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The Art of Bookbinding in the Ottoman Empire (Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)

Abstract: This study deals with the Ottoman art of book ornamentation, and its evolution and development between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. This period of development will be explained by considering bookbinding methods and techniques, and materials. Our interpretations are supported by binding samples selected from various libraries. Bookbinding samples, made with different materials by using different techniques, were selected in order to show differences among them in terms of this development and evolution. Generally speaking the study examines the development of the bookbinding art in the Ottoman Empire through the stated centuries. This study will not include comparison with European bookbinding practices as European influence upon the binding art in the Ottoman Empire began in the nineteenth century.

Keywords: bookbinding art, book ornamentation, manuscripts, the Ottoman Empire, Turkish bookbinding

Introduction

The term *bookbindin*g refers to a book's cover made of cardboard and covered by leather, paper, plastic, or cloth in order to prevent the pages of a book from scattering. In bookbinding the pages of a work are gathered and given a final shape; it is an art form that includes all the processes necessary for binding a book to protect the book from external damage. In Turkish, the bookbinder is called a mücellid/binder.

The art of bookbinding passed from Central Asia to Iran, the Arabian peninsula, and then Anatolia. The ornamentation varied regionally using local motifs: this created various bookbinding types such as arabesque,[1] Herat,[2] Hatayi,[3] Rumi,[4] Seljuk, Mamluk, Ottoman, and Maghrebi.[5] Many arabesque designs occurred in the Seljuk and Anatolian Beylik periods, but the Ottoman Turks used bookbinding molds and produced many bookbinding types during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries also using the zencirek (a chain design used to decorate the borders of an illuminated manuscript), köşebent (corner panel), and şemse (ornamental sun figure) designs with similarities resulting from cultural interaction.[6]

In general ornamentation material and handtools for bookbindings are following:

Ornamentation materials:

– leather (respectively sheep leather "meşin", goat leather "sahtiyan", gazelle leather "rak" and cow leather "kösele")
– cloth (usually satin, silk and velvet),
– wood,
– marbled cardboard,

[1] A geometric figure used as netted stars covering Anatolian Seljuk and Ottoman bookbindings.

[2] Referring to the great art center Herat and others such as Şiraz and Isfahan of Tamerlane's time period, these bookbindings were developed by Turk, Mongol, and Iranian masters. In them, the spaces between and in the şemses and corner panels are filled with plant, human, and animal figures (birds, snakes, lions, and legendary creatures such as Persian dragons (Simurgh) sprinkled with Chinese cloud motifs. M. E. Özen, *Türk Cilt Sanatı*, Ankara 1998, p. 10.

[3] This type of ornamentation is made of intermingling spiral floral motifs creating a motif resembling a lotus. Plant motifs are quite simple in the Seljuk works of Anatolia. Hatayi ornamentation continued developing during the period of the Anatolian Beyliks but it reached its zenith in the classical Ottoman period. M. E. Özen, op. cit., p. 16.

[4] This type, which was generally used throughout Anatolia since its development by the Anatolian Seljuks, originated with the animal figures of middle Asian Turkish art. After the arrival of Islam, the animal motifs disappeared completely becoming a stylized abstract motif. Rumis covered the covers' backgrounds, inside and out, and zencireks, şemse centers, among the other ornamental elements, were applied in the tucks of the Seljuk bookbindings. M. E. Özen, op. cit., p. 16.

[5] The Maghrebi style developed in Andalusia, Sicily, and Morocco. It is reminiscent of the Arabian style. It influenced European bookbinding via Spain and Sicily. The colors are all brown and black tones with round, complex geometric şemses. In the borders there are usually zencireks. See, A. S. Arıtan, *Ciltçilik*, [in:] *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 7, İstanbul 1993, p. 552.

[6] Ş. Tekin, *Eski Türklerde Yazı*, İstanbul 1993, pp. 42–44.

– jewellery (gold and silver plaque and other valuable stones especially ivory, mother-of-pearl, enamel, diamond, ruby and emerald).

Handtools:
– metal or wood moulds,
– knives,
– cross-cut saw "bıçkı",
– narrow gorge "cendere"
– "gıldırdıç" a kind of grater.[7]

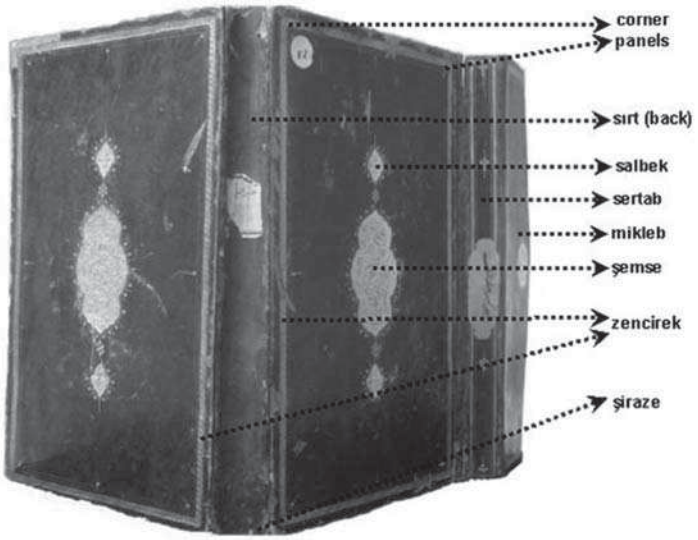


Figure 1. Main parts of a classical Turkish binding (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: University of Ankara, Library of Faculty of Letters, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Books, no. A 82.

Fifteenth Century Bookbinding (Early Ottoman Period)

This section covers early Ottoman bookbinding. In the Ottoman Empire, bookbindings are first found in the period of Murat II (1421–1451). The Ottomans used a new style of bookbinding as in their other arts and they achieved this in the period of Mehmet the Conqueror (Mehmet II)

[7] M. E. Özen, op. cit., pp. 30–38; A. S. Arıtan, op. cit., pp. 551–552, 554.

(1451–1481). The bookbinding art in the Ottoman Empire began to develop with books prepared for Mehmet the Conqueror and some innovations were made.[8] In this period, Mehmet the Conqueror took over as protector of the book arts from his father, and Turkish bookbinding gained its peculiar characteristics. The first model of Islamic bookbinding in patent leather (a bookbinding technique for manuscripts using bright leather – a kind of lacquered binding) belongs to this period,[9] and Seljuk influence is clearly seen. The books written for the private library of Mehmet the Conqueror were in a style that blazed a new art trail with its calligraphy, ornamentation, bookbinding, and even the paper. Although the bookbindings of this period share similarities with the ones made in the previous period – that of Tamerlane, Karakoyunlu, Akkoyunlu, and the Mamluks- their styles are different. Those made in Mehmet's palace bookbinding workshop show that classical Turkish bookbinding art reached a high level. We see that Hatayi, Rumi, and cloud motifs were used; the bookbindings were ornamented with gold and also they were glued the background with a different colour by engraving the, mainly black, leather (the technique of cutting out a text, a painting or a figure with a special little sharp pencil and gluing it to another ground, a delicate Turkish engraving art). Some bookbindings were ornamented by gluing marbled or other colourful paper inside them. The şemses are sliced in the shape of shuttles with salbeks (the name given to the extensions of the şemse ornamentation in the shape of the sun). There are also some with sliced, round şemses and some with entire covers in Hatayi designs. Şemses, salbeks, and cover panels are all in one piece, and the leather and murakka (the name given to the cardboard made by gluing a few papers to be used in the cover of the bookbinding, which are under the leather) are not engraved for this reason, so the embossed height of the designs is very short. Nevertheless, the motifs are clearly recognized. In some of them, tahrir (line drawn on the four sides of the page in order to enclose the borders of the writing) are drawn on the border of the designs.

[8] *Baºbakanlık Osmanlı Arºivindeki Belge Türleri, Padiºah Elyazmaları ve Belge Restorasyonu*, ed. İ. Binark et al., İstanbul 1997, p. 197.

[9] Z. Tanındı, *Cilt*, [in:] *Eczacıbaºı Sanat Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 1, İstanbul 1997, p. 348.

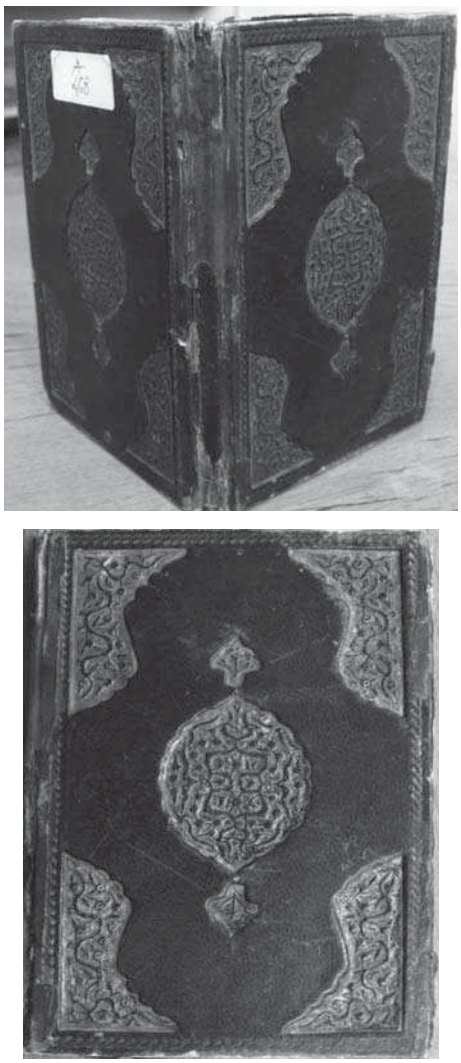


Figure 2–3. 15th century bookbinding (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: National Library of Turkey, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Works, no. A 468.

The inner cover is covered with claret red and light brown leather and is ornamented with müşebbek (katı'a) şemse.[10] The corner panel on the ground is gilded. In some bookbindings, this ornamentation is located in

[10] A şemse type made by dyeing the background with eye-catching colors and gluing thinly engraved leather ornamentation onto this ground.

the Sertab (rectangular piece attached to the mikleb functions as a bookmark and tuck). The katı'a (carving ornamentation on paper and/or leather engraving) ornamentation in the inner cover is very thin and colourful in Iranian bookbindings, but in those of Mehmet the Conqueror, the ornamentation is usually thicker and with two colours. The latter are very attractive and elegant. In Mehmet the Conqueror's private library were books he had ordered to be written, or copied, and brought there from the science centres of the time, showing the importance which the sultan gave to science and art aside from his political and military genius. In Mehmet the Conqueror's embroidery house, ornamentation was given height by embroidering around the floral motifs, which were styled in the manuscripts by smearing ground gold with a brush and a sharp, pointed wheel device. The bookbindings made in this style were masterpieces. The delicacy and elegance of katı'a art are seen inside the covers (see fig. 2–3). The clearest type of fifteenth century Turkish classical bookbinding has stylized plant motifs with naturalistic characters, Hatayi, Penç, Rumi, cloud, leaf, rosebound, awl (lance pointed ornamentation drawn around the şemse), and finial in the marquetry, printed using moulds. The outer covers of the bookbindings of this century show extraordinary harmony with şemse on sertab and mikleb (triangle or trapezoid rectangle piece bound to the undercover; it covers the mouth of the book and its point enters between the upper and inner covers), salbek, corner panel, borders (the section surrounding the cover in classical bookbindings), and composition harmony. An additional technique of the time is decorating the inner cover with a colour different from the one on the outer cover, using dye or gold.

In this period, besides the various tones of brown, purple-brown, purple, red, blue, very dark green, olive green, tahini colour and black leather were also used; some of them are found especially in the inner covers. While these bookbindings are usually ornamented with a triple leaf (seberg),[11] flower bud, rose geranium leaf, finial, penç, hatayi, middletie (agraf), awl, lily, rose, and rumi tenons, there is rarely scenery, complex ornamentation or liveliness in the motifs. In the fifteenth century, lacquered and cloth bindings were also made in addition to leather bindings. This was a rising age for Turkish bookbinding. The Ottoman rulers' love of reading caused an atmosphere beneficial to the development of book art (see fig. 2–3).

[11] In Persian *se* means "three" and *berg* means "leaf".

The bookbindings of this period took up to six months to complete and were very costly. The writing and binding of a book could take several years. In order to prevent the şemse and other ornamentation, which would be embroidered on the leather of the binding, from damaging, the pieces of the cardboard in these sections would be engraved and exchanged with thinner cardboard. This application made for the front and back covers was the same for mikleb, which is an extension of the undercover. After that, the leather to be put on the covers would be shaved such a way that its curls would be thinner; it would be washed, dried as it stretched, and covered with cardboards.

The front cover opens to the right; the back cover opens to the left with the mikleb. The space between the spine and covers is called mukat payı (cut share); the space between the covers and the mikleb and sertab is called dudak (lip-leb). The sertab is put in front of the book, the triangular-pointed mikleb hold the sertab and enters between the book and front cover; it is also used as a bookmark.[12]

In the period of Bayezid II, besides the classical leather binding, there were many çaharkuşe (a type of bookbinding whose edges are covered with leather and the middle is covered with paper, cloth bindings). The cloths used were not specially woven for bindings. The cloth used for the bookbindings was woven in Istanbul and Bursa or brought from Damascus and China. The covers were surrounded with leather, and the middle was covered with silk cloth, either checkered or ribbed in two colours. The inner part of some of these covers is ornamented with müşebbek şemse in the style of the Mehmet the Conqueror's embroidery house.

As sometimes demonstrated in this period, blue was occasionally used on outer covers as a ground colour for centre- and corner pieces. More commonly, though, it was used to accompany gold as a partly-coloured ground for filigree panels on the doublures, as it had been on occasion during Mehmet II's reign. An innovation of Bayezid II's reign was to introduce green as a third colour, as, for example, on a manuscript dated 1500. This use of partly-coloured backgrounds for the filigree harks back, in concept, though not in detail, to the cloud-collar style of the 1450s, and the same can be said about the other features of Bayezid II's manuscripts, such as the burgundy outer covers and the greater sense of space.

[12] M. E. Özen, op. cit., p. 11.

Sixteenth Century (Classical Period)

The sixteenth century is the most remarkable period for the bookbinding art of the Ottoman Empire, rightly called the classical period. This type of bookbinding depended on the development of Ottoman leather working, which could produce leather of every colour since the beginning of the sixteenth century. In this period, the ornamentation does not cover the whole surface as in Iranian bindings. The bindings had a plain beauty with both upper and under separating şemses.[13] In this century, şemses were only oval. As in the bookbindings of the fifteenth century, although the spaces between the embossed şemse and corner panels were left empty, sometimes mülemma şemses (gilded ornamentation) which were filled with embossed and Halkari (şemse whose motifs and embossed parts are ornamented with gold) motifs were made. The cloth bindings with leather and the leather bindings with cloth of this period are very attractive. The inner covers continued the tradition of the fifteenth century, but borders were widened and round or oval cartouches (border pieces) were set in the designs, and stylized pomegranate flowers, sextet flowers, çintemani cloud (Chinese cloud) and especially serrated leaf motifs can be seen along with the fifteenth century motifs. Çintemani motifs were especially used together with rumi and hatayi scrolls/clouds on bookbindings in this period. Çintemani style is known as three spot or pelenk (in Persian). Çintemani style traditionally was used to ornament bookbindings; one spot is above and two spots are bottom.[14]

Book arts and classical bookbinding reached its zenith during the sixteenth century. Typically, şemses were shuttles with salbeks; corner panels, surrounding water, zencirek[15] and cedvel[16] are found in the bindings; and the şemses and other designs were mostly made in multiple parts; this parted şemse was ornamented with salbeks, corner panels, upper and under separating motifs. In classical Turkish bookbinding, the part between şemse and corner panels was usually left empty, but in a few

[13] Embossed motifs are left as in the color of the leather, if the ground is gold it is called "under separating şemse"; the ground is left in the color of the leather, if the motifs are gold it is called "upper separating şemse".

[14] Z. Tanındı, *Books and Bindings*, [in:] *Ottoman Civilization*, vol. 2, ed. H. İnalcık, G. Renda, İstanbul 2003, p. 858.

[15] A chain design made with gold between the two lines on the edges of the covers.

[16] Surrounding the text part of the pages, a frame that is formed with a thick and a thin gilded line.

bookbindings this part was ornamented. In this century, inner cover decoration also developed. While using colourful leather in addition to the gold in the ground of motifs in the sixteenth century katı'a, the designs of the outer cover were applied to the inner covers entirely, but a different-coloured leather was chosen for the inner cover.[17]



Figure 4. A sample of 16th century lacquered Safevid bookbinding (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts Inventory, no. 489.

"Light-shadow reflecting" is attractive feature of this period's illuminations. This is obtained by using light and dark shades of the same colour of ink on the same background. Bouquets, vases with flowers, and fruit baskets are the most common motifs of the period.[18]

The leathers of choice in this period were Moroccan leather (goat leather) and tanned leather (sheep leather), but gazelle and camel leathers were also used. Besides the various tones of black and brown, red, cherry-red, green, blue, and purple were used. Cloth-covered bookbindings became even more beautiful in this century. One example has red satin cloth embroidered with the leather binding motifs before it covered the cardboard. Motifs were drawn by the bookbinding masters, called zerduzi.[19] At this time, one of the most important bookbinding styles was

[17] M. E. Özen, op. cit., pp. 17–18.

[18] F. Ç. Derman, *Osmanlı Asırlarında, Üslup ve Sanatkarlarıyla Tezhip Sanami*, [in:] *Osmanlı Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 11, Ankara 1999, p. 112.

[19] Bookbinding on which realistic motifs are embroidered with yellow, pink, and

murassa (jewelled) bookbinding; in these, wood or cardboard was covered with gold and silver plaques and the surfaces of the plaques are curved out like lacework or are decorated with jewels. Most murassa bindings have a magnificent impact reflecting all the opulence of the Ottoman court. This kind technique was usually applied on the Kor'an or other important religious works.



Figure 5. A sample of mid of the 16th century embroidered bookbinding

Source: Topkapı Palace Museum Library TSM, no. H. 1365.[20]

In the first half of the sixteenth century, innovations were made to the traditional ornamentation style with leather covers having recessed şemse and corner panels and patent leather covers having şemse and corner panels; new elements were also formed. One new characteristic peculiar to Turkish bookbinding occurs with recessed şemse,[21] şemse with corner panels leather bindings. Two groups of ornamentation was made with moulds for the corner panels. One of them uses oval, sliced şemse and a group of leaves in the corner panel or a few thin branches emerging from the pedicel curl in the şemse as scattered and turn. Khanjary leaves

green silver threads. See O. Aslanapa, *Osmanlı Devri Cilt Sanatı*, "Türkiyemiz" 1982, vol. 13, no. 38, pp. 12–17, 43–44.

[20] Z. Tanındı, *Kitap ve Cildi*, [in:] *Osmanlı Uygarlığı*, vol. 2, prepared by H. İnalcık, G. Renda, İstanbul 2003, p. 856.

[21] Embossed şemse fixed on the engraved cardboard.

and hatayis in various shapes are arranged in a row on these branches. A huge hatayi is put in the salbek. This ornamentation (called rush style) is repeated in the şemse and corner panels of the mikleb. In some examples, the designs are developed by making branches and leaves in the şemse, making more hatayis, with hatayi bouquets on one edge of the khanjary leaf which comes from the middle of the hatayis. The ornamentation of the wide border of the binding is the same as that of the şemse and corner panels. The şemse, corner panel, border background, or all ornamentation were gilded.[22]

Seventeenth Century Bookbinding

Sizes of books from the 17th century are quite big. It is seen that the inner and outer covers of the bindings were ornamented with graded rush style, and the wide recessed border with gilded şemse and corner panel were ornamented with cloud and rumi, and the branches were ornamented with hatayi. Ornamenting some outer covers with brush in rush style as if it were a Chinese panel and dying the ornamentations with gold gild are the innovations of the bookbinders in the design of bookbindings.[23]

In the 17th century, the bindings which were completely covered by gold sheet and ornamented with valuable stones attracted attention. In this period ornamentations were made inside of the bindings with this engraving technique. Ornamentations in different technique can be seen in the bindings. After the 17th century, embroidering on the leather was used widely in the ornamenting of bindings. Naturalist floral motifs can be seen in the embroidered colourful and silver threads. At later times, embroidering on clothes bindings are seen. However, in the 17th century the decline of the Ottoman Empire began to affect the art life and the bookbinding art was also influenced by this decline. There was no difference in binding production in this century. However, an obvious regression in the composition and workmanship of ornamentative motifs is striking. Corner panels and border ornamentations were usually left, instead of them big şemses resembling a rectangle which has projections on

[22] Z. Tanındı, *Türk Cilt Sanatı, Baºlangıçtan Bugüne Türk Sanatı*, Ankara 1993, p. 425.

[23] Idem, *Osmanlı Sanatında Cilt*, [in:] *Osmanlı Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 11, Ankara 1999, p. 107.

the top and sides were used alone as an ornamentation. In the same bindings oval şemse rarely continued to be made but there were some shape changes. A thick gold zencirek was drawn as an outer border. Although it can be set forth that the salbeks lost their beauty since they were made bigger by the bookbinders who continued the classical composition, it should be accepted that there are very beautiful bookbinding models belonging to this century.[24]

In this period, unproductiveness can be seen in the bookbinding as in the other art branches parallel to the unproductive period of the Ottoman Empire. In the models which were faithful to the classical forms salbeks got bigger and came close to the corner panels. There is no harmony between the motifs embroidered on the şemse and corner panels and the motifs of borders. A regression in workmanship is also seen in this century. Despite all of them, the bookbindings of this century protected its nobility by using gold and various harsh colours randomly.

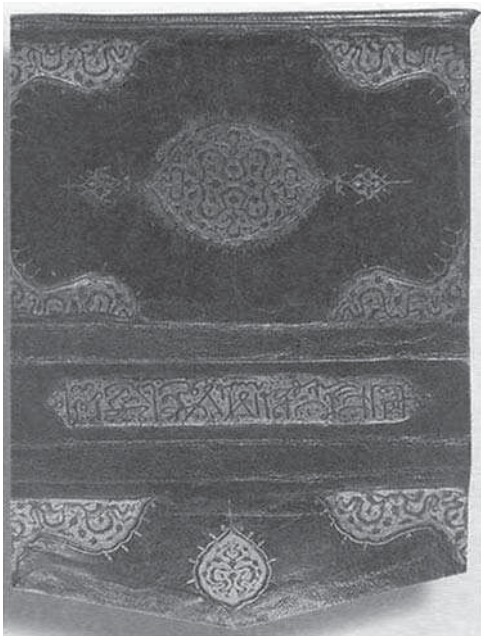


Figure 6. A sample of 17th century (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: IRCICA Library (Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture), Koran – Nuri Arlasez Collection, no. 312.

[24] K. Çığ, *Türk Kitap Kapları*, İstanbul 1953, p. 18.

Despite the proportionless motifs, Turkish bookbinders did not lose their colour purity and did not use gold gild and harsh colours randomly. It can be thought that the proportion changes of composition, getting bigger of salbeks, leaving the corner panels and borders in some bindings and occurring of the big rectangular şemses in the bookbindings of the 17th century is a search for innovation after the perfectness of the 16th century.[25] Corner pieces and borders were removed in some covers, a part of şemses was transformed to rectangular and some to oval shape, and thick zencireks were drawn around them instead of borders.

A combination of the rumi and tchi motifs can be seen on some of the stamped bindings. Some examples are identical in decoration and the outer covers of both of these bindings as well as that on are made up of a large central rectangular panel which is stamped with two impressions from the same dye, the central join clearly visible. Within the design, the scalloped medallion and decorative extensions on the vertical axis (salbek) stand out quite plainly but the medallions themselves and the surrounding areas are filled with elaborate tchi and rumi forms. This type of design with elaborate gold paper filigree decoration on the doublures is typical of the bindings produced from the late 17th century and 18th century onwards.

Eighteenth and Nineteeth Century Bookbinding

The eighteenth century books become quite large. Their inner and outer binding covers were ornamented with graded rush style; the wide, recessed border was decorated with gilded şemse; the corner panels were ornamented with cloud and rumi designs; and the branches were ornamented with hatayi. Innovations of this century in bookbinding include decorating some outer covers by brush in rush style as if they were Chinese panels and gilding the decoration.[26]

In this period ornamentations were made inside of the bindings with an embossing technique. After the seventeenth century, embroidering on the leather was used widely. Natural floral motifs can be seen in the embroidered coloured and silver threads. At later times, embroidery on cloths bindings is seen. However, in the seventeenth century the decline

[25] M. E. Özen, op. cit., p. 19.

[26] Z. Tanındı, *Osmanlı Sanatında Cilt*..., p. 19.

of the Ottoman Empire began to affect artistic life and the art of bookbinding was also influenced by this decline. Not that there was a difference in binding production, but a regression in the composition and workmanship of ornamental motifs is obvious. The corner panels and border ornamentations were usually omitted, and large şemses resembling a rectangle with projections on the top and sides were used alone instead. In the same bindings, oval şemses continued but were rare. A thick, gold zencirek was drawn as the outer border. Although it can be suggested that the salbeks lost their beauty since they were made larger by the bookbinders who maintained the classical composition, it should be noted that there are examples of very beautiful bookbinding in this century.[27]



Figure 7. A sample of 17th century (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: University of Ankara, Library of Faculty of Letters, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Books, no. A 190.

Classical covers continued to be made in the eighteenth century. However, a revival occurred and bookbinding enjoyed another golden age due to the encouragement of Ahmet III (1703–1730) and to the grand vizier of the period, Nevşehirli Damat İbrahim Paºa. Besides the eighteenth-century classical bookbindings, which were at least as good as those of the period of Süleyman I (the Magnificient), lacquered bindings also became

[27] K. Çığ, op. cit., p. 18.

widespread. Apart from the classical covers, four new types occurred in the eighteenth century:

Bindings with realistic motifs:

- These motifs are embroidered with gilded silver threads onto the leather,
- The classical composition is protected, but the motifs are naturalized,
- Bindings with decoration stamped onto the gilded leather (yekşah). The motifs are still classical and stylized but the technique is new,
- European Rococo style bindings (in the second half of the century),
- Lacquered bindings-beautiful works produced by illuminators and painters.[28]

The numbers of the bookbindings with şemse decreased markedly; zilbahar (lattice work, a design made by drawing a four-sliced leaf motif with pounded gold sheet and lines in the shape of a railing) bindings became widespread in the eighteenth century. Furthermore, with the increase of the pressed work, leather, satin, and velvet bindings, with one cover ornamented with a gilt Ottoman coat of arms and one with a moon-star were made in addition to the western leather bindings. Floral motifs usually dominated in the cover ornamentation (şükufe style). Lacquered (patent leather) and yekşah bindings and the bindings with realistic motifs became widespread. In the yekşah style, the gilded leather is ornamented by inlaying yekşah leather, and the motifs are stylised rumi and hatayi motifs of the classical bindings with şemse. Motifs of rose, carnation, pomegranate, tulip, poppy, lily, and hyacinth were painted as bouquets, as single, double, or triple borders in a delicate, artistic way. Using engraved ornamentation and embroidering gilded silver threads on the leather plus the signatures of the artists on the cover are characteristic of this period's bindings. The clearest characteristic of the period is cover compositions with deformed şemse, corner panels, cartouches, and colourful flowers in bouquets.[29]

Flowers have an important place in the illuminations of the eighteenth century. Naturalist bouquets and flowers in the page centre begin to be seen frequently in this period. In general, as flowers started to dominate the works of this period, the motifs of the classical period lost their impor-

[28] B. Mutlu, *Türk Cilt Sanatına Toplu Bir Bakış*, "Akademi" 4: 1966, p. 54.

[29] E. Özdeniz, *Türk Cilt Sanatı*, "Sanat Dünyamız" 1981, vol. 21, pp. 13–25.

tance. Flowers were preferred, even in awls. Making lacquered bookbinding also became widespread in this period. And flower miniatures are frequently found on the first or last pages of prayer books in this period.[30]

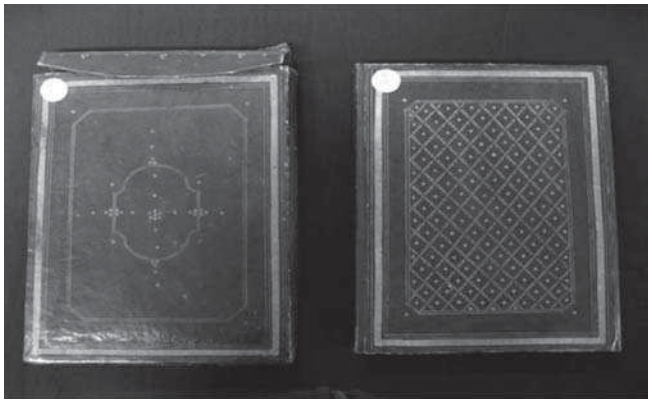


Figure 8. Classical leather cover binding and its bookcase in 19th century (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: University of Ankara, Library of Faculty of Letters, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Books, no. B 39.



Figure 9. Example of inner cover of 19th century Turkish bookbinding with marble design (photo by H. Anameriç)

Source: University of Ankara, Library of Faculty of Letters, Section of Manuscripts and Rare Books, no. B 52.

[30] Y. Demiriz, *Tezhip Sanatı* [on-line]. İstanbul Üniversitesi [access: 30 November 2012]. Available in Internet: http://www.istanbul.edu.tr/Bolumler/guzelsanat/tezhip.htm.

Very beautiful examples of classical bindings with şemse were made in this period. Ornamentation of the outer and inner covers increased; leather of every colour and abundant gold were used. The European Baroque-Rococo style affected both the illumination bookbinding arts; şemses and corner panels were ornamented with flowers and leaves.[31] More circular, narrow and long şemses became widespread. Helical rumis and dots were made with a special device and vases filled with flowers were made with a brush in this type of şemse. In some bindings, the outer and inner covers were made by a device and a brush and ornamented with gilded and plastered baklava shapes. And in some, the outer cover was covered with cloth and the inner cover was ornamented with bouquets (in the later part of this period).[32]

In şükufe style, widespread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, natural or stylised floral miniatures, bouquets, flowers with or without a vase, or only flowers were painted. These flowers were sometimes applied alone on the cover and sometimes classical şemse binding forms (salbek, şemse, corner panel) were prepared and realistic floral motifs were set with the classical technique. Covers were ornamented with embroidery and pressed with moulds of salbek, şemse and, corner panel with realistic floral motifs.[33]

The medallions of the doublures are decorated in a wide range of colours and materials. Some bindings have gold paper filigree over a blue, orange, turquoise, and black paper background. The doublure of another eighteenth century binding has all the decoration, including the medallion and tchi motifs, in elaborate gold leather filigree over a blue silk ground.[34]

In eighteenth-century bindings, the exterior covers are divided into a main rectangular panel with two small panels above and below. The main panel is decorated all over with tchi forms stamped in relief, within and between which are flowers picked out in blue paint. The exterior covers all have a central medallion and corner-pieces, but the latter have been extended so that they actually join on all four sides. This is an innovation of the late eighteenth century that was further developed in the

[31] E. Özdeniz, op. cit., p. 19.

[32] Z. Tanındı, *Osmanlı Sanatında Cilt*..., p. 107.

[33] Z. Balkanal, *Bilgi ve Sanatı Kaplayan Sanat: Ciltçilik*, [in:] *Türk Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 12, Ankara 2002, p. 346.

[34] D. Haldane, *Islamic Bookbindings in the Victoria and Albert Museum*, London 1983, p. 139.

early years of the following century. The colours became more sombre and tomato-red is particularly common.[35]

The bindings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were decorated by embroidering gilded silver threads and silver on velvet. All bindings had a leather frame so that their durability was provided. They were made with paper and marbling in the same way. Lacquered bindings are an important group of in this period. Gold and various colours of rumi, hatayi, clouds, and natural floral motifs were used on dark-coloured backgrounds in the ornamentation. Besides the classical motifs used in the first half of the eighteenth century, scenery, flowers, and bouquet designs have been used in outer and inner covers up to the nineteenth century.

In these centuries workmanship lost its delicacy, and colours lost their bright and lively appearance. It is seen that both classical motifs belonging to the classical period and illumination understanding were kept and also the influence of Europe started to be felt in the work especially in the last decade of this century.[36] While poor quality, classical, leather covers continued into the nineteenth century, the yekşah and baroque-rococo bindings of the eighteenth century were in demand. It is not possible to talk about any style for the last period of Turkish bookbinding, which is completely different from the classical style. The decorations of the covers were sometimes made using older Turkish motifs, but mainly they were influenced by German and French bookbinding. The following types are seen in the bookbinding of this period (made with big presses and more modern implements): leather appliqué, lacquered, half-leather binding cloth, half-leather marbled or batik, artificial leather, and paper-covered.[37]

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire and financial crisis affected the bookbinding art, and Turkish bookbinding has abandoned its position to modern bookbinding as of the beginning of the twentieth century.

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[35] Ibidem.

[36] F. Ç. Derman, op. cit., p. 114; A. S. Arıtan, op. cit., p. 557.

[37] *Ciltçilik*, [in:] *Türk Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 7, İstanbul 2002, pp. 551––552.

Conclusion

In the Ottoman period, the holy Kor'an and other religious books were ornamented much like jewellery. Moreover, the Ottoman padishahs' love of books and of founding libraries resulted in rich collections and showy books, reaching the highest level of the bookbinding art as an artistic branch of the Ottoman Empire. While the bookbinding art reached its peculiar characteristics because of the concern of the padishahs and statesmen and the economical situation of the country in centuries, change of materials and ornamentation techniques used in bookbinding showed themselves in different schools. These bindings, made with cost and work, have succeeded to reach today from the fifteenth century and are protected with their priceless value in Turkish libraries and museums and exhibit the taste and magnificence of the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman art of manuscript ornamentation in colour varies according to periods. In the art of illumination the use of colour was not random; colours were used by considering the symbolic meaning of each colour. For example, while the basic material, gold symbolizes the sun, yellow, the colour of light, is used as the symbol of knowledge. Blue and dark blue symbolize the sky as the colour of eternity. Whereas blue, white, green, black, and orange were mostly used separately in manuscript illuminations in the beginning of the fifteenth century, gold, blue and dark blue started to be used frequently toward the end of the century. The period when gold, blue, and dark blue were used is the period when the Ottoman Empire reached its peaks. This period is the sixteenth century, and it is known as the classical period of the Ottoman Illumination period. The Ottoman art of the illumination was under the influence of Europe since the middle of the eighteenth century, light-shadow contrast, which is peculiar to Baroque and Rococo art, is also seen. In this period, using light and dark versions of colour gave depth by means of perspective.[38]

Bookbinding is a field of study worth researching. In the Ottoman art of bookbinding, carving and inlay were executed using every kind of metal, wooden, leather, and painting material, making the Ottoman manuscripts rich sources reflecting cultural and artistic characteristics of the materials and ornamentation techniques. The ornamentation of manuscripts written for important persons such as sultans, viziers, etc., was

[38] Ş. Aksoy, *Kitap Süslemelerinde Türk Barok ve Rokoko Üslubu*, "Kültür Bakanlığı Sanat Dergisi" 1977, vol. 6, p. 130.

given great importance. This kind of binding was covered with gold leaf, ornamented with jewels and various illumination motifs.

In considering the manuscript arts of the Ottoman Empire from the beginning to the time of dissolution, it can be demonstrated that this art form developed in parallel with the socio-politic development of the empire. This art gained new forms through the course of the empire that were characteristic of the Ottoman Empire; developments obtained by uniting foreign art trends with the existing ones.

The Art of Bookbinding in the Ottoman Empire (Fifteenth to Nineteenth Centuries)

[Sztuka osmańskiego zdobnictwa książki w XV–XIX w.]

Streszczenie: Artykuł prezentuje sztukę osmańskiego zdobnictwa książki, jego ewolucję i rozwój między XV a XIX w. Okres ten został scharakteryzowany przez przybliżenie metod i technik introligatorskich oraz materiałów, z których wykonano oprawy. Przedstawione interpretacje są wynikiem analizy wybranych opraw przechowywanych w różnych bibliotekach. Zaprezentowane oprawy, wykonane z rozmaitych materiałów przy użyciu różnych technik, są przykładem rozwoju sztuki introligatorskiej w imperium osmańskim na przestrzeni XV–XIX w. W artykule nie podjęto zagadnienia europejskiego introligatorstwa i jego wpływu na sztukę imperium osmańskiego w XIX w.

Słowa kluczowe: imperium osmańskie, introligatorstwo tureckie, rękopisy, sztuka introligatorska, zdobnictwo książki