

**BOOK AND EARLY PERIOD FORMS – PLATE AND DESIGN  
RELATION**

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**Abstract:**

The Koran, main book of the Islam civilization takes place in base of various art forms. The book elements such as superscription, interior face of binder, title, epilogue, heading of sura (section of the Koran) applied during the centuries by the ornamentation are available in all scientific, historical and literary artworks. These forms of the ornamentation within the book as well as periods and changed styles had also continued their improvement. The ornamentation and the script in its center had met in the books firstly and this togetherness had demonstrated a full compliance at the classic period. Presentation wish of the script and the ornamentation getting out of the book pages and targeting more independent and more persons was also a precipitating of improvement in the script and the ornamentation.

The cuts and *murakka* which could be accepted as early period forms other than books had enabled to presentation of the calligraphy and the illumination as a plate with their ornamentation concepts resembling books but becoming free. The tughras and illuminated edicts which were the basis of the Turkish-Islam plate concept are considered. At ornamentation of the tughras, it is possible to see the ornamentation in the certificate which sent by the Sultan was thought for a nice presentation of an entire artwork.

While the style difference which is in view at any time are evaluated in any way, big change in the forms and presentation style must not be overlooked. If it is possible to see a plate as the interior decoration of the architecture or a space, of course we must also count inscriptions and ornamentations among basic concepts which constitute such style.

While some forms such as *hilye's*, mosque scripts were starting the plate tradition, improvement of the apparent scripts and aesthetic caught by the calligraphers at this field had encountered to the periods when the Turkish ornamentation had under the influence of the west.

The master illuminators of XX<sup>th</sup> century achieved to ascribe the classic period ornamentation concept next to the calligraphy art which continuing still the peak progression with a big effort. Thus, in fact, the ornamentation get out of only book met with the classic concept again after its style adventures.

**Key words:** Illumination, Plate, Manuscript, Kıt'a, Hilye, Edict.

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## INTRODUCTION

Ornamentation and calligraphy are an inseparable whole with togetherness continuing for years. It is possible to see this integrity at ornament of pages such as superscription, interior face of binder, title, epilogue, heading of sura (section of the Koran), heading of chapter within Koran and manuscripts. This togetherness had continued with changed liking and styles during the periods. The ornament is seen mostly at superscription and inner cover pages in Koran. At such pages; on the areas other than written parts of the superscription; interior and exterior moldings, captions, *koltuk* (armchair) designs, inscription edges reflect ornamentation elements of their period in all their glory. Headings of sura, title pages, roses (prostrating, fraction, portion, sura), epilogue pages are also the ornament elements which adding beauty to the inscription at the Koran books.

During centuries, while the book arts are crowned as improving together manuscripts, it is followed up being independent, exhibiting separately wishes and working for both of calligraphy and illumination within the history. Other than book pages, togetherness of calligraphy and illumination continues at a new culvert which seen more after 19<sup>th</sup> century. While the calligraphers were writing their exercises, apothegm and hoard on the form called “plate”; the illuminators also were starting to illuminate this new form other than page excluding

### 1. EARLY PERIOD CALLIGRAPHY AND ORNAMENTATION FORMS

While the inscription was continuing by improving at the book pages, of course, the calligraphy works which animating the places and architecture with its ornament were applications which executing function of the plate tradition which would be in demand later and initializing to this trend. We can consider *murakka* (thick slab achieved with over and over fixed papers) which has inscription and ornament albums as an interim application of passing to the plate from the book. *Murakka* means to gather papers and to prepare them as albums (Acar, 1999, p. 119).



*Picture 1: Sülüs- Nesih Kit'a Calligraphy: Hafiz Osman*

The *kit'a* tradition which started at Arabs had improved in different ways through Iranians. It had continued its improvement at the Ottoman calligraphy environment after 15<sup>th</sup> century and become a continuing form (Alpaslan, 2002, p. 506). The *kit'a*'s had been kept by sticking together from lower and upper edges in roll forms up to 16<sup>th</sup> century. After 16<sup>th</sup> century, firstly, it was fixed together on the same dimensioned cardboard and decorated its contours, then the *murakkaa* albums which we still encounter their examples were formed by bringing back to back and bracing its remaining three edges with a fine leather or a textile strip (Derman, 2002, p. 27).



Picture 2: Title Page, (AE 772 Meşair'üş- Şu'ara) İstanbul, Millet Library.

While the *kit'a's* were kept together within such alumes, then, they were presented in a plate style as a single artwork. As of second half of XVI<sup>th</sup> century, it was started to give important examples in terms of both of calligraphy art and illumination art for *murakka* which may be also called as inscription album. It was seen that two or three interior moldings or only one interior molding called *templet* was used at *kit'a's* which occurring *murakka*. Interim veins which considered the color, design and size are used. It is encountered to the most important ornaments at armchair designs for *murakka*. It is illuminated square and rectangle parts between right and left spaces of inscription. If the cut in the *murakka* is a few lines, reciprocal illuminations on each line edge are decorated in a same composition and same color. If it is needed to make armchair designs which have different sizes from each other at same line or *kit'a* the craftsman demonstrates his/her skill by preparing the composition as if the illuminated areas on both sides are same as one another.



**Picture 3:** Murakka, Illumination: Muhsin Demironat (Special Collection)

For the *murakka* whose *kit'a's* are placed as inclined, the triangle parts between the inscription line and the frame and called as amulet are illuminated. Frame of the illuminated *kit'a* is enriched by decorating with guilloche (Şanes Dođru, 1995, p. 2)<sup>1</sup>, double essay (Derman 2009, p. 526)<sup>2</sup>, or three thread rumi<sup>3</sup> (Derman, p. 532), motif (Özkeçeci, 2007, p. 171). It is preferred generally to make *zereşşan*<sup>4</sup> (Derman, p. 534) at outer moldings of such *kit'a's*.

At some examples, it is seen that the page edges are decorated with *halkar* (ornamentation made with golden). If there is wideness at line spaces of

<sup>1</sup> “Guilloche: is strips intersecting each other from below and from above as matting. Uninterrupted continuation of chain rings is feature of such motif type. There are many composition types made with punctuation style formed from small circles.”

<sup>2</sup> “Double Contour (Airy): It is a painting style used on the illumination. It is colored by interspacing the parts formed the motif as much contour. So it is called as airy. Because of the painting is started to draw two-sided contour firstly, it also is called as double contour.”

<sup>3</sup> “Three thread rumi: The molding design prepared with rumi motifs placed in form of following each other on the three spirals.”

<sup>4</sup> “Zer-eşşan: Sprinkling golden-ink on all paper with a brush equally. This operation is called as shaker zereşşan if it is made with golden foil put in a shaker.”



*murakka*, on the purpose of filling such spaces, golden or rarely colored ornamentation is called as *beyn-es sūtur* (between lines). If we accept integral artworks as plate other than books or if we deem them inception of the plate, we can say that *kit'a*'s, ratification certificates, edicts and *hilye*'s are foundation of the plates becoming popular later.



**Picture 4:** Kit'a, Calligraphy: Yedikuleli Seyyid Abdullah Efendi 1670, Sakıp Sabancı Museum

The ratification means permission, license, approval, privilege or certificate, diploma given to the students who completing science or art education. Graduation from calligraphy art as practicing styles and rules of the inscription from a master is to gain right to executing the calligraphy art and signing capacity. The given license is called as ratification certificate. The student who completing the inscription education and reaching to a level for getting the ratification imitates *kit'a* of one of old masters who selected by his teacher. The ratification certificate is prepared sometimes in a form of *murakka*, *hilye* or a magazine showing pedigree of the calligrapher. The teacher writes permission and approval sentences in Arabic under the imitated *kit'a* carefully. Other masters attended to the ratification ceremony organized write also an approval sentence next to the teacher's permission sentence (Serin, 2003, p. 354).

The ratification certificates are suitable to the plate form in terms of their written form. Miscellaneous ratification certificates given on different periods were made suitable for exhibiting to hang on the wall after they were ruled illuminated. Besides it is thought that Abdurrahman b. Yusuf b. Es Saiğ (died in 845/1441), the famous calligrapher lived in Egypt was first

person who gave first calligraphy ratification to his student, there is information about existence of the calligraphy ratification previously (Bakırcı & Çögenli, 2010, p. 6).



**Picture 5:** Illumination of Heading of Sura (Kur'an-ı Kerim) Rhodos, Gazi Ahmet Pasha Library. No:1



**Picture 6:** Sülüs- Nesih Diploma (İcazet) From İsmail Zühdi to Mustafa Rakım

Edict, diploma, (prose, property certificate, enfeoffment) and foundation certificates are the forms which have important place in the calligraphy art. They are also valuable due to their application areas in the inscription and ornamentation art and bringing the sense of art of their period

into the present as well as their historical importance, original characteristics (Acar, p. 116-188). There are sultan's signatures called 'alamet-i şerife' at the beginning of edicts and they include in orders of sultans. The Tughras (Sultan's signatures) (Ersoy, 1989, p. 14)<sup>5</sup>. On the certificates such as edict, diploma and foundation certificate had been illuminated according to pleasure at the period as one each symbol used instead of Ottoman emperors' signatures (Sultan's name, father's name, and "el muzaffer daima" (always victory) words). The edicts (Bayramoğlu, 1976, p. 18). Bearing the Sultan's tughra of the period and called as decree, *tevki*, medal, diploma, prose, *biti* or *yarlığ* were keeping in rolls at their periods. The Tughra had not pertained to only Sultans at first periods; there was also a tradition for the Sultans' sons that they were pressing their signatures on their written orders. Grand viziers, viziers, flag officers, etc. had used signatures resembling the Tughra on the official certificates. It did not encounter to pressing their the signatures of Sultans' sons after period of Sultan Selim the Stern. Also, allowance of signature press for the Grand viziers had been ended during period of Kemankeş Mustafa Pasha (1638-1643). The Tughra which accepted as completed its first evolvement during Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror and took a nice form As from period of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent had improved as from 18<sup>th</sup> century and it had taken its perfect form during last years of II<sup>nd</sup> Mahmud.



**Picture 7:** Epigraph (Çorlulu Ali Pasha Madrasah) Photographer: Assist. Prof. A. Sacit Açıkgözoğlu

<sup>5</sup> “... The Oldest Ottoman Tughra is on a foundation certificate given by Orhan Gazi in 1324. The oldest Tughra in Anatolia is on Saruhanoğlu İshak Bey's coin (1366-1378).. When we turned back more, we see that the sultan's tughra was drawn on letters, prose and diplomas at Great Seljuks and Anatolian Seljuks and also they were drawn by “Tuğrai”s. It is known that the Memluks tughras passing from Great Seljuks were improved more different from Anatolian Seljuks and Ottoman tughras. The Principalities and Ottoman tughras had a curved structure but the tughra arranged on a single line and without curved at the Memluks ...”



At Fuat Bayramoğlu's article titled "The Illuminated Edicts Approved by the Sultans", one of Professors of Naples University Turcologist Alessio Bombaci's statement was remarkable about the illuminated tughras in the Turkish Certificates Collection taken place in the Venice State archives in scope of the report submitted at International II<sup>nd</sup> Turkish Arts Congress in Venice in 1963 "*The Tughras i.e. characteristic monograms on the edicts of the Ottoman Sultans are not only interested the diplomatic as basic elements of official certificates but interested the art history as decorative and inscription art products*". It is also known that there is a study published by Prof. Dr. Ernst Kühnel, German art historian about art improvement of the tughras based on Turkish documents in Berlin State museums in 1955. Alessio Bombaci had expressed that richness of the ornament in the tughras which examined by him was subject to importance of the text in the edicts and respectability of the person sent. At the same time, he had stated that the tughra ornaments had proceeded to a different attack as of 16<sup>th</sup> century, had been produced one more valuable and careful artworks than the other one during this period when the painting had gained importance and respectability.

When it is looked at the tughras, it is generally seen that their ornaments are different each other, any of illuminations does not resemble other one. It is known that during the period until II. Murat and Sultan Selim the Stern, the tughras had been drawn by using golden ink and the letter contours had been written down with black ink and colored ink. It is seen that it had been used golden and cobalt on some tughras of II<sup>nd</sup> Mehmed the Conqueror, it had been added vermilion during II<sup>nd</sup> Bayezid. It is known that the tughra ornaments had proceeded to attack in parallel with improvement at the illumination on the inscriptions of the period in XVI<sup>th</sup> century; the muralists had produced one more valuable and careful artworks than the other one. Golden Horn work ornaments, different motif spirals and free cloud motifs in interior and exterior curves had been used during Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and while hatayi group motifs, decorated *rumi*, *piçide* (enwinding) *rumi*, cloud, *çintemani* designs, semi-stylized flowers such as tulip (yellow, red, blue), clove, rose, hyacinth, violet, narcissus, flowered springs, cypress continued to use in subsequent periods were transforming *kürsü* and curve parts of the tughra into a flower garden, the sedge style motifs had taken place in these ornaments. Also cuttlings and medallions in the tughras are seen among ornamentation elements. At VII<sup>th</sup> century, an impairment had been indicated on the illumination of tughras in comparison with the previous period. It is known that it was seen ash gray, green and pink on the tughras, in next periods also was added silver and lilac colors to them (Ersoy, *ibid.* p. 16). It was seen that during II<sup>nd</sup> Selim period, the tughra *seresi* (*kürsü*) had been canalized to a triangle form, it had been started to use interlaced curly branch ornaments at bottom parts of interior

curve (*beyze*). Painting of flowers within the composition drawn on the tughras according to their natural colours are one of factors providing colorfulness. The tughras had been illuminated in same care identically. It is followed the Baroque period with excessive and enthusiastic decoration features and afterwards the Turkish Rococo period. Multi-colored tulips, peonies, various *şükufeler* and especially rose bouquets were used intensively on the tughra illumination. It had discovered to examples that environment drawing had been provided with sedge style leaves on the tughras in XVII<sup>th</sup> and XIX<sup>th</sup> centuries. Also *halkar* had taken its place on the tughras ornamentation by using pink, blue, golden colors. During and after Sultan Abdülmecid period, it had been started to make sun beams with golden on sides of tughras. During and after Sultan Ahmet III period, it was given place to flowers in single or bundles for providing more beautiful appearance and filling the blanks out of tughras and especially right top cover (Acar, 1998, p. 112).

On the ornamentation of the tughras, while it was preferred firstly only inner of curves (*beyze's*), *elif's* (*tuğ*), and *zülûf's* or arms, it was seen during the Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, the ornaments had exceeded the around of the tughra, started to make in triangles growing and extending on top part with interior of the tughra and reached to the familiar form (Bayramoğlu, p. 19-37).

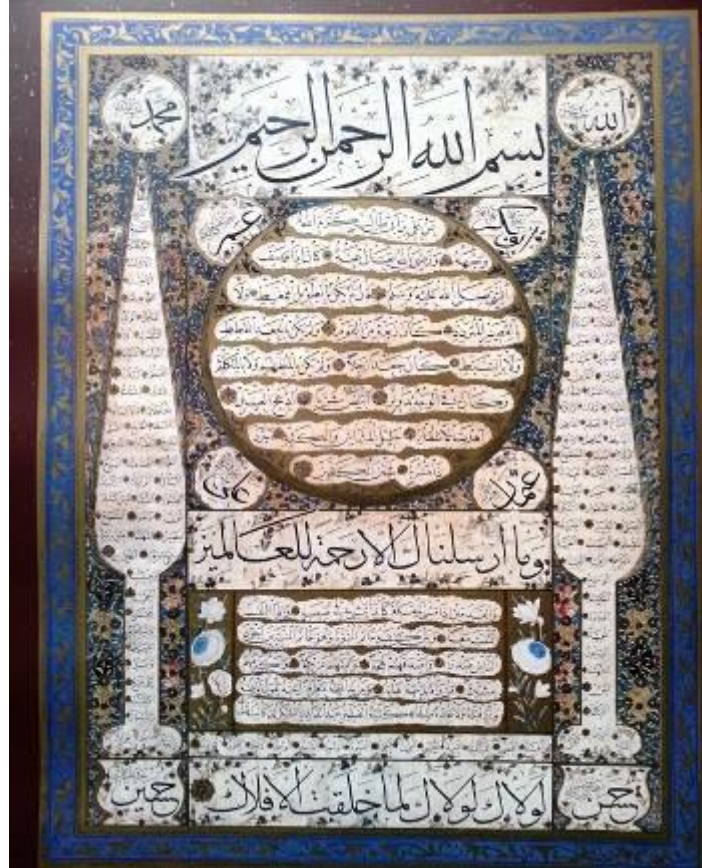
The tughras illuminated in different forms and designed for hanging on the wall as superscriptions are documents which displayed all characteristics of the embroidery style of the period in a single artwork as *murakka*.

The tughra form deteriorated because of west effect had been made in the best form in 18<sup>th</sup> century due to Mustafa Rakım, the Calligrapher had brought its sizes in proportion in 19<sup>th</sup> century. After this period, it had not been needed to illuminate the tughras (Derman, 2002, p. 35-36). While the tughras were ornamented, the ornaments brought superscription features to the edicts and diplomas sometimes were distributed in the edict text; it was tried to achieve an aesthetic presentation with full points and flowers (Sarıay, 2003, p. 11). In fact, it must be thought that the tughras need to handle with more special studies. Because, determination of ornament borders with letters, hoarding and inscription elements are not a feature met in other artworks. Filling blanks in the tughra with illumination had allowed to present ornamentation and inscription integrally.

## 2. SWITCH PLATES FROM PAGE

*Hilye's* may have an important place in the superscription form. The Muslims had carried the embellishment texts written with naskh calligraphy in their chest pocket as a sign of respect to Muhammad, the Prophet. It is known that this special text which expressing Muhammad the Prophet's

physical features, character, human and ethic qualifications as well as attitudes and behaviors had been brought by Hafız Osman who was the most famous calligrapher of 17<sup>th</sup> century in a superscription form; he had researched and found different *hilye* texts in order to improve this form; he had tried to write them with various trials (Özkeçeci, 2007, p.166)<sup>6</sup>.



**Picture 8:** Hilye-i Şerife Calligraphy: Abdülkadir Şükr-i (Special Collection)

The *hilye*'s in the superscription form were in a composition where basmala, versicle and four khalifs' names were written with naskh lines. Yedikuleli Seyyid Abdullah, Mahmud Celaleddin, Yesarizade, Kadiasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi, Mehmet Şefik, Mehmet Şevki, Yahya Hilmi, Hasan Rıza, Ahmet Kamil Akdik, Hamid Aytaç were some calligraphers who wrote

<sup>6</sup> "...in spite of it was said that the calligrapher arranged the first embellishment superscription was (Big) Derviş Ali, he had no any artwork found until today. It is accepted that the first known example was written by Hafız Osman (1642-1698)..."

nice *hilye*'s within their period after Hafız Osman. The *hilye*'s were written as small as carrying in the chest pocket and up to two meters in various sizes in order to hang on big walls.



**Picture 9:** Hilye-i Şerife, Sülüs- Nesih Calligraphy: Mâcid Ayral (1308/1891 1380/1961) Illumination: Rikkat Kunt, (1321/1903 - 1407/1986).

The interior ornamentation was decorated as illumination; outer molding was decorated in *halkar* style. However, it was met examples that interior and exterior parts were illuminated completely if it was written in very small sizes. “....it was seen that Mecca and Medina miniatures had been also made on the *hilye* compositions in the later XVIII<sup>th</sup> century. One more valuable *hilye*'s than the other in terms of the calligraphy art had been illuminated in baroque-rococo style in XIX<sup>th</sup> century and mostly the inscription had become of secondary importance by going to extremes...” (Taşkale & Gündüz, 2006, p. 17-37).



The superscriptions are apparent inscriptions which become popular in 19<sup>th</sup> century and written in order to hang on the walls (Acar, p. 133). However, previously it was possible to encounter the superscription examples in the early periods. The known oldest superscription examples are seen on the architectural artworks in the form of apparent inscription. Teknecizade İbrahim Efendi's inscriptions dated 1644 which stayed approximately 200 years in the Hagia Sophia are some examples of them. These inscriptions had been put away in 1849 when Hagia Sophia was restored by Fossati and it had been placed the inscriptions written by Kadiasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi (Kumbaracılar, "Turning Ayasofya into Museum and Judge of the Army Superscriptions, p. 222; Rado, 1984). It means we mention about a 400-year long background based on the oldest example of the superscription tradition known.



**Picture 10:** İsmail Zühdi 1806, Sakıp Sabancı Museum

*Celi sülüs* superscription dated 1110/ 1668-69 which known belonged to Sultan Mustafa II who was Hafız Osman's student and the superscription signed "*Hak-i pa-yı Nakşibendi Hasan ed-Defteri sabık*" dated 1192/1778-79 are among early examples. It was understood that at such superscriptions it had been used western ornamentation elements away from classic understanding (the Turkish Rococo) and letters and hoard rules hat not been placed yet exactly in apparent inscriptions (Karadaş, 2004, p. 30-31). In XIX<sup>th</sup> century, upon being absolute of letters of apparent script by Mustafa Rakım, the calligrapher, other calligraphers had also started to prepare their hoards with this script which was in demand at the present time. The superscription usage had increased at big architectural spaces in 19<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the most important examples of this period is *alsociharyar-ı güzin* superscriptions in the Hagia Sophia as mentioned above (Mert, 2000, p. 145). Based on the inscription written by Abdülfettah Efendi and Şefik Bey on walls of the Bursa Ulu Mosque, the building is alike to a superscription museum (Ayverdi, 1989, p. 142). The superscriptions of some calligraphers such as Kadıasker Mustafa İzzet Efendi, Sami Efendi, Rakım, Hasan Rıza, Şefik, Nazif take place on the walls of Cihangir Mosque which had been restructured in 1307/1890 (Altun, 1993, p. 539). Abdullah Zühdi Efendi, İsmail Hakkı Altunbezer were calligraphers who had also given the superscription examples. İsmail Hakkı Altunbezer is famous with his superscriptions whose scripts wrote and made its illuminations himself in style of the Turkish Rococo.



**Picture 11:** Superscription, Calligraphy: Macit Akdik,  
Illumination: İsmail Hakkı Altunbezer, İstanbul, Painting  
and Sculpture Museum

They were produced by using sculpturing, painting and sticking techniques. The superscriptions were enriched with kit'a words of wisdom, hoarding. Some forms such as *armudi*, *müsenna*, *beyzi*, etc. had been used at these hoardings according to their periods. Scribbles also may be evaluated within the superscription form. The calligraphers had hoarded plants, geometric designs, Mevlevi coins, mosque, pitcher, small boat and various animals (stork, lion, camel, etc.) other than classic inscription forms. Thus, a new style had appeared from collocation of the inscription-illustration; it also had started to take place on the walls in process of superscriptions.

While the superscription ornament was only tabulating of the inscriptions previously, it had been decorated as the Turkish Rococo style according to the appreciation of the period in 18 and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There was no a certain discipline at the ornaments until midway through 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was started to apply an ornamentation program reflecting to nowadays and had certain standards for the superscriptions decorated by Muhsin Demironat and Rikkat Kunt who were illuminators of the period as using classical decoration elements.

### 3. ASSESSMENT

Finally, the Koran had existed initially. The decoration of the book pages had gained importance together with worth its name ornamentation desire of the Koran and various scientific books. Firstly, the inscription in the page had taken been out both of book covers at the architectural field with aesthetical concerns in order to read from long distance. While the epigraph and large letters were continuing in the ornamentation program of the public buildings; it was started to think some inscriptions for homes, rooms, lodges other than book pages. The ornamentation areas, techniques and designs given place in certain pages of the book had become supplementary elements of such superscriptions.

During order of a book to a scribe or a calligrapher, its approximate size is determined. The inscription area, book size are in same proportion and similar measures. For arrangement of a superscription, about an artwork designed by thinking decoration, the ornament may be done on more free and bigger areas. For even ornamentations got ahead than inscription elements, usage of more bigger areas is possible.

The book is restrictive. The ornamentation on the book is determined by the page size. Inconsistency with *haşiye* space and different measures may be seen at edge of pages, its bottom parts. However, the classical superscription tradition decorates around of the inscription with a single symmetric size. Size of the biggest book is even definite. Generally, three edges of the pages were equal (sometimes bottom part of the page may be shorter) the juncture part was narrower. Therefore, the pages were decorated with illumination or *halkar* as three sides equally, narrower or thinner fourth side. The inscription allows more free designs on this matter. The ornamentation is affected by it. The *halkars* following each other as four sides equally or illuminations completed with scribes had surrounded the superscriptions.

The art works presented as a single page or superscription other than book were edicts and diplomas, ratification certificates, *sülüs- talik-nesih-muhakkak*, etc. *kit'a* and *Hilye-i Şerife*. Then, artworks which had an

independent presentation exactly were produced upon being in demand of the apparent script and hoarded or lined superscriptions.

As seen, many sheets and elements such as interior face of binder, caption, head of sura, *beynesütur*, *hatime* page, *koltuk*, *Mushaf* roses among the book pages had been moved to the superscription from the books and underlay the superscription decoration. In consequence of adventure of the book arts within the centuries, it is thought that independent presentation was tried, it is possible to accept the book covers and even inner cover pages are entrance into only illuminated pages which not included scripts mostly at the present time.

During this historical process, the position of 20<sup>th</sup> century is more different from others. The classical style ornamentation left among only old *kit'a's* during a several centuries with European decoration and the Turkish Rococo trend had been passed to the superscription from the book by the craftsman of the recent period. I.e. because of the Ottoman craftsmen had not made ornamentation in the classical style during beginning of the superscription trend, as from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the classical ornamentation was moved to our century by the masters loved the art.

While the old manuscripts are serving in the library shelves in order to address to the interested persons, the arranged superscriptions are seen by everyone at the locations. In fact, the script and ornament in the book was presenting a beauty and care for the persons looking for science and knowledge at beginning of the process, then it was transformed to an art and presentation for the persons looking for aesthetic, meaning and symbol. Other than the Korans written rarely by the new calligraphers and in consequence of economic reasons, the manuscript tradition may be deemed as vanished. But, the superscriptions designed by modern calligraphers and illuminators arisen from it are continuing to give spiritual joyful and cheer to interested persons as private order and during exhibitions.

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