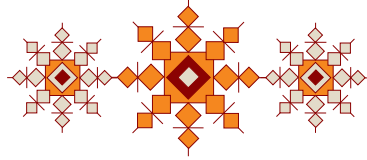
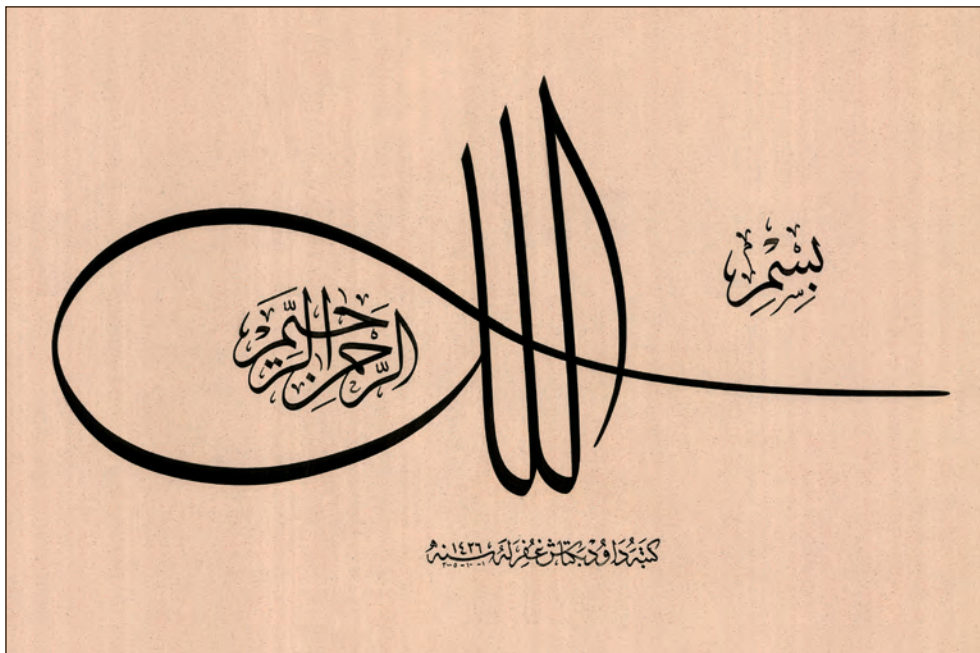


FROM ISTANBUL TO TIMBUKTU — ink routes



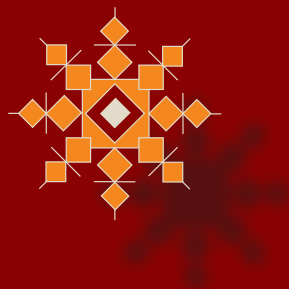
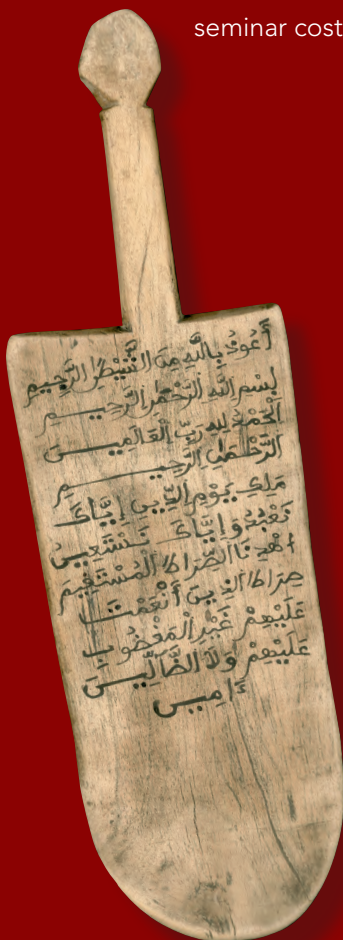
FROM ISTANBUL TO TIMBUKTU — ink routes



Prepared by the Tombouctou Manuscripts Project



The organisers would like to thank the following contributors, without whom this exhibition would not have been possible: In first place, all the calligraphers who kindly agreed to send their precious pieces to the southern tip of Africa. Secondly, the tireless curators of the exhibition, Nuria Garcia Masip and Deniz Öktem Bektaş, who with incredible persistence and dedication, managed to co-ordinate the exhibition and catalogue from another continent. The Gold of Africa Museum and its curator, Christopher Till, who graciously agreed to host the exhibition. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the support of the Department of Education and the National Research Foundation, especially for funding towards research and seminar costs.



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HOST Gold of Africa Museum

DESIGN, LAYOUT, REPRODUCTION AND FINE ART PRINTING Scan Shop

preface

Since 2002, when the idea of the formation of the Tombouctou Manuscripts Project first emerged, we have been involved with various aspects of the study of the rich manuscript tradition in the historic city of Timbuktu, Mali. This city was a great centre of learning and was famous in West Africa and far beyond over a period of more than three hundred years, from the 15th to the 19th centuries. Local scholars and their students recorded their scholarship – original works and copies – in manuscripts, i.e. handwritten texts. Our project has been very much concerned with the diverse content of the manuscripts, the circulation of scholars and ideas, the economy of the manuscript book, and other aspects of the ‘work of scholarship’ in Timbuktu. We have collected digital samples of diverse handwriting styles and marvelled at these unique calligraphies. However, we have not yet fully addressed the question of calligraphy, although we have been aware that the styles of handwriting in the Timbuktu libraries are unique West African expressions of the Islamic calligraphic tradition. The seminar, workshops, and exhibition this catalogue accompanies, are part of our ongoing attempts to look at the Timbuktu written tradition; now it is literally the writing that we address.

Timbuktu became famous for its scholars and the range of handwritten works that circulated and were collected by individual scholars and collectors. By the time the printing press reached West Africa, the glorious days of Timbuktu’s intellectual life had already faded. Even when modern printing arrived in and around Timbuktu, the art of calligraphy remained the preferred mode for the transmission of ideas of the leading Islamic scholars. Ink, reed pens, leaves of paper and the craft of using the hand to convey what was in the brain and heart have therefore been the core means of literary expression in Timbuktu. In our attempt to bring to light the legacy of the manuscripts to both an academic and a wider audience, we organised an international conference in 2005, which resulted in the publication of *The Meanings of Timbuktu* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008). We also collaborated with the Iziko Museums of Cape Town exhibition “Script & Scholarship” of a selection of Timbuktu manuscripts held at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town in 2008, and the publication of its catalogue.

The aesthetic dimension of the West African manuscript tradition is a most understudied field. West African calligraphy is of course intimately linked to the larger Islamic calligraphic traditions. We cannot look at the African traditions of calligraphy without placing them in the larger frame of Islamic calligraphy that encompasses the West as much as the East, Africa as much as Asia. These calligraphic traditions are still

alive today in various centres of Africa and the Middle East – in Fez and Damascus, in Kano and Cairo, in Timbuktu and Tehran. Istanbul was in many ways a crossroads where East and West, Africa, Europe and Asia came together in the Ottoman Empire (1298 – 1923). Despite the downgrading of importance given to calligraphy due to the impact of the printing press, industrialisation, and modernity that stresses speed and quantity, the contemplative style and fine craft of Islamic calligraphy still thrives in various parts of Africa and the Middle East; and Istanbul is one such location where the grand tradition of beautiful writing still has its respected teachers and schools.

The current exhibition is a modest attempt to place West African manuscripts in the broader Islamic calligraphic tradition which remains alive in West Africa today through the ‘profession’ of the established ‘copyist’ of manuscripts. As exemplified in the exhibition, in countries such as Mali and Nigeria, handwritten copies of the Qur’an continue to be highly prized possessions, and the copying of medieval and modern manuscripts continues to this day. In the countries of the Middle East, the calligraphic tradition has developed more into a distinctive art form of its own, with emphasis both on the transmission of the grand tradition and on innovation. Calligraphers have become more like contemporary artists, exhibiting their pieces in international galleries, participating in international calligraphy exhibitions and competitions and selling their works to private collectors. This ‘modernisation’ of the calligraphic art has not affected the West African calligraphers to the same extent.

The first article is by Nuria G. Masip, the co-curator of the exhibition, who is also a certified and practicing calligrapher; she presents a summary of the development of the classical Islamic calligraphic scripts, with a greater emphasis on the more widespread and developed Eastern scripts. The second piece by University of Cape Town academic Andrea Brigaglia, offers a more historical look at the transformation of the Nigerian calligraphic tradition in recent times. Through the life of Sharif Bala Gabari of Kano we can glimpse a growing link between the West African scribal tradition and the more contemporary calligraphic art, as practiced in other countries in the Middle East.

In addition to introducing this fascinating art form to the South African public, the aim of this exhibition, the workshops and academic seminar that accompany it, is also to create a bridge among calligraphers of different continents and traditions. In particular, we want to highlight the place of West African calligraphy in the greater Islamic calligraphic tradition, bringing together East and West in a diversely beautiful whole.



Malian calligrapher Boubacar Sadeck



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Master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi working at his desk



ink routes

The field of Islamic Calligraphy is a subject as fascinating as it is vast. Our aim here is to offer a glimpse into the origins of this art, in order to provide a context for the different styles of calligraphy displayed in this exhibition.

The art of beautiful writing grew out of the necessity in early Islamic times to record the Divine Word and thus ensure its preservation. What had been a rudimentary script before the arrival of Islam suddenly developed, in a very short space of time, into a proportioned and highly refined calligraphy, that would occupy the pinnacle in the hierarchy of the Islamic arts.

The Arabic alphabet was also adopted by most of the peoples who entered into the fold of Islam in order to write Persian, Urdu, Ottoman Turkish or various African languages. Some of the scripts are especially well suited for these languages, and different styles thrived due to the richness of the different cultures with which Islam integrated. The term Islamic Calligraphy is thus used to encompass all the calligraphic styles that emerged across the Islamic world, from the deserts of western Africa, to the steppes of Central Asia and beyond.

The earliest form of a discernable style in Arabic writing was *ma'qili*, a script that consisted entirely of straight lines. It is from this style that *kufi* developed, allegedly thanks to 'Ali ibn Abu Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of

the Prophet Muhammad and fourth Caliph. He is considered to be the first master calligrapher and thus the source of the calligraphic chain of transmission, or *silsila*, which continues to this day.

Kufi (usually denoted as Kufic in English) received its name from the town of Kufa, in the south of present day Iraq, where it was most widely used. All the early copies of the Qur'an were written in variations of this script, mostly on vellum in horizontal format. In time, two main forms emerged: the Eastern *kufi*, with diagonal lines predominant, written on paper, and Western *kufi*, which took a more rounded form and eventually evolved into what is commonly known as the *maghrebi* script.

The large type of *kufi*, known as *iri kufi*,¹ was widely used for architectural purposes across the Islamic world, and new modalities developed, depending on the material used (stucco, bricks, or tiles) to decorate the facades and the interiors of

mosques, palaces and public fountains. Some of the most stunning geometric compositions in this style can be found in the blue tiled facades of the mosques in present day Iran and Samarkand.



Above 'Poem to the Prophet' in *kufi* script by Salah Abdel Khalaq



Left 'Salatu'l Fatihi' in *sudani* script by Boubacar Sadeck

eastern scripts ♦♦♦

Parallel to the development of the *kufic* scripts, the cursive hand, which had been used as a kind of shorthand for quick transactions, started to develop into more elegant calligraphic styles due to the needs of the chancellery in the eastern parts of the Islamic world. Already under the Umayyad caliphate (661-750), different cursive scripts were used, and, with them, a whole new calligraphic vocabulary arose to designate the different pen widths, tools and types of writing. The script most favoured during this period was *tawqi*, which could be written in different sizes according to the document. Documents were written on paper of different colours and different pigments were used for the inks.²

During the Abbasid caliphate (750-1258), the cursive script improved significantly. Ibn Muqla, a 10th century vizier and outstanding master calligrapher, created a system of proportions amongst the letters by measuring the letters with the rhomboid dots produced by the nib of the *qalam* (reed pen). He also showed the relationship of the letters in relation to the circle, which further served to develop the internal geometry of the script and create a general harmony amongst the letters.

Amongst the students of Ibn Muqla was the renowned Ibn Bawwab, who added more elegance to the scripts and is celebrated for the Qur'an he wrote in the year 1000.³ The school of Ibn Bawwab was continued in Baghdad to the last of the great medieval calligraphers, Yaqut Al-Musta'simi (d.1298), who introduced cutting the nib of the pen at an angle, and further developed what came to be

known as the six styles of calligraphy, or the *aqlam al-sitta*, namely: *thuluth* and *naskh*, *muhaqqaq* and *rihani*, *tawqi* and *riqa'*.

The *thuluth* script, known as "the mother of calligraphy,"⁴ is characterised by its rounded and soft letters. This script lends itself to great flexibility in the compositions of the letters, and in its *jali* (or "big") form it is the ideal style for epigraphy. Soon it started to be combined with *kufi* in architectural inscriptions, and artisans used it on many different materials, such as golden and silver vessels, leather belts, tiles, glass lamps, porcelain, as well as fabrics.



Thuluth is often used in combination with the *naskh* script, and, although the latter differs greatly in form, it is written with a pen one third the width of *thuluth*. There is no room for complex compositions in this script, since the letters must be arranged in a line. Due to its small size, *naskh* was used widely by copyists to write longer texts, such as Qur'ans and longer anthologies. The foundation for this style was laid by Shaykh Hamdullah (d. 1517) and perfected by Hafiz Osman (d. 1698) during the Ottoman period, and hence the popular Turkish saying that "The Qur'an was revealed in Mecca, was [best] recited in Egypt, and was written in Istanbul."

Below 'Ahlu'l Bait' in *jali thuluth* script by Davut Bektaş



In fact, some of the most outstanding examples of these two scripts are found in the work of Şevki Efendi (d. 1887), whose lines of *thuluth* and *naskh* constitute the model for calligraphy students even to this day. For the *jali* forms of *thuluth*, the great calligraphers of the 18th and 19th centuries such as Mustafa Rakim (d.1826), Kazasker Mustafa Izzet (d.1876) and Sami Efendi (d.1912), amongst others, have become the paragons of this style.

The other two scripts usually written together are *muhaqqaq* and *rihani*. Although today these scripts are not as widely written, all through the Middle Ages and up to the 16th century they were widely used to make copies of the Qur'an (*muhaqqaq* for large-scale *mushafs* (the Qur'an in book form) and *rihani* for smaller pieces). Unlike *thuluth* and *naskh*, these two scripts closely resemble each other. Their mutual characteristic is that the *alifs* (the first letter of the Arabic alphabet) are quite high and the letters have flat endings terminating in points.



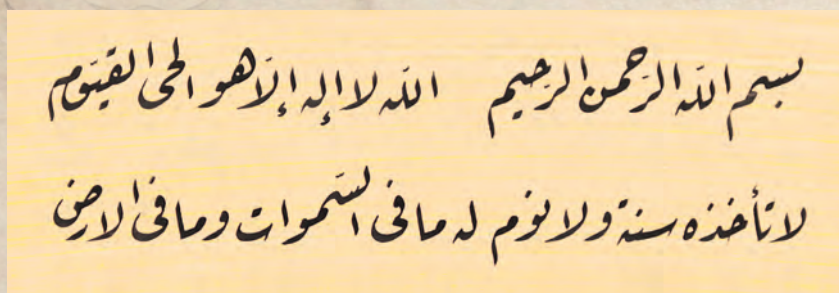
As mentioned earlier, *tawqi* and *riqa'* developed in response to the needs of the chancellery, and later continued to be used mainly for official purposes. During Ottoman times, *riqa'* developed into the *ijaza* script with which master calligraphers would write the diplomas for their students.



Above 'Kelam-i Kibar' in *tawqi* and *riqa'* scripts by Nurullah Özdem

Left 'Read' in *muhaqqaq* and *rihani* scripts by Nurullah Özdem

Right Extract from 'Ayat of the Throne'
in *riq'a* script by Efdaluddin Kiliç

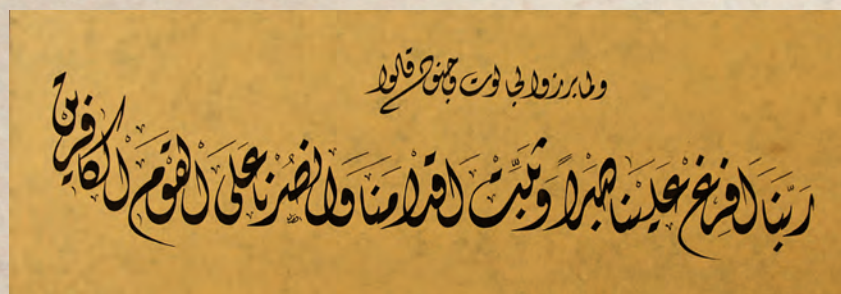


The other important script that developed under the influence of the Ottoman Imperial council was *diwani*. This script was restricted to the use of official documents. The *fermans*, or edicts of the Sultan, were commonly headed by the *tuğra* (the monogram of the Sultan's signature) and followed by lines of unvocalised *diwani*, often written in different coloured inks, as well as crushed gold.

□ write everyday Ottoman Turkish. It is characterised by the lack of vowels, and short straight shapes, which make it easy and quick to write.⁵

Both the *tuğra* monogram and the *diwani* and *jali diwani* scripts were soon adopted by calligraphers to write other pieces as well, such as *suras* (chapters) from the Qur'an or poems. *Jali diwani*, especially, is still widely used today for artistic compositions on calligraphic panels.

And we come now to the "hanging style" as developed in the Persian world and widely used in present day Pakistan and India to write Persian and Urdu. The so-called *ta'liq* script, a version of *tawqi*, was used for chancellery purposes in Persia from the 14th century onwards.⁶ Even after



The *jali* version of *diwani*, (which in this context does not mean "big" but rather "clear") combined the letters into a tight-knit line where the vowels and reading signs were included, and the sentence slanted upwards towards the left. These characteristics prevented any forgeries or changes in the sentences from taking place. Another script in this family is the *riq'a* script (not to be confused with the old *riqa* script), which became the shorthand to

□ Mir Ali of Tabriz (d.1446) had regulated the style (in a similar fashion to Ibn Muqla) by shaping and measuring the letters, it continued to be used mainly for official documents. It was *nasta'liq*, the script that evolved from *ta'liq* in the Persian world, which soon became the preferred script for writing anthologies of poetry, and in the 16th century some copies of the Qur'an were written in this style.



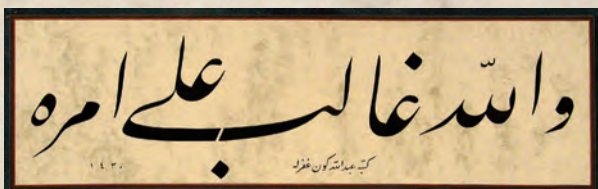
Middle 'Patience in Adversity' in *diwani* script by Efdaluddin Kiliç

Bottom Extract from 'Hilye' in *jali diwani* script by Turan Sevgili

Below Extract from 'Nun' in *ta'liq* script
by Abdullah Gün



The *nasta'liq* style was also taken up by the Ottoman Turks, for whom it became simply known as *ta'liq*, and acquired an aesthetic of its own. The *jali* form of the *ta'liq* script, as perfected by the Turks, is considered by many to be superior even to the Persian examples. Also known as the "naked script," there are no vowel marks or decorative features, which make it very delicate and light, and particularly well suited for poetry.



Above *Tuğra* taken from 'Hilye' in *jali diwani* script by Turan Sevgili

Above left 'God Always Prevails' in *jali ta'liq* script by Abdullah Gün

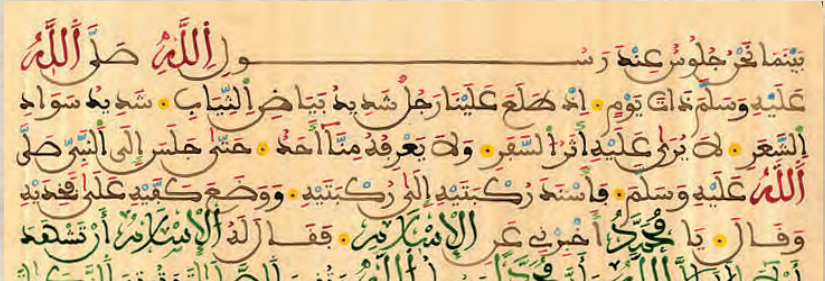
western scripts ♦ ♦ ♦

While the eastern scripts developed into a variety of styles with extensive representation in texts and architecture, in the far western part of the Muslim World, the *Maghreb* and West Africa, cursive writing evolved quite differently. While the scripts developed by Ibn Muqla were also used by calligraphers (who brought them back from travels to the *Mashreq*, the Eastern Islamic lands), the *maghrebi* script remained the staple script for Qur'ans and everyday writing. The main characteristic of this script is that the letter *fa* has the dot underneath (as opposed to one dot on top as in the eastern scripts), and *qaf* has only one dot (instead of two). There was no system of proportions amongst the letters, so the style varies greatly amongst calligraphers. It was often written on vellum as well as paper, and the use of coloured inks for different words and vowel signs makes it very attractive.

In West Africa, *maghrebi* is characterised by heavier letters, often more tight-knit. Several different variations of this script developed throughout the region, and some, such as *sudani*, *hausawi*, *sahrawi* or *suqi*, are still in use to this day, especially since North and West Africans are more accustomed to reading their own scripts than the eastern scripts. For this reason, the tradition of copyists is still very much alive, especially in Northern Nigeria where it is common to have handwritten Qur'ans.

Top Extract from 'Hadith of Gabriel' in *maghrebi* script by Hamidi Belaid

Bottom 'Ahmed Baba's Poem' in *sudani* script by Boubacar Sadeck



We have provided here a glimpse into the origins of Islamic Calligraphy and the development of different scripts and styles, as background to the exhibition.

While the diversity of the styles is impressive in itself, it is important to remember that all the scripts arose from the need to express, in the most noble and beautiful way, the Divine Word. It is the reverence for this sacred art which has guided calligraphers throughout the centuries to continue to perfect and cherish their profession. The *silsila*, or chain of transmission from master to disciple, which continues unbroken in many parts of the Muslim world, has ensured the survival of the traditional methods of calligraphy and materials to this day.

The pieces in this exhibition, which proceed from three different generations of master calligraphers, testify to the enduring strength, beauty and diversity of traditional Islamic Calligraphy.

¹ Uğur Derman, *Letters in Gold* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), p. 6.

² Annemarie Schimmel, *The Art of Islamic Calligraphy* (London: Tauris & Co Ltd, 1995), p. 13.

³ Annemarie Schimmel, *The Art of Islamic Calligraphy* (London: Tauris & Co Ltd, 1995), p. 19.

⁴ Uğur Derman, *Letters in Gold* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1998), p. 15.

⁵ Ali Alparslan & Osmanlı Hat Sanatı Tarihi (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999), p. 198.

⁶ Uğur Derman, *Letters in Gold* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1998), p. 17.

SHARIF BALA GABARI OF KANO

FROM SCRIBE TO CALLIGRAPHER¹

Born in the late 1930s “Mahiru” (the “skilled one”) Sharif Bala Gabari (also known as Sharif Bala Zaytawa), can be considered today as the living legend of the Islamic calligraphic tradition of Kano, the pulsating commercial heart and vibrant centre of Islamic scholarship in twentieth century northern Nigeria.

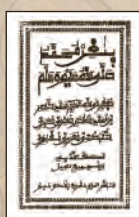


for exportation; 3) the relatively late – in comparison with other Muslim countries – establishment of a local printing industry.

When printed Arabic books started to circulate in northern Nigeria, the growing public of northern Nigerian readers who were able to buy books were still accustomed to the variant of the *maghrebi*

The career of Sharif Bala developed during years of profound transformation of the book market in Kano, marked by the conjuncture of three interconnected factors: 1) the phenomenon of religious revival and increased Arabic literacy, inspired by two dynamic Sufi brotherhoods (Tijāniyya Nyāssiyya and Qādiriyya Nāsiriyya) whose scholars engaged in extensive poetry writing; 2) the integration of Kano – formerly a prominent southern terminal of the trans-Saharan trade routes to Libya – in the new, South-oriented, economy of Nigeria, wherein Kano became the commercial centre where the agricultural produce of the North (groundnuts and cotton) was gathered before being transferred to the southern seaports

script used in local *qur’ānic* schools, and were not familiar with, or did not appreciate, the Eastern script available through the imported printing facilities. Thus, it became necessary for the local scholars engaged in the Nigerian Sufi revival of the 1950s, who wanted to market their writings among a wider audience, to hire a scribe who would write a sample in the local script, and then rely on one of the newly established local printing companies (Oluseyi Press; Northern Maktabat Printing Press) to produce lithographed or photocopied editions that would be marketed through the scholarly networks of Northern Nigerian *zāwiyas* (religious centres linked to a particular Sufi order).



Above Sharif Bala Gabari
(photography courtesy of Maimadu Barma Mutai)

Below Examples of calligraphy by Sharif Bala Gabari in *hausawi* script. This selection includes Hausa poetry of Shaykh Nasiru Kabara, suras from the Qur’an and Tijani poetry

¹ I am grateful to Maimadu Mutai for sharing information and comments

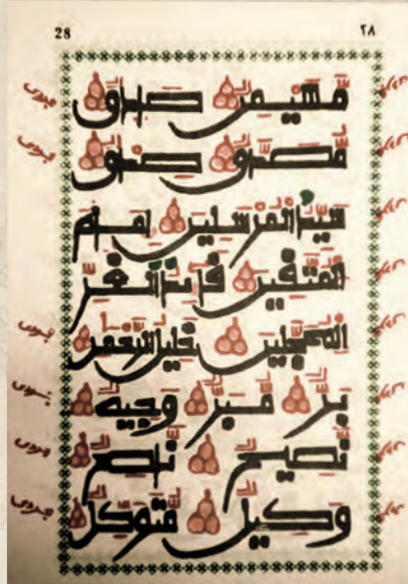


Above A printed edition of the *Kitab al-shifa* from a manuscript copy written by Sharif Bala Gabari in *hausawi* script.

Sharif Bala wrote down his first complete copy of the Qurʾān at the age of 20, and was noticed for the clarity of his script by some of the then emerging Sufi scholars and religious poets of Kano city, who started hiring him to write sample copies of their writings – especially poetry, both in Arabic and in Hausa *ajami* (Hausa in Arabic script). Although he wrote a number of poems for some prominent Tijāni scholars of Kano, his main patron would soon become Mālam Nāsiru Kabara (d. 1996), prolific writer and leader of the local Qādiriyya, whom Sharif Bala considers his religious mentor.

With rare exceptions, Sharif Bala consistently wrote in the Nigerian variant of the *maghrebi* script. Transmitted through the Middle Ages to Bornu and Kano, the typical Nigerian hand shares most of the basic features of the other *maghrebi* scripts (andalusian, *fāṣī*, *saharāwī*, etc.), like the one-dot *qāf*, under-dotted *fāʾ*, un-dotted final *nūn*, etc., but displays, in its most decorative variants used for poetry, Qurʾāns and prayer-books, a characteristic boldness that is reminiscent of the most archaic forms of Kufic. When interrogated on what styles he uses more often, Sharif Bala proudly emphasises that the Nigerian hand he is using is indeed the modern heir of Kufic.

As a general rule, thinner and slightly more cursive styles tend to be appreciated for prose works, for they economise the space of a page. Bold, thicker hands of a monumental aspect, instead, tend to be used for writings that are more suitable to ritual recitation, like the Qurʾān, the *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt*, along with highly cherished, almost iconised works of poetry such as the *Burda* of Imām al-Būsirī, the *Dīwān* of Shaykh Ibrāhīm Nyass, or the Hausa and Arabic poems of Mālam Nāsiru Kabara. Over the years, Sharif Bala has started to maximise the boldness and angularity of his style in order to improve its decorative appeal, while at the same time trying to standardise the dimension of letters. The latter concern can be seen as a distinctively modern one (traditional Bornu hands, on the contrary, deliberately avoid regularity), that makes his script somewhat similar to a sort of hand-made proxy of a printed Nigerian Kufic hand. Thanks to the regularity of his script, a new *hizb* (one sixtieth) division of the Qurʾān always starts at the beginning of a new page. This allows readers to easily divide the Qurʾān (whose sheets, according to the local use, are always left loose) into separate sixtieths for congregational reading in mosques, an additional factor that makes Sharif Bala's copies of the Qurʾān especially appreciated.

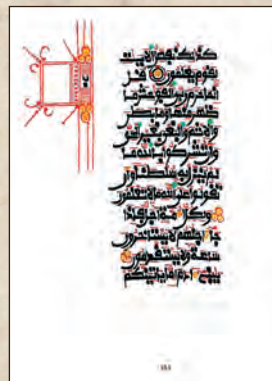


In the late 1970s, realising that the Nigerian book market, thanks to the introduction of printing facilities, was rapidly expanding beyond its traditional borders, and unhappy with some of his patrons who, while his photocopied handwritten books were circulating throughout Nigeria, still used to pay him the traditional wage of an ordinary copyist for a single work, Sharif Bala decided to emancipate himself from the role of a traditional local scribe, reliant on the occasional commissioning of individual works and unable to establish himself as a professional. With the help of Mālam Nāsiru Kabara and a successful link he was able to establish with printers in Lebanon, he started to concentrate on the production of remarkably decorative copies of the most widely appreciated books by Nigerian Muslims (Qur'ān, *Dalā'il*, *Shifā'*, *Jalālayn*). Consistent with the Nigerian tradition, his copies of the Qur'ān always feature, along with the black ink used for the consonantic body of the text, also red vowels, yellow *hamza*, green *wasla*, and elaborate decorations at each *rub'* (a quarter of the Qur'ān) divisions. His works are then sent to the prestigious printing press *Dār al-Fikr* in Beirut, Lebanon, to be lithographed – often in colour – and bonded in hardcover. They are then marketed in Nigeria as prestigious, luxury editions. In such a way Sharif Bala, and along with him – although probably less successfully – a few

others among the last generation of professional copyists/scribes of northern Nigeria, established themselves as artist calligraphers and survived the changes of the local scribal tradition which, after the boom of locally handwritten, lithographed and marketed books

from the 1950s to the 1980s, had started to decline following the spread of literacy in Eastern *naskh* script among the younger Nigerian public, promoted by the mushrooming modern Islamic schools. One of the last traditional copyists of Kano, Sharif Bala has successfully established himself also as one of the first modern calligraphers of Nigeria, and contributed immeasurably to the transmission of a local legacy of Arabic script which dates back to the very earliest Kufic script.

To date, “Mahiru” Sharif Bala has written fifty-one manuscript copies of the Qur'ān, six of which have been printed (one, today very rare, in the Tunisian *maghrebi* style). He has also written several dozen copies of the *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*, the *Kitāb al-Shifā'* of Qādī 'Iyād, etc. He runs a traditional *qur'ānic* school in Kano city that has formed hundreds of young *huffāz* (memorisers of the entire Qur'ān by heart), and has transmitted his calligraphic skills to a smaller circle of committed disciples. He has also established a small independent printing press in Kano. Sharif Bala thus brings together the calligraphy ethos and the modern printing press with great skill and elegance.



Top A printed edition of the *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt* from a manuscript copy written by Sharif Bala Gabari in *hausawi* script

Left and right From a handwritten copy of the Qur'ān by Malam Rabiū Dantinki of Kano in *hausawi* script



calligraphy materials



pens ♦♦♦

The most common calligraphy pen is made out of aged reed or bamboo. For most of the eastern scripts, the nib is cut at an angle and slit down the middle to ease the flow of ink. The width of the nib and the angle varies depending on the script, the inclination of the writing surface, and the size of the letters. For bigger (*jali*) scripts, pens are carved out of wood. For smaller scripts, a java pen, coming from the leaves of a tropical tree, is used because of its hardness. In the western cursive styles, such as the *maghrebi* and the *sudani* scripts, the nib of the pen is rounded, and generally the pens are cut from a cane split down the middle.



writing surfaces ♦♦♦

Most pieces today are written on different types of high quality paper. This paper is previously treated to ensure durability and the proper gliding of the pen on its surface. If the paper is white, it is first dyed with tea, onion skins or other natural substances to create the desired shade. It is then coated with one layer of wheat starch and three layers of *ahar*, a mixture of egg-whites and alum. Once the papers are dry they are thoroughly burnished with an agate stone. They are then put aside for at least year before they can be used. Thinner papers, such as handmade Indian paper, are previously stretched on wooden boards and then coated. In West Africa, different types of vellum are still used, such as lamb or mutton skins.

ink ♦♦♦

Most of the western scripts, such as *sudani* and *maghrebi*, were often written in brown ink. However the principal ink used for the eastern scripts is lampblack, the soot produced by burning linseed oil and kerosene. Originally this soot was collected from the mosque lamps, which had the added blessings of the prayers. This was then thoroughly crushed and mixed with gum arabic to fix it to the paper. Coloured inks such as arsenic yellow, lead white, cochineal red or gold, were also traditionally used, usually against darker backgrounds.



illumination ♦♦♦

Many pieces of calligraphy are illuminated, or decorated, with beautiful motifs. Indeed illumination is a separate art form in itself. While there are some exceptional calligraphers who illuminate their own pieces, usually the piece is worked on by a separate master illuminator, or *muzehip*.

Before being illuminated, the piece is wet-laminated onto a *murakka*, a hand-made backing stretched onto a wooden board to keep it flat. This will ensure the durability of the piece and ease the process of illumination. Different coloured paper is then applied around the edges, the borders are outlined, and the chosen motifs are carefully painted using gouache paints and different shades of gold.

The crushed gold leaf used in the pieces has been finely ground by hand with a solution of gum arabic. This mixture is then strained and filtered until only pure gold dust remains. Different alloys of gold leaf produce different shades: 17K green gold, 21K yellow gold, 23K red gold and 12K white gold. The gold is applied with a brush and burnished with an agate stone.

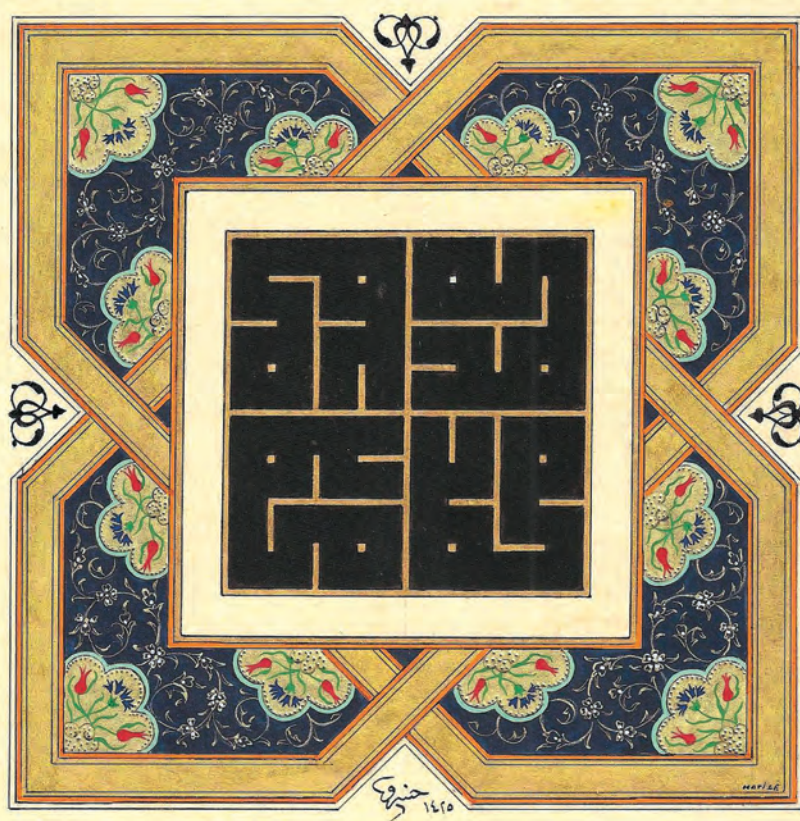




caLLigraphic pieces







اعْتَدِ فَضْلُكَ بِحُجَّتِي وَكَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَيْهِ

فَالْبُؤْعُ كَرِهَتْ دَخَلَ عَبْدًا عَلَيْنَ جَمَادِ
الزَّيْنِ يَوْمَ عَمَلِكَ التَّوَكَّلَ فَقَالَ التَّوَكَّلَ كُنَّا
مِنْهَا لَكَ لِمَعْرُوفٍ فَنَدَا فَعَيَّ الْأَيَّامُ

سَوِيَّةٌ لِلَّهِ فِي
فَلَمْ تَخْشَ أَنْ تَكُنْ
الْمُتَّقِينَ

فِي الْمَقَامِ

کتابتہ نور اللہ اور خدیغہ غفرلہ ۱۴۲۰

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

الصَّمدُ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

بَشِّرْ بِاللهِ الْخَيْرِ الرَّحِيمِ

عَنْ أَبِي مُوسَى الْأَشْعَرِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ * عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ * قَالَ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ صَدَقَةٌ * قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ * قَالَ يَعْمَلْ

وَتَعَبًا وَنُوعًا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

بِيَدَيْهِ فَيَنْفَعُ نَفْسَهُ وَيَصَدَّقَ * قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ * قَالَ يُعِينُ ذَا الْحَاجَةِ الْمَلْهُوفَ * قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ * قَالَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

وَلَا يَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

أَوْ الْبَغْيِ * قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ * قَالَ يُمْسِكُ عَنِ الشَّرِّ فَانْهَى صَدَقَهُ * رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ * قَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

وَأَنْقُولُ اللهُ زَالَهُ شَيْدُ الْحَقَابِ

النَّاسُ عَلَى الْأَزْمَلَةِ وَالْمُسْكِينِ كَالْجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ أَوْ الْفِتَنِ * اللَّيْلُ الصَّافِي النَّهَارُ * رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ وَمُسْلِمٌ وَالتِّرْمِذِيُّ وَالنَّسَائِيُّ
كَتَبَهُ دَكْبَرُ كَتَبَتْ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

طه

الحج

عن علي بن زياد قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
 كُنْ أَنْزَا وَصَفَا لَيْقَى صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ۝ قَالَ لَمْ يَكُنْ
 بِالْقَدِيرِ الْمُتَعَبِ ۝ وَلَا بِالْمَقْبُولِ الْمُرْدُودِ ۝ كُنْ أَنْزَا وَصَفَا لَيْقَى صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ۝
 وَلَا يَكُنْ بِالْبَقِيَّةِ الْعَلِيَّةِ ۝ وَلَا بِالْمَقْبُولِ الْمُرْدُودِ ۝ كُنْ أَنْزَا وَصَفَا لَيْقَى صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ۝
 جَمًّا زَجَلًا ۝ وَلَا يَكُنْ ۝ وَلَا بِالْمَقْبُولِ الْمُرْدُودِ ۝ كُنْ أَنْزَا وَصَفَا لَيْقَى صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ۝
 وَكَانَ فِيهِ الْوَجْهُ الْبَدِيدُ ۝ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۝ أَدْعُ
 الْبَنِينَ ۝ أَمَلْنَا الْأَشْقَارَ ۝ جَلِيلُ الْمَنَاصِبِ وَالْكَوْثَرِ ۝ الْجَرْدُ وَنَسْرُهُ
 شَرُّ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْقَدِيمِ ۝ إِنْ شِئْتَ بِمَنْعِكَ كَانَتْ مَنَافِعِي ۝
 فِيهِ صَبِيرٌ ۝ وَإِذَا الْفَتْةُ الْفَتْةُ مَهْمَا ۝

وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

يَرْكَبُهُ حَارِثُ الْبُيُوتِ ۝ وَهُوَ خَادِمُ الْبَنِينَ ۝ أَحْوَدُ النَّاسِ مَسَدَرًا
 وَأَصْدَقُهُمْ لُحْمَةً ۝ وَالنُّهْدُ عَرَبِيَّةٌ ۝ وَأَكْرَمُهُمْ جَنَابَةً
 مَنْ سَرَاهُ بِدِينِهِ مَسَابُ ۝ وَمَنْ خَالَطَهُ مِمَّنْ هُوَ أَحَبُّهُ ۝ يَقُولُ نَاغِيَةً لِّسَمِ
 أَوْفَكَهُ ۝ وَلَا يَسُدُّهُ نَسْلُهُ حَسْبُكَ ۝ اللَّهُ يَجْلِبُ بِهِ وَسَيْلُهُ ۝ اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى
 نَجْوَى الرَّحْمَنِ ۝ وَشَعْبِيهِمْ ۝ الْأَمَّةُ تَحْمِلُهَا الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ وَعَلَى جَمِيعِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ

كَلِمَةُ الْفَقِيرِ الْفَقِيرِ الْفَقِيرِ الْفَقِيرِ الْفَقِيرِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَأِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا
الذِّكْرَ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَحْجُورْ وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ
وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ
الْخَنَّاسِ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْلُوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهَرِ
الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا مِمَّنِ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ
يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَايُنَا قَوْمٍ أَنْ ضَدُّواكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
إِنْ تَعْتَدُوا وَاتَّقُوا نَوَاعِلَ الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى



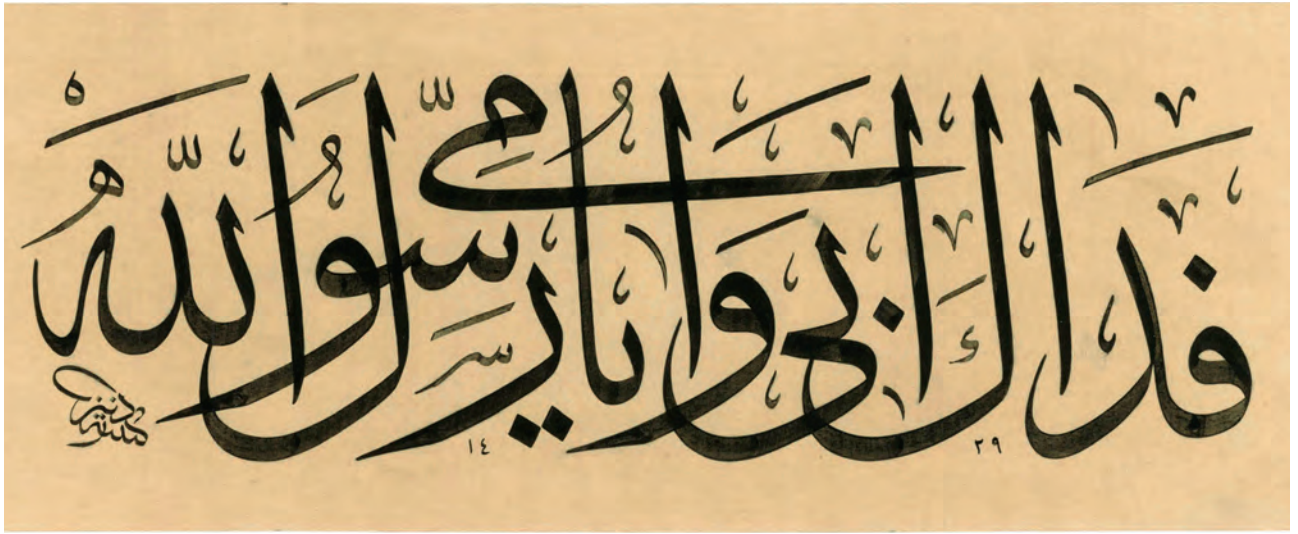


















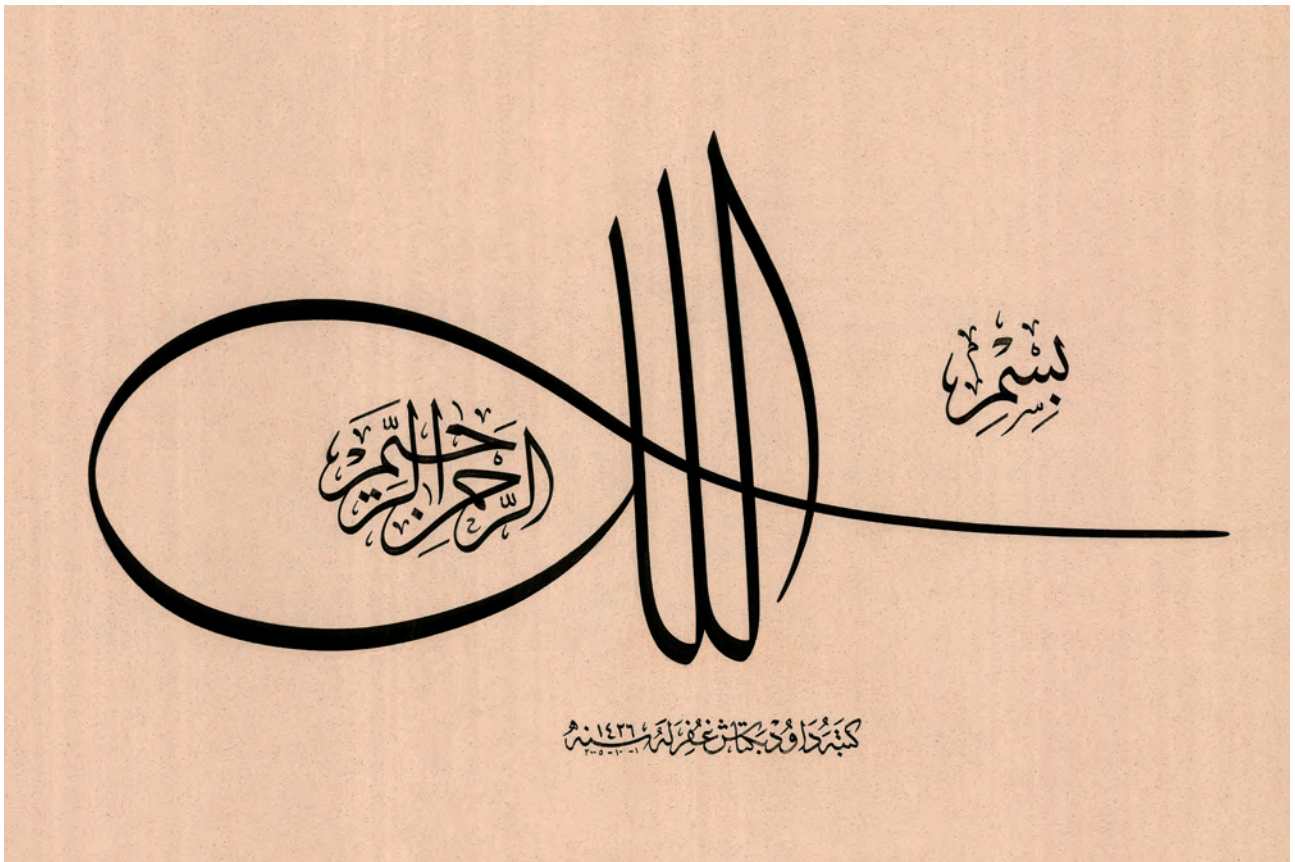
ملكا يوم الدين ان كان فعبداً ان كان نفعاً ان كان صبراً ان كان شرفاً ان كان طهره ان كان خيراً ان كان خيراً ان كان خيراً
 بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم لا اله الا الله هو الذي لا يقدر عليه شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء
 لا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء
 بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ولا اله الا الله هو الذي لا يقدر عليه شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء ولا يؤمن به شيء
 فقل ان خوفك من الله انك لا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه
 فقل ان خوفك من الله انك لا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه ولا تعلمه





وَمَا يَرْزُقُكَ لِي وَيُؤْتِيكَ مَا تَحْتَاجُ

رَبِّهِ أَفَرِحَ بِحَدِيثِ هَبْرَةٍ وَتَبَيَّنَ لِقَدْرُهَا وَفِي نَفْسِهَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

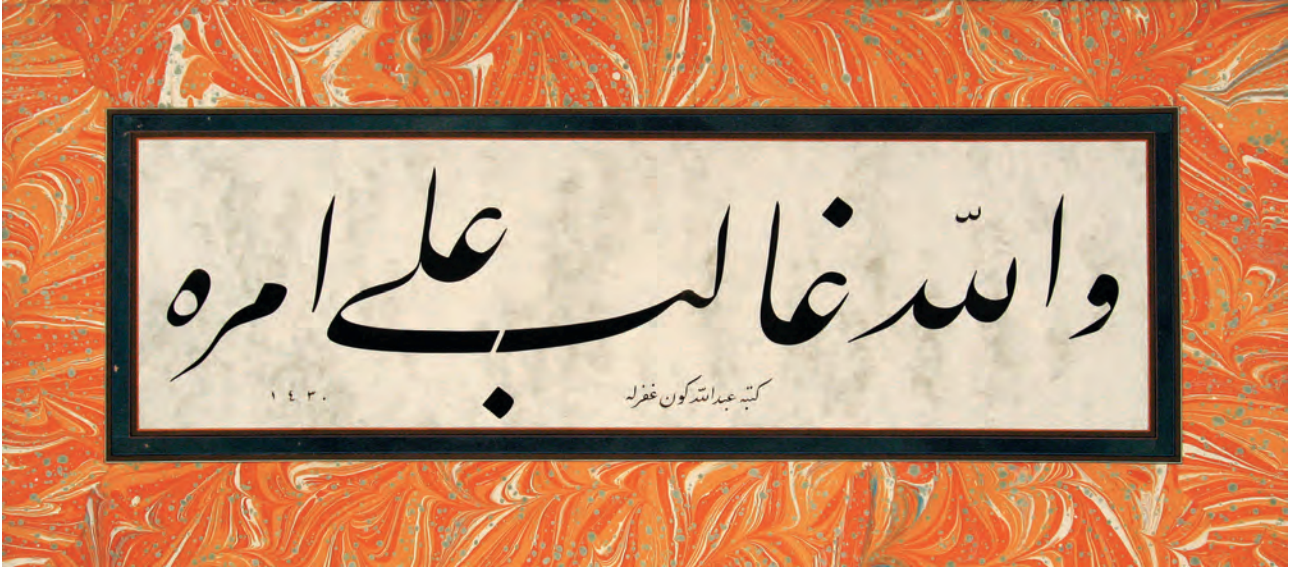
لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا

خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ

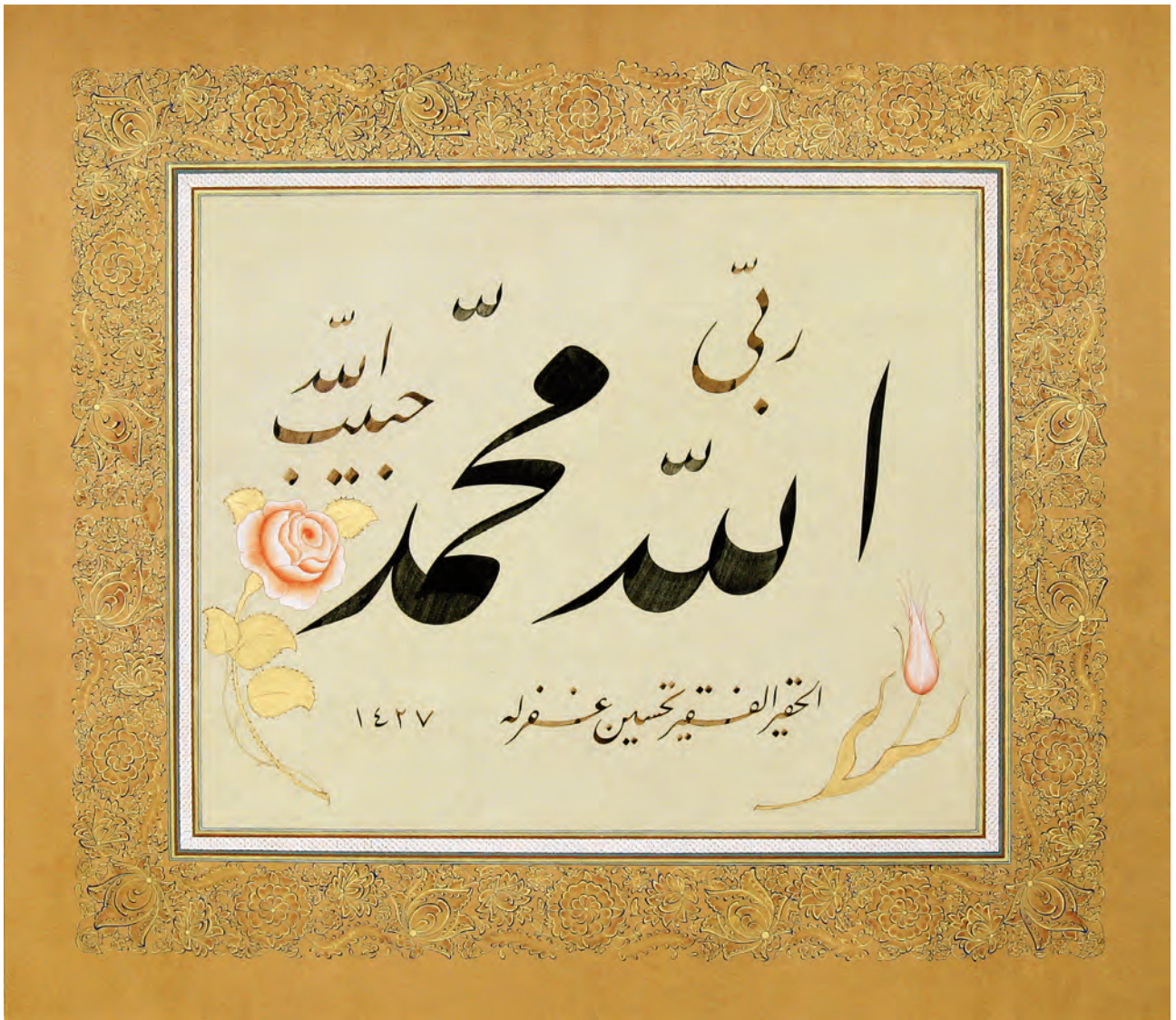
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ







و
بلغ العلى بحاله
كرشم الدجى بحاله
حسنت جميع خصاله
صلوا على
مشتاق الفقير حسين بن ذر
عبد
١٤٢















index & Biographies

1 Poem to the Prophet, 2009.

Kufi script.

Red and black inks on paper. 60 x 60 cm.

This piece in Fatimid kufi script contains a poem describing the attributes of Prophet Muhammad around the circumference. The letters merge into a geometric pattern in the centre.

Calligrapher: Salah Abdel Khalaq

2 Divine Name, 2000.

Ma'qili kufi script.

Black ink, gouache and gold on ahar paper. 26 x 26 cm.

This piece in the highly stylised ma'qili kufi script contains the name of God repeated four times in the centre.

Calligrapher: Husrev Subaşı

Illuminator: Hatice Aksu

3 The Prophet, 2000.

Ma'qili kufi script.

Black ink, gouache and gold on ahar paper. 26 x 26 cm.

This piece in the highly stylised ma'qili kufi script contains the name of the Prophet Muhammad repeated four times in the centre.

Calligrapher: Husrev Subaşı

Illuminator: Hatice Aksu

4 Kelam-i kibar, 2009.

Tawqi and rika' scripts.

Ink and gold on ahar and marbled (ebru) paper.

25,7 x 35 cm.

This is a reproduction of a 16th century manuscript by Shaykh Hamdullah.

Calligrapher: Nurullah Özdem

Illuminator: Abdulhamid Yılmaz

Ebru Artist: Ibrahim Hakkı Yiğit

5 Read, 2009.

Muhaqqaq and rihani scripts.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 34,5 x 37,5 cm.

The first line in muhaqqaq script contains the *basmala*, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate."

The second part of the text, in rihani script, is the first sura revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, and reads:

*Read in the name of your Lord and Cherisher who created,
Created men out of a clot of congealed blood.
Read and thy Lord is Most Bountiful,
He who taught [the use of] the Pen,
Who taught man that which he knew not.
Nay, but man doth transgress all bounds,
In that he looketh upon himself as self-sufficient.
Verily unto thy Lord is the return.* Qur'an, 96:1-8.

Calligrapher: Nurullah Özdem

Illuminator: Zakir Gökgöz

6 He is One, 2009.

Muhaqqaq script.

Black ink on ahar paper. 40,5 x 50 cm.

Say: He is the One God: God the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of All Being. He begets not, and neither is He begotten, and there is nothing that could be compared unto Him. Qur'an, 112:1-4.

Calligrapher: Efdaluddin Kiliç

7 Charity, 2008.

Thuluth and naskh scripts.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 76 x 56 cm.

The texts in this piece are a combination of a sura from the Qur'an and a *hadith*, a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, on the topic of charity. The thuluth script reads:

Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour; fear God, for God is strict in punishment. Qur'an, 5:2.

The smaller naskh script reads:

*The Prophet said: "Charity is necessary for every Muslim."
The Prophet was asked: "What if a person has nothing?"
The Prophet replied: "He should work with his own hands for his benefit and then give something out of such earnings in charity."
The companions asked: "What if he is not able to work?"
The Prophet said: "He should help poor and needy persons."
The companions further asked: "What if he can't even do that?"
The Prophet said: "He should urge others to do good."
The companions responded: "What if he lacks that also?"
The Prophet said: "He should check himself from doing evil. That is also charity." Hadith.*

Calligrapher: Deniz Öktem Bektaş

Illuminator: Eda Funda

8 Hilye, 2009.

Thuluth and naskh scripts.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 74 x 53.5 cm.

The hilye is a description of the Prophet Muhammad. The central round portion in the naskh script contains the physical qualities of the Prophet and is surrounded by the names of the four first caliphs of Islam: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali. The lower rectangular part describes the moral qualities of the Prophet. It reads:

Transmitted from 'Ali [son-in-law of the Prophet], may God be pleased with him, who, when asked to describe the Prophet, peace be upon him, would say: He was not too tall nor too short. He was medium sized. His hair was not short and curly, nor was it lank, but in between. His face was not narrow, nor was it fully round, but there was a roundness to it. His skin was white. His eyes were black. He had long eyelashes. He was big-boned and had wide shoulders. He had no body hair except in the middle of his chest. He had thick hands and feet. When he walked, he walked inclined, as if descending a slope. When he looked at someone, he looked at him full in the face.

Between his shoulders was the seal of prophecy, the sign that he was the last of the prophets. He was the most generous-hearted of men, the most truthful of them in speech, the most mild-tempered of them, and the noblest of them in lineage. Whoever saw him unexpectedly was in awe of him. And whoever associated with him familiarly, loved him. Anyone who would describe him would say, I never saw, before him or after him, the like of him. Peace be upon him.

The middle line in *thuluth* script reads:

And We did not send you [Muhammad] except to be a mercy to the universe. Qur'an 21:107.

Calligrapher: Nuria Garcia Masip
Illuminator: Eda Funda

9 Asma Al Husna, 2009.

Thuluth and naskh script.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 75 x 48 cm.

The Asma al-Husna, or God's Ninety-Nine Most Beautiful Names, are an important aspect of the Islamic tradition. In this piece, the names are written in the *naskh* script, and the Divine Name of God, Allah, is written on top in the *thuluth* script.

Calligrapher: Hilal Kazan
Illuminator: Hatice Algun

10 Verses of Bounty, 2009.

Thuluth and naskh scripts.

Black ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 62 x 57 cm.

This piece contains three different verses from the Qur'an, which are often recited as means of protection. They are all headed by the *basmala* in *thuluth* script.

Hence [be patient], even though they who are bent on denying the truth would all but kill thee with their eyes whenever they hear this reminder, and [though] they say, "[As for Muhammad] behold, most surely he is a madman!" [Be patient:] for this is nought else but a reminder [from God] to all mankind. Qur'an, 68: 51-52.

*Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the Dawn,
From the mischief of created things;
From the mischief of Darkness as it overspreads;
From the mischief of those who practise Secret Arts
And from mischief of the envious one as he practises envy.
Qur'an, 113.*

*Say: I seek refuge with the Lord and Cherisher of Mankind,
The King of Mankind,
The God of Mankind,
From the mischief of the whisperer [of Evil] who withdraws
after his whisper,
The same who whispers into the hearts of mankind,
Among Jinns and among men. Qur'an, 114.*

Calligrapher and illuminator: Ayten Tiryaki

11 And Do Good Unto Others, 2009.

Naskh script.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 50 x 60 cm.

Behold, Qarun was one of the people of Moses; but he arrogantly exalted himself above them - simply because We had granted him such riches that his treasure-chests alone would surely have been too heavy a burden for a troop of

ten men or even more. When [they perceived his arrogance,] his people said unto him: "Exult not [in thy wealth], for, verily, God does not love those who exult [in things vain]! Seek instead, by means of what God has granted thee, [the good of] the life to come, without forgetting, withal, thine own [rightful] share in this world; and do good [unto others] as God has done good unto thee; and seek not to spread corruption on earth: for, verily, God does not love the spreaders of corruption!" Qur'an, 28:76-77.

Calligrapher: Ayten Tiryaki
Illuminators: Ayten Tiryaki and Şeyma Okur

12 Al-Maidah, 2008.

Thuluth script.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 64 x 58 cm.

O you who have attained to faith! Offend not against the symbols set up by God, nor against the sacred month [of pilgrimage], nor against the garlanded offerings, nor against those who flock to the Inviolable Temple, seeking favour with their Sustainer and His goodly acceptance; and [only] after your pilgrimage is over are you free to hunt. And never let your hatred of people who would bar you from the Inviolable House of Worship lead you into the sin of aggression; but rather help one another in furthering virtue and God-consciousness, and do not help one another in furthering evil and enmity; and remain conscious of God: for, behold, God is severe in retribution! Qur'an, 5:2.

Calligrapher: Ömer Faruk
Illuminator: Zakir Göküz

13 Hem okudum hem yazdım, 1989.

Thuluth script.

Ink, gold and gouache on ahar paper. 43 x 40 cm.

This is 16th century poem in Ottoman Turkish by Karacaoğlu, referring to the transient nature of this world. It reads:

I both wrote and studied / O deceitful world, I have left your charms behind.

Calligrapher: Davut Bektaş

14 Ya Farid, 2009.

Jali thuluth script.

Black and green inks on ahar paper. 86,5 x 63 cm.

Farid means 'the unique' or 'the second to none', and it is one of the names used to address the Prophet Muhammad. In this composition, the name is written as a mirror image, the colour green being the colour associated with the Prophet and Islam.

Calligrapher: Hasan Çelebi

15 Ahlu'l Bait, 2008.

Jali thuluth script.

Black soot ink on ahar paper. 44,5 x 41 cm.

This piece is a composition containing the names of the family of the Prophet Muhammad. The name Muhammad occupies the upper central part of the piece, and the letter 'lam' of 'Ali' is extended over the top to join the name of Fatima. The names of their sons, Hassan and Hussein, are written on either side in smaller writing.

Calligrapher: Davut Bektaş

16 The Protector, 2008.

Jali thuluth script.

Black soot ink on *ahar* paper. 39 x 31,5 cm.

This is one of the ninety-nine names of God, used for invocations and prayers.

Calligrapher: Davut Bektaş

17 The Ever-Forgiving, 2009.

Jali thuluth script.

Red ink on *ahar* paper. 86 x 66 cm.

This is one of the ninety-nine names of God, used for invocations and prayers.

Calligrapher: Ferhat Kurlu

18 Reward, 2009.

Jali thuluth script.

Brown ink, gold and gouache on *ahar* paper. 57 x 65 cm.

Whosoever does good, God will reward him with more good. Hadith.

Calligrapher and illuminator: Ayten Tiryaki

19 Fadaka, 2008.

Jali thuluth script.

Black soot ink on *ahar* paper. 46,5 x 24,5 cm.

O Messenger of God, for you I would sacrifice my mother and my father. Supplication

Calligrapher: Deniz Öktem Bektaş

20 All Encompassing, 2009.

Jali thuluth script.

Ink, gouache and gold on Indian *ahar* paper. 50 x 50 cm.

And truly God encompasseth all things. Qur'an, 4:130.

Calligrapher and illuminator: Nuria Garcia Masip

21 Serenity, 2009.

Jali thuluth script.

Black and brown inks on Indian *ahar* paper. 73 x 39 cm.

It is He who sends down serenity into the hearts of the believers. Qur'an, 48:4.

Calligrapher: Nuria Garcia Masip

22 Verses of Protection, 2009.

Diwani script.

Black, blue and red inks on *ahar* paper. Gold and gouache illumination. 68 x 40 cm.

This piece, written in the style of an Ottoman *ferman*, or Sultan's edict, contains the *basmala* inside the top *tuğra* (the imperial monogram). Underneath, in *diwani* script, are the following verses from the Qur'an: the *Fatiha* (1:1-7); the Verse of the Throne (2:255); verses from the Chapter of the Pen (68:51-52); and the last two *suras*, 113 and 114.

Calligrapher: Turan Sevgili

Illuminator: Fatima Gül

23 Diwani Hilye, 2009.

Jali Diwani script.

Black, blue and red inks on *ahar* paper. Gold and gouache illumination. 80 x 44 cm.

This *hilye*, or description of the Prophet Muhammad, is written in the style of an Ottoman *ferman*, or Sultan's edict. Underneath the main text are written the names of the four first caliphs of Islam: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali.

Calligrapher: Turan Sevgili

Illuminator: Fatima Gül

24 Patience in Adversity, 2009.

Diwani script.

Black ink on *ahar* paper. 37,1 x 68,1 cm.

And when they came face to face with Goliath and his forces, they prayed: "O our Sustainer! Shower us with patience in adversity, and make firm our steps, and succour us against the people who deny the truth!" Qur'an, 2:250.

Calligrapher: Efdaluddin Kiliç

25 Basmalah, 2007.

Tuğra

Black soot ink on *ahar* paper. 56 x 42 cm.

The *tuğra* is the imperial monogram used to contain the Sultan's signature during the Ottoman period. Over time, calligraphers stylised the shape of the *tuğra* and filled in the monogram with verses from the Qur'an or pious sayings. In this case, this *tuğra* contains the *basmala*, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate," the phrase that is recited before initiating any legitimate action across the Islamic world.

Calligrapher: Davut Bektaş

26 Ayat of the Throne, 2009.

Riq'a script.

Black ink on *ahar* paper. 39 x 36 cm.

God - there is no deity save Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsistent Fount of All Being. Neither slumber overtakes Him, nor sleep. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. Who is there that could intercede with Him, unless it be by His leave? He knows all that lies open before men and all that is hidden from them, whereas they cannot attain to aught of His knowledge save that which He wills [them to attain]. His eternal power overspreads the heavens and the earth, and their upholding wearies Him not. And he alone is truly exalted, tremendous. Qur'an, 2:255.

Calligrapher: Efdaluddin Kiliç

27 Profession of Unity, 1999.

Jali ta'liq script.

Black ink, gold and gouache on *ahar* paper. 68 x 72 cm.

This piece contains the Islamic profession of faith: "There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Messenger."

Calligrapher: Savas Çevik

Illuminator: Aysun Ercan

28 God Always Prevails, 2009.

Jali ta'liq script.

Ink and gold on *ahar* paper and marbled (*ebru*) paper.
34 x 76,5 cm.

For God always prevails in whatever be His purpose.
Qur'an, 12:21.

Calligrapher: Abdullah Gün
Ebru Artist: Ibrahim Hakkı Yiğit

29 Nun, 2009.

Jali ta'liq and *ta'liq* scripts.

Ink and gouache paints on *ahar* paper and marbled (*ebru*) paper. 33,5 x 38,5 cm.

Nun, by the pen and the record which men write.
Qur'an, 68:1.

Calligrapher: Abdullah Gün
Ebru Artist: Ibrahim Hakkı Yiğit

30 Praise to the Prophet, 2009.

Ta'liq script.

Black ink on *ahar* paper. 21 x 33 cm.

This is a poem to the Prophet Muhammad which reads:

*He attained the heights with his whole being
He lightened up the dark with his countenance
All his qualities were beautiful
Prayers to him and his family.*

Calligrapher: Tahsin Kurt

31 God is our Lord, 2009.

Jali ta'liq and *ta'liq* scripts.

Ink, gouache and gold on *ahar* paper. 65 x 80 cm.

In this piece, the popular invocation "God is our Lord and Muhammad is His beloved" is combined with the symbol of the tulip for the name of God, and the symbol of the rose for the Prophet Muhammad.

Calligrapher: Tahsin Kurt

32 Maghrebi Hilye, 2009.

Maghrebi and *kufi* scripts.

Japanese ink and gold on elephant skin paper.
100 x 70 cm.

The *hilye* is a description of the Prophet Muhammad. The central round portion in the *maghrebi* script contains the physical qualities of the Prophet and is surrounded by the names of the four first caliphs of Islam. The lower rectangular part in *maghrebi* script describes the moral qualities of the Prophet.

The middle line in *kufi* script reads:

And We did not send you [Muhammad] except to be a mercy to the universe. Qur'an 21:107.

The circular *kufi* surrounding the central part is a verse from the Qur'an, 48:29.

Calligrapher: Hamidi Belaid
Illuminators: Akka Hamidi and Hamid Hamidi

33 Veda Hutbesi, 2009.

Maghrebi script.

Korean ink and gold on marbled (*ebru*) paper. 100 x 70 cm.

This is a reproduction of the Farewell Sermon of the Prophet Muhammad. In it, the Prophet exhorts his followers to keep steadfast in their religion, treat others with kindness and respect and transmit his message to the next generations.

Calligrapher: Hamidi Belaid
Illuminator: Hamid Hamidi

34 Iqra, 2009.

Maghrebi script.

Japanese ink and gold on *ahar* paper. 100 x 70 cm.

Read in the name of your Lord. Qur'an, 96:1-2.

Calligrapher: Hamidi Belaid
Illuminator: Hamid Hamidi

35 Hadith of Gabriel, 2009.

Maghrebi script.

Japanese ink and gold on *ahar* paper. 60 x 60 cm.

This piece contains a famous *hadith* (saying of the Prophet Muhammad) where the Archangel Gabriel questions the Prophet about the basic aspects of the religion: Islam (submission), Iman (faith), and Ihsan (excellence).

Calligrapher: Hamidi Belaid
Illuminators: Hamid Hamidi and Akka Hamidi

36 Timbuktu Proverb, 2009.

Sudani script.

Chinese ink on paper. Carved leather frame.
18.5 x 24.5 cm.

"Salt comes from the North, gold from the South, silver from the land of the whites, but words of God, wisdom and beautiful stories are only found in Timbuktu."

Calligrapher and illuminator: Boubacar Sadeck

37 Ahmad Baba's Poem, 2009.

Sudani script.

Chinese ink on paper. Carved leather frame.
18.5 x 24.5 cm.

"O you who go to Gao, take a detour to Timbuktu. Whisper my name to my friends and take them greetings perfumed by exile, I who long after the earth where reside my friends, my family and my neighbours."

Ahmad Baba (1556-1627) was one of the leading scholars of Timbuktu during its intellectual height in the late 16th century. He was exiled to Marrakesh for 14 years after the Moroccan invasion in 1591. This poem expresses longing for his homeland, to which he eventually returned and where he died.

Calligrapher and illuminator: Boubacar Sadeck

38 The Saints of Timbuktu, 2009.

Sudani script.

Chinese ink on paper. Carved leather frame.

24.0 x 24.0 cm.

Timbuktu is known as the town of 333 saints, who, according to tradition, are buried in a protective circle around it. This piece describes the thirteen most well-known saints, known for their goodness and piety.

Calligrapher and illuminator: Boubacar Sadeck

39 Prayer Times, 2009.

Sudani script.

Chinese ink on paper. Carved leather frame.

24.0 x 24.0 cm.

The calculation of prayer times was one of the many Islamic Sciences that a scholar like Ahmad Baba (1556-1627) would have mastered. This particular design is calculated from the pace of his feet. (IHERIAB Manuscript No. 8699)

Calligrapher and illuminator: Boubacar Sadeck

40 Salatu'l Fatihi, 2009.

Sudani script.

Ink and gouache on vellum. 67,5 x 53,5 cm.

The Salatu'l Fatihi, or "prayer of the opening", is a prayer of the Tijaniyya order which is recited everyday in their ritual litanies. It is said to have been revealed to the founder of the order by the Prophet Muhammad himself and asks for the Prophet's blessings and mercy.

Calligrapher: Boubacar Sadeck



Hasan Çelebi was born in Erzurum, Turkey, in 1937. In 1963, he started work as an imam, and a year later began calligraphy lessons with the great master calligraphers of the 20th century, Halim Özyazıcı, Hamit Aytaç and Kemal Batanay. He received his *ijaza* (calligraphy diploma) in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts from Hamit Aytaç in 1975 and in the *ta'liq* and *riq'a* scripts from Kemal Batanay in 1981.

In 1981, Mr. Çelebi was commissioned to produce the Islamic calligraphy panels for the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Jeddah. In addition, he went to Medina to restore the calligraphy panels in the Prophet's Mosque in 1983, and a few years later produced the calligraphy panels for the new Quba Mosque in Medina.

Hasan Çelebi held his first personal exhibition in Istanbul at IRCICA (Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture) in 1982. From that time to the present, he has participated in a long list of both national and international exhibitions, spanning numerous countries in Europe and Asia. His works can be found in numerous historic mosques of the Islamic world, as well as some of the new mosques built in Europe and South Africa. His calligraphic panels form part of many private collections.

Mr. Çelebi has been teaching Islamic calligraphy since 1976 and has given *ijaza* to 44 students from Turkey and abroad. He continues to work as a jury member at the International Islamic Calligraphy Competitions organised by IRCICA every three years.



Savaş Çevik was born in the region of Antalya, Turkey, in 1953. He graduated from the Graphic Arts Department of the State Fine Arts Academy in 1976, and started working as an assistant to Professor Emin Barın. In 1983, he completed his doctorate thesis on Latin writing, and four years later he was appointed assistant professor at the same academy.

He studied the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Hamid Aytaç and the *ta'liq* and *riq'a* script with Kemal Batanay. Following the death of his teachers in the late eighties, he studied *diwani* and *jali diwani* with master calligrapher Ali Alparslan.

Savaş Çevik has received more than 30 international awards, organised 22 solo exhibits, and participated in more than 48 exhibits in Turkey and abroad.

He is now professor of Graphic Arts at Haliç University and Doğuş University, Istanbul. He continues to work as a professional calligrapher both in the classical Islamic and western calligraphic styles.



Turan Sevgili was born in Erzurum in 1945. He graduated from the Divinity School of Istanbul University in 1967, and a few years later completed his degree in the M. S. Ü. Visual Arts Textile Department. In 1963, he started to pursue his calligraphy studies with the late master calligrapher, Hamid Aytaç. From this master he obtained six different *ijaza* in the *kufi*, *thuluth*, *naskh*, *ta'liq*, *diwani* and *jali diwani* scripts.

During the 1980's, Mr. Sevgili taught calligraphy at the Bursa Divinity School, and at the same time started to produce numerous western calligraphic inscriptions for different buildings and collections in Istanbul. He also wrote a copy of the Qur'an, which was published by the Saudi Arabian Maktaba'l Nahda Hadith publishing house.

Turan Sevgili continues his work as master calligrapher and painter in his studio in Istanbul, where he also gives classes to his students. His works form part of numerous collections around the world.



Husrev Subaşı was born in Niksar, Turkey, in 1953. He graduated from the Faculty of Theology of Marmara University in 1976 and completed his doctorate on Islamic Art at Istanbul University. During his university studies, he took calligraphy lessons from the great master calligrapher Hamid Aytaç in the different calligraphic scripts.

Husrev Subaşı currently works as a professor at the Faculty of Theology Department of Marmara University, Istanbul. He has participated in many congresses in Turkey and abroad and has published several books and articles on the art of calligraphy. He also continues to produce calligraphic works and has exhibited widely in the Middle East and Europe. His calligraphic compositions can be found in mosques and on book covers, as well as in private collections, in Turkey and internationally.



Hamidi Belaid was born in 1959 in Ain Leuh, Morocco. After pursuing his secondary studies in the Royal Palace of Fes, he became a teacher in 1979. In 1992, he became calligrapher at the Royal College in Rabat. During these years, following various trips to Istanbul and studies by correspondence, he obtained his *ijaza* in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts from master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi, and *ijaza* in the *ta'liq* script from master calligrapher Dr. Ali Alparslan.

Hamidi Belaid has written 5 copies of the Qur'an in the *maghrebi* script (two of which were printed in Morocco), and numerous other calligraphic pieces, which form part of private collections. In 2007, he founded the Association of Calligraphic Arts in Rabat. He has also participated as a jury member in numerous international calligraphy competitions. He currently lives in Cairo, where he teaches calligraphy at the al-Halaqa Foundation to the students of al-Azhar University.



Davut Bektaş was born in the village of Akoluk, near Adana, in 1963. In 1981, while completing his law studies at the University of Istanbul, he started taking Islamic calligraphy lessons in the *thuluth* script with the late master calligrapher, Yusuf Ergün Erzincani. In 1982, he continued his studies in the *thuluth*, *naskh* and *riq'a* scripts under master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi. He received his *ijaza* from Hasan Çelebi in 1994.

Examining the works of the great master calligraphers of the previous centuries, such as Sami Effendi and Hamid Bey, and benefiting from the examples of contemporary calligraphers, Bektaş has focused on the script of *jali thuluth*. Between 2002 and 2005, Bektaş also received lessons in the scripts of *ta'liq* and *diwani* from the late Professor Ali Alparslan.

Davut Bektaş won three consecutive first prizes in the *jali thuluth* and *thuluth* scripts in the International Islamic Calligraphy Competitions organised by IRCICA in 1986, 1989 and 1993. Currently, Bektaş forms part of international calligraphy competition juries and has a large number of students from all over the world. He produces calligraphy pieces from his studio in Istanbul and teaches calligraphy classes at the prestigious Süleymaniye Library.



Salah Abdul Khaleq was born in the province of Qalubia, Egypt, in 1963. He started studying calligraphy with master calligraphers Mohamed Abdul Qader Abdullah and Mosaad Khudier el-Porsaidi. In 1995 he received his certificate from the Arabic Calligraphy Academy Bab el-Louq in Cairo. In 1999 he received his diploma in Arabic Calligraphy and Gilding from the same institution.

From 1992 until now he has worked as a calligrapher and advertisement designer for Al-Gomhuria newspaper in Cairo as well as an Islamic set designer for Egyptian Television.

He is a founding member of the Arabic Calligraphy General Association in Cairo, which was established in 1994. He has won numerous merit certificates in the *kufi* category in many international calligraphy competitions, and has exhibited widely in Egypt abroad. His work can be found in buildings and galleries in Cairo and Alexandria, as well as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan and the U.A.E.



Abdullah Gün was born in Fatsa, Turkey, in 1960. Following a traditional course of study, he became a *hafiz* under masters Huseyin Ay and Kazim Bayram in the Fatih Cedid Abdurrahim Efendi Kur'an Kursu, and in 1983 started to work for the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Under the encouragement of his teachers, Abdullah Gün started to take calligraphy classes in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi, and received his *ijaza* in 1999. He also studied the *riq'a*, *diwani* and *jali diwani* scripts with master calligrapher Ali Alparslan.

Abdullah Gün's calligraphic panels can be found in many mosques in Istanbul and he has also written numerous tombstones. He has exhibited widely and his work forms part

of many private collections. He currently teaches calligraphy at the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, as well as in other institutions linked to the Ministry of Turkish Culture.



Efdaluddin Kiliç started studying calligraphy in 1985 with master calligrapher Husrev Subasi, and studied the *riq'a* style with Muhiddin Serin. He graduated from the Faculty of Theology of Marmara University in 1990, and in 1993 completed his Masters Degree in the Department of Traditional Turkish Arts. In 1995, he received his *ijaza* in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts from master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi.

Mr. Kiliç has produced pieces for different monuments and mosques in Turkey, and has restored numerous manuscripts of the late Egyptian calligrapher, Seyyid Ibrahim.

During the last ten years, Efdaluddin Kiliç has given many conferences and workshops in the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom, and has exhibited his works widely. Today Mr. Kiliç continues to work from his studio in Istanbul, where he also prepares his own calligraphic materials such as paper, inks and natural pigments. He gives classes on calligraphy and Ottoman Turkish at the Madrasa Jaferaga in Istanbul.



Hilâl Kazan was born in Istanbul, Turkey. She holds a Masters and Ph.D. from the Turkish Islamic Art Department of Marmara University and has specialised in researching different aspects of Islamic calligraphy during Ottoman times.

During Ms. Kazan's university studies, examining old manuscripts fuelled her interest in calligraphy. In 1994, she started to take lessons from master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts, and in the year 2000 she received her *ijaza*.

Hilal Kazan has travelled extensively as an ambassador of calligraphy, usually in the company of her teacher Hasan Çelebi, and has participated in exhibitions in Turkey and abroad. She has also given conferences on this art form in the Middle East, the U.S.A and South Africa, and published various papers on the subject. She continues to combine her research work with her calligraphy practice.



Ayten Tiryaki was born in Ordu, Turkey, in 1961. She graduated from the Faculty of Theology at Ankara University in 1983 and moved to Istanbul, where she started lessons in the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi. In 1989, Mrs. Tiryaki was the first woman to receive *ijaza* in these scripts from her master. During her calligraphy studies, she also took lessons in the art of illumination (*tezhip*) from Professor Dr. Çiçek Derman and İnci Ayan Birol. She received her *ijaza* in this art form in 1986.

Ayten Tiryaki has exhibited widely in the Middle East and Europe, and her works form part of numerous private collections. Amongst her various prizes are a Mention Award in the *naskh* script in the International Calligraphy

Competition organised by IRCICA in 2007, and two Mention Awards in the *thuluth* and *thuluth/naskh* scripts in the 2008 Albaraka Turk Calligraphy Competition. Today she works as a professional calligrapher and illuminator from her studio in Istanbul and teaches both arts to a large number of students.



Tahsin Kurt was born in Van, Turkey in 1965. He started lessons in *ta'liq* with master calligrapher Dr. Ali Alparslan in 1987 and lessons in the *thuluth* script with master calligrapher Huseyin Kutlu in 1994. He received his *ijaza* in *thuluth* in 2001. He received Mention Awards in *ta'liq* and *jali ta'liq* in the International Calligraphy Competition of IRCICA in 1997, awards in *ta'liq* at the Calligraphy Competitions organised by The Turkish Ministry of Culture in 1999 and 2001, and the second prize in *jali ta'liq* at the Albaraka Turk Calligraphy Competition in 2008. Today, Tahsin Kurt combines his work as an accountant with the production of calligraphy pieces and teaching to a number of students in Istanbul.



Ömer Faruk was born in 1968 in Erzurum, Turkey. He graduated in Visual Arts from the Kazim Karabekir Education Department of Atatürk University in 1996. In 2000, he developed an interest in Islamic calligraphy and started to study the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Davut Bektaş. He received his *ijaza* in these two scripts in November 2005.

Ömer Faruk has received many awards in the *jali thuluth* script, amongst them, the second place award in the Albaraka Calligraphy Competition in 2008, and third place award in the International Calligraphy Contest organised by IRCICA in 2007. He now lives in Istanbul, where he continues to combine his work as an art teacher with his calligraphy profession. He has exhibited both in Turkey and internationally, and his works form part of many private collections.



Ferhat Kurlu was born in Fatsa, Turkey in 1976. He graduated from the Department of Theology of Dokuz Mayıs University and studied the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Hasan Çelebi. He received his *ijaza* in these two scripts in 2000.

Mr. Kurlu has participated in exhibitions in Turkey and abroad. During the last five years, he has won first prize awards in the *thuluth* and *jali thuluth* scripts in different international calligraphy competitions. He has produced numerous pieces for mosques and fountains in Istanbul, as well as 100 *hilyes* (description of the Prophet) and 40 original compositions in the scripts of *thuluth* and *jali thuluth*.

Currently, Ferhat Kurlu is taking lessons in the *ta'liq* script with Hasan Çelebi, and working as an *imam* at Nişantaşı Meşrutiyet-Hamidiye Mosque, where he continues to produce calligraphy pieces and give lessons.



Boubacar Sadeck was born in Timbuktu, Mali in 1974.

He pursued an Islamic education from an early age and succeeded in memorising the entire Qur'an and mastering the science of *tajwid*. He pursued higher Islamic education under his uncle, Cheikh Mahamane Mahamoudou (Hamou), studying theology, *fiqh*, Arabic grammar and hadith, as well as specialising in manuscripts at the Ahmed Baba Institute (IHERI-AB, ex-CEDRAB).

During this period, his uncle started training him in the art of calligraphy, as well as in the profession of Manuscript Copyist. After years of training, he has become a professional copyist and calligrapher, working independently from his studio. He is well known for his calligraphy of panegyrist prayers on the Prophet Muhammad, and has copied more than 300 manuscript volumes. He co-founded the association AMAM (Arts et Métiers Appliqués aux Manuscrits, or Arts and Professions Applied to Manuscripts), which has been active in promoting the art of calligraphy in Mali, and he has participated in numerous workshops and exhibitions related to the arts of manuscripts.



Deniz Öktem Bektaş was born in Holland in 1976. After completing her university studies at Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, she continued her graduate work at Georgetown University in the U.S.A. While working on her Masters Degree, she met calligrapher Mohammed Zakariya and started lessons in the *riq'a* and *naskh* scripts. At the end of 2002, on her return to Istanbul, she continued to take calligraphy lessons with master calligraphers Hasan Çelebi and Davut Bektaş in the *riq'a*, *naskh* and *thuluth* scripts. In 2007, she obtained her *ijaza* in the *naskh* and *thuluth* scripts.

In 2007, Ms. Öktem received an Encouragement Award in the *naskh* script at the 7th International Calligraphy Competition organised by IRCICA and a Mention Award at the Islamic Calligraphy Sharja Biennial in 2008. Deniz Öktem has participated in exhibitions in Turkey and internationally, and continues her work alongside her husband, Davut Bektaş, in their studio in Istanbul.



Nurullah Özdem was born in Erzurum in 1984. With the encouragement of his grandfather Shawkat Özdem, who was a calligrapher, he started to study calligraphy. He received his Bachelor's Degree in painting in Erzurum, where he also finished the main calligraphy curriculum with calligrapher Dr. Bilal Sezer. In 2004 he began studying the scripts of *thuluth* and *naskh* with Davut Bektaş in Istanbul and received his *ijaza* in these two scripts in 2007. He received a Mention Award in the *jali thuluth* script at the 7th International Calligraphy Competition of IRCICA in 2007, and in 2008 received a Mention Award in the Al-Burda Competition in Abu Dhabi, and a Mention Award in the Albaraka Turk Calligraphy Competition.



Nuria Garcia Masip was born in Ibiza, Spain in 1978. In 1999, after completing her university studies at The George Washington University, she travelled to Morocco where she developed an interest in Islamic art. In 2000, she returned to Washington D.C., where she started studying the *riq'a*, *thuluth*, and *naskh* scripts with master calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya. After moving to Istanbul, she continued to study the *thuluth* and *naskh* scripts with masters Hasan Çelebi and Davut Bektaş and she received her *ijaza* in 2007.

Ms. Garcia received a Mention Award in the *thuluth* script in IRCICA's 2006 International Calligraphy Competition, and the third prize award in the Albaraka Turk International Calligraphy Competition in 2008. Her pieces have been exhibited in the Middle East and Europe and her work forms part of numerous private collections. She currently lives in Munich, Germany, and visits Istanbul regularly where she continues to further her calligraphy studies under the guidance of her teachers.

