisted of the sultan's name, his patronymic, and the invocation “el muzaffer dâîma” ("Ever victorious"). The principal elements of the tugra consist of the kürsû or sere (the monogram proper), tug (the shafts), zülfe (dependent sweeps from the tug), inner and outer beyza (loops), and hançer or kol (pincer-like projections). In the sixteenth century the tugra was usually illuminated, but although the intricate decoration declined over the centuries, its form reached its aesthetic culmination through the genius of Mustafa Râkim (1121-1241/1757-1826) during the reign of Selim III (1789-1807) and later the artistic power of Sâmi Efendi (1253-1330/1838-1912). Tugras consisting of the names of dervish saints, a verse of the Qur’an, or a hadîs (oral tradition of the Prophet) are also encountered. (Derman, <http://www.sabanci.com.tr/sergi/calig/more/contrib.html> )

**Plate 144 - Rakim's "The tugra of Il. Mahmud"**
(nineteenth century)

**Umar ibn al-Khattab:** Abu Bakr chose Umar as his successor in 634 A.C. As a child, Umar had been well-educated in areas including swordsmanship and the art of speaking. As an adult, he earned his living as a merchant who traveled to distant lands and interacted with an array of different people. His manner was described as self-assertive, frank, and straightforward. He spoke all his mind, regardless of his audiences’ reactions. Umar vehemently disapproved of Islam; he was twenty-seven years old when the Prophet proclaimed his mission. Umar was predictably open about his dislike for Muhammad's ideals. After beating his slave-girl (who'd accepted Islam), he beat his own sister,
Fatima, who had also accepted Islam. It was when Fatima had handed him the Qur'an, that Umar’s heart changed. Instantly moved by the words, he immediately approached the Prophet and vowed allegiance to him.

The definitive accomplishments of Umar’s Caliphate were vast conquests of Islam. Apart from Arabia, Egypt, Iraq -- Palestine and Iran also came under the protection of the Islamic government. Umar’s own style of ruling had been looked upon with greatness. Departments of treasury, army, and public revenues were established. Soldiers received regular salaries and a census was held. He insisted that his governors lead simple lives, be accessible to the people at all times, and Umar himself, set the example. He prayed in the mosque among the people and took nightly strolls on the streets of Medina, ready to lend help or assistance to those who needed it. His aid benefited not only Muslims, but Christians and Jews as well. Some argue Umar was more feared than loved and that instead of helping people, he walked about with a whip waiting for one to break the law. Nevertheless, Umar remained an influential component of Islamic history. Umar died (it is claimed that he was murdered my an angry slave) in the first week of Muharram, 24 A.H. and was buried by the side of the Holy Prophet. (Cultural Academy, <http://hyperion.advanced.org/17137/Library/umar.html>)

The Umayyad Caliphate (661-750): The caliphate of ’Ali was undone by the cry for vengeance that arose over the murder of ‘Uthman. A fellow member of the Umayyad clan, Mu’awiyah, began the agitation against ’Ali; and he was joined by a group of extremists, formerly ’Ali supporters, called Kharijites, or Seceders. The members of this sect denied the inherent right of the Quraysh tribe to hold the caliphate, believing that the office should be the reward of piety, not birth. It was a member of this sect that killed ’Ali; but by the time of his death his prestige had declined markedly, while Mu’awiyah had built up a strong military force. In 661 Mu’awiyah was generally recognized as caliph, the first of the Umayyad line. Mu’awiyah selected his son, Yazid I (680-685), to succeed him.

Plate 145 - The map of Umayyad Caliphate

The nearly 100 years of Umayyad rule was divided between two branches of the family, the Sufyanid, which reigned from 661 to 684; and the Marwanid, which reigned until 750, the end of the Umayyad caliphate. The Umayyad headquarters were in Damascus, Syria, and the Syrian army became its military support. This support enabled the Umayyads to continue expanding the empire, while simultaneously controlling Arab factions. The decline of Umayyad power began in 717, when its armies suffered a serious defeat by the Byzantine emperor Leo III. The dynasty was further weakened by financial troubles; the vast expenditures of the caliphs were not being readily replaced through
taxation. Another difficulty was the matter of ruling so large an empire from one capital so far removed from the frontiers. Local centers of power appeared, spurred by tribal rivalries and a general hostility to the caliphate from the various sects.

During the reigns of the last three Umayyads, most of the agitation against them was being coordinated by a clan descended from an uncle of Muhammad, al-`Abbas. Through a well-organized network of secret agents, they succeeded in capitalizing on all the resentments against the Umayyads. In the years 745 to 747, revolts broke out in Syria, Iraq, and Khorasan. By 749 the rebels were strong enough to proclaim Abu al-`Abbas as-Saffah to be caliph. The last Umayyad, Marwan II, was defeated in battle in 750; and he fled to Egypt, where he was killed. The remaining members of the Umayyad clan were hunted down and were killed. One, however, escaped: `Abd ar-Rahman made his way to Spain and, with the help of Umayyad supporters, established the Umayyad dynasty of Córdoba in rivalry to the `Abbasids. This Spanish dynasty lasted until 1031. It was eventually replaced by another Muslim dynasty, which was known as the Almoravids.

\textbf{Uthman ibn `Affan}: Umar had appointed a committee of six, all companions of the Prophet before his death to choose the next caliph. After two days of discussion among the group, after considering the opinions of the Muslims of Medina, all swore allegiance to Uthman – the third Caliph of Islam. Uthman bin Affan was born seven years after the Holy Prophet, and learned to read and write at a fairly early age. Like the two caliphs before him, Uthman earned his living as a merchant. He had been a close friend of Abu Bakr, had his share of integrity and truthfulness, and it was Abu Bakr, who brought him to Islam. Although a man of a wealthy past, Uthman was subjected to ridicule and disapproval because of his new-found faith. He was forced to leave Mecca for Abyssinia. Some time later he returned to Mecca in time to accompany the Muslims on their journey to Medina. It was in Medina that he regained his wealth and as the name Ghani – or generous – suggests, he gave great portions of his riches to charities and the Muslim army.

Under Uthman's Caliphate, the values of impartial justice for all, mild and humane policies, striving in the path of God, and the expansion of Islam, continued. The Islam Empire extended in the west to Morocco, in the east to Afghanistan, and in the north to Armenia and Azerbaijan. A navy was organized, administrative divisions were revised, and many public projects were expanded and completed. Although the first six years passed peacefully, but the second half of Uthman's caliphate was marked with discontent. He was accused of nepotism, favoritism, misadministration, and religious innovation -- a rebellion arose. The rebels demanded his abdication and surrounded his house. Uthman died on 17 Dhul Hijia, 35 A.H. (June 656 A.C.) He was eighty-four years old.

(Cultural Academy, <http://hyperion.advanced.org/17137/Library/uthman.html>)

\textbf{al-Musta' imi, Yaqut}: The third figure in the assembly of 'calligraphy virtue' was the thirteenth century scribe Yaqut al-Musta' imi who adhered to the geometric principles of Ibn Muqlah and to the strivings of Ibn al-Bawwab for aesthetic grace. Yaqut al-Musta' imi's achievements have been described succinctly by the sixteenth century Iranian chronicler Qadi Ahmad: "In the art of writing he
followed the tradition of Ibn Bawwab, but in the trimming of the qalam and in the clipping of its nib he altered the manner of the earlier masters...". The cynosure of calligraphers (Yaqut) cut the end of the qalam (the tip of the pen). Thus he altered both the rule and the writing, because writings subordinate to the qalam. For this reason his writing is preferred to that of Ibn Bawwab for its fineness and elegance, and not for the sake of the basic rules; for the essence of writing, it is the same as invented by Ibn Muqlah from the circle and the dot...

Yaqut's innovation was to cut the qalam's nib at an angle, thus enabling him to achieve greater fineness, thinness and linear variability. Often called the sultan of calligraphers, he and his writing have remained quite essential models until modern times.

Yaqut is reputed to have been a very strict tutor, requiring his students to practice long hours. He himself practiced every single day by copying sections from the Qur'an, a routine which he apparently refused to break even when Baghdad was being sacked by Mongol armies in 1258. While the city was still burning, he took refuge in a minaret and, with pen and ink in hand, he practiced writing on a piece of linen. This delightful anecdote, which may well be true, is illustrated in miniature-paintings that depict Yaqut writing at the top of a minaret. Yaqut lived a long life and was a most prolific calligrapher. But his genuine work is extremely rare and is among the most valuable Islamic treasures in existence.

**Zamzam:** The Zamzam is also called the well of Ismail. The well is 35 metres deep, and is marked by an elegant dome. Water is health-giving, and collected on bottles and brought home by the hajjiyyys. One of the last things a hajjiyy tries to do, is to dip the clothes in which he or her is to be buried one day, in the Zamzam. Muslim tradition tells that the Zamzam was opened by the angel Jibril, to save Hagar and her son Ismail from dying of Ismail, when they were out in the desert. From the sources available, the Zamzam appears to have been revered since long before Muhammad.
SOURCE OF LIST
## SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plate</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Turkish Ministry of Culture hand book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,4</td>
<td>Miniature, Istanbul University Library, Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Photograph, Uskudar, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,26,94,95</td>
<td>Emin Barin's, private collection, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,7</td>
<td>Photograph, Mewlewi place, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,9,</td>
<td>Private collection, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Illustrations, Marmara University, Fine Art Faculty Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,11</td>
<td><a href="http://www.imultimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/a3">http://www.imultimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/a3</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12,13,16,</td>
<td>Sakkal Mamoun,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28,33,49</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html">http://www.sakkal.com/ArtArabicCalligraphy.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Palestine 685-705 A.D. The Lourve Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Dalil al Kyahrat, Library and Archives of Rabat: 356 J.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17,18</td>
<td>British Museum, London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19,39,46</td>
<td>Istanbul Museum of Islamic Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>St Louis Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The Walters Art Gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Cincinnati Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ghaznah, Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Private collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Fogg Art Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td><a href="http://www.geocities.com/Holywood/3122/bism.gif">http://www.geocities.com/Holywood/3122/bism.gif</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,32</td>
<td><a href="http://www.multimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/html">http://www.multimedia.pt/museuvirtpress/ing/alfa/html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Private collection, Casablanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36,37,38,43,47</td>
<td>Private collections, Istanbul</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
40,39  Topkapı Museum, Istanbul
41,45,50,54,96  Sabanci Collection
129,130
44  St. Sophia, Istanbul
52,53,55,57,58  Private collection, Istanbul
Ministry of Culture collection, Turkey
60,61,62,63,65,66, Antonio, and Ivana, Tubaro, eds. Lettering. New York:
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77,78  Private collection in USA
79,87,88  Mamoun Sakkal collection, in USA Washington
80,81,92  Private collection in Turkey Istanbul
102, 100, 105,106, Enis Tan’s collection
103,104, 108,109,110
96,101, 91,93,97  Halis Bicer’ collection, Istanbul
98,112,113,114  Emin Barin’s, private collection, Istanbul
115,116
111,107  The University of Wollongong collection, Australia
115,116, Private collection
121,122,142,144
117,118,119  Private collection, Europe
123  Uğur Derman private Collection
120,122,124  The Museum of Turk – Islam Arts
126,130,132  M. Bedreddin Yazır’s collection
133,134,136,138  Sabanci collection, Istanbul
139,140,144


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