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**OTTOMAN ART AT THE FREER GALLERY**

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## OTTOMAN ART AT THE FREER GALLERY

Esin ATIL

The Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. is one of the most unique museums in the United States. It houses the finest specimens of Far and Near Eastern art together with the largest compilation of the works of the renowned American painter James McNeill Whistler. Both the collection and the building were given by Charles L. Freer as a gift to the Smithsonian Institution. Under the terms of the deed some 9,500 items were transferred to Washington upon the death of Mr. Freer in 1920.

Since the opening of the Gallery in 1923, numerous works of art were added to the collection, bringing the total number of the objects close to 12,000, the bulk of which is made up of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Near Eastern, and Indian objects. The Gallery also contains study material as thousands of sherds of pottery and porcelain, a reference library with books, slides, and photographs, the Herzfeld Archive, a technical laboratory, an Oriental picture mounting department, a photographic laboratory, and a cabinet shop.

Near Eastern objects which were moved to Washington when the museum was established consisted of over 500 pieces plus a large group of ancient Egyptian glass. Within the last fifty years many invaluable Pre-Islamic and Islamic objects were added to this section. In the Islamic group Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman manuscripts, pottery, and metalwork constitute an exceedingly comprehensive collection, incorporating objects with the highest aesthetic and historical values. Although the Islamic section at the Freer Gallery is not the largest in existence, it is the one with the most celebrated and unique pieces.

Due to the extensiveness of the collection in all phases of Islamic art, we will concern ourselves only with the objects pertaining to the Ottoman world in this paper. Ottoman art forms a relatively small portion of the mu-

seum but its manuscript, painting, and ceramic traditions are well documented. Although limited in numbers, the various stages of the development of Ottoman art can be determined through the representative pieces in the collection. In this respect it is an invaluable grouping of objects, reflecting not only the characteristic features of Ottoman art but also its problematic and transitional stages.

### Art of the Book

At the present the Freer Gallery owns four bound religious texts, two sheets of calligraphy, a book binding, a rare literary text with two miniatures, and eight single images.

Among the religious works there is a 16th-17th century manuscript containing 28 folios of ten suras from the Koran (suras LXVII-LXXVII, no. 37.40). The text is written in alternating naskhi and thuluth with the titles given in gold, green or blue thuluth. The second work is a 17th century book of prayers from the Koran entitled **Munajat-i Koran-i Sherif** and consists of 53 folios written in naskhi (no. 37.37). The headings are once again in thuluth and illuminated in gold and silver. Another religious text, dated 1198/1783, is a Turkish commentary on sura XXXVI with «Haza Sherh-i Yasin» appearing on the title page which has an illuminated head-piece (no. 06.301). Naskhi script appears on its 70 folios with the verses from the sura given above the commentaries. The last of the group is a late **Yevminame**, a day-book, dated 1222/1807 and signed by the calligrapher Süleyman (no. 06.307). It is a small volume with only ten folios.

The two calligraphic pages are from the 16th century, written in naskhalik, each with an illuminated band in the center (nos. 29.66-67). They obviously once belonged to an anthology of Turkish poems.

The bookbinding at the Gallery is a superb example of Ottoman work from the late 16th or early 17th century. It is in red leather on pasteboard, stamped and tooled in gold. The interior is plain with single gold medallions while the exterior shows a more intricate and refined decoration (plate 1). On each cover an ogival medallion, flanked by two pendants, is framed by corner spandrels and enclosed by a wide border. The border shows a floral scroll while the other areas are decorated with blossoms and long curving cloud bands, a popular motif in this period.

The miniature collection is quite extraordinary since each object reflects a different aspect of Ottoman painting, which when assembled, gives



a most concise survey of the various themes, styles, and influences involved in the study of this tradition.

The most fascinating and exceptional painting is a portrait of an Ottoman painter which has caused many contraversies and various attributions in the past (plate 2). The inscription on the lower left portion, giving the name of Behzad, has confused many scholars who were not familiar with Ottoman painting, and lead them to believe that this was a copy by the celebrated Persian artist, based on the work of Gentile Bellini, or even that it was executed by the Venetian painter himself. It is obvious that this portrait is not by a Persian and the attribution, or the misattribution, was placed at a later date. Through the works of some late 15th century Ottoman artists we know that Bellini was influential in the Ottoman court school of painting when he visited Istanbul between 1479 and 1480. Although his impact was very shortlived, there exist several portraits the most famous of which is by the Ottoman painter Sinan which combines the western style with that of Islamic.<sup>1</sup>

The Freer portrait is far more unique than Sinan's work as it is closer to its prototype, or to the style of Venetian Renaissance. The single figure portrait is a genre characteristic of the Ottoman school, with an accentuation of the head and facial features as seen here. The treatment of the folds of the voluminous **kavuk**, shading of the face, and certain other details, as multiple sashes at the waist, is very European. Other aspects, as the patterns on the garment, strange placement of the neck within the collar of the **kaftan**, jutting of the back of the garment, stylization of the folds on the sleeves and the playful ripples at the hem seem distinctly Islamic. The handkerchief tucked into the waist is a typical element found in Ottoman portraits. The placement of the figure in tight quarters is also another aspect common to Ottoman portraiture.

The combination of western and eastern elements within one image fits precisely into the style seen in early Ottoman painting. The fact that this portrait was painted in Istanbul is quite obvious, but the identification of the author of the image is still problematic. The imperial studio of painting incorporated artists of diverse origins who frequently worked together on single scenes. We would like to suggest that either the combined efforts

1) Sinan's portrait of Sultan Mehmet II is at the Topkapı Palace Museum (H 2153, fol. 10a). There is also another portrait at the Gardner Museum in Boston, attributed to Gentile Bellini, which belongs to this group.

of two artists trained in different traditions is represented here or that a Turkish artist executed the portrait (possibly a self-portrait) working in the manner of Venetian Renaissance to which he was exposed by Bellini or through models by other contemporary European artists.

The historiographical manuscript tradition of the 16th century is provided by one image which depicts the encampment of the Ottoman forces on a desert region (plate 3). The commander-in-chief appears seated on the upper left, in front of his tent, receiving two foreign dignitaries placed on a carpet before him. High ranking officials form an enclosure around these figures with Janissary officers and heads of other military units placed in rows on the right. The setting of this meeting is given by the palm trees lining the hills on the horizon and a stream which flows into a body of water in the foreground.

The book from which this image is taken is unknown at the present but the stylistic and iconographic features of the miniature, related to the great *shahnames* written under Murat III, indicate that it was executed around 1580's. Parallels to the particular elements seen here, their arrangement within the image, and the color scheme can be found in the *Shahname-i Selim Khan* (Topkapı Palace Museum, A 3595, dated 1581) and the *Shahinshahname* (Istanbul University Library, F 1404, also dated 1581). The size of this painting is also comparable to the dimensions of these two Istanbul manuscripts as well as the text above the scene, written in Persian verse, a feature observed in the works of Lokman, the chief historiographer of the classical period.

A clue to the episode represented is given by the text which mentions the reception of an Abd-Ali, a descendant of Ali, by the Paşa. Abd-Ali, given full honors and the customary gifts, leaves for Istanbul where he is received by the Grand Vizier and the Sultan, and is claimed as the rightful successor of his father.

In the image Abd-Ali is recognizable through his placement in the scene and his non-Ottoman headdress which has a scarf tied to it. Apparently during his reception he was accompanied by one of his officials who sat behind him. The problem of identifying the Paşa and Abd-Ali historically, and establishing the location of this meeting has not yet been resolved. Historiographic works from the reign of Murat III not only cover the personal campaigns of the Sultans but also of the viziers and military leaders. Documentation of the southern campaigns in the Near East and

North Africa during the reigns of Selim II and Murat III were taken up by the court historians and painters. This image obviously refers to one of these, perhaps more specifically to the campaign of Sinan Paşa who conquered Yemen and Tunusia in 1570-74.

The only complete volume of an illustrated Ottoman work at the Freer Gallery is the **Gulistan** by Sadi which contains two miniatures. It is in 153 folios and written in Persian by Rajab bin Khair al-Din. The manuscript is intact with its contemporary binding. The first digit in the colophon has been tampered with but the last two read 72. If these figures are correct, then the date 972-1564 seems to be given. This fits into the stylistic identification of the miniatures which belong to the second half of the 16th century and may have been painted at a slightly later date than the completion of the text. Literary manuscripts are quite rare during the classical period and this manuscript provides us with an example of one of the less common themes illustrated at that time.

An exterior scene on folio 103a shows a youth standing in an archway, offering a drink to the facing figure (plate 4A). It illustrates an episode from the **Gulistan**<sup>2</sup> in which a youth appears from the antechamber of a house to offer a goblet of ice water to the poet who is very thirsty and hot. The shading in the archway, folds in the garments, treatment of trees, and type of headgear belong to the school of Murat III. The peculiarity of tiny clusters of grass covering the ground appearing here is frequently seen in the 17th century, and provides a prototype for this feature which is a characteristic of the following century.

The other scene, on folio 110a, depicts an interior scene, representing the visit of the king to the kadi whose amorous activities had been spreading (plate 4B). According to the text,<sup>3</sup> the king, accompanied by his chief officers, finds the kadi in a drunken stupor with the lights still burning. In the image the king appears on the upper left with his two sword-bearers, obviously quite surprised at the scene he witnesses. The kadi is asleep, reclined on a cushion. His books and great ulema **kavuk** placed on a stand are seen in the niche above. In the foreground three musicians play with wine bottles and a burning candlestick sprinkled on the carpet. The youthful favorite of the kadi sits on the right, holding his wine cup. The architectural features, postures of the musicians, and the placement of the elements in horizontal

2) Chapter V, story 15. John T. Platt, *The Gulistan of Sadi*, London, 1904, p. 220.

3) Chapter V, story 19. Platt, p. 237.

groupings are to be found in the painting style of the late 16th century.

Album painting, which becomes the major artistic concern from the beginning of the 17th century on, is represented in the remaining images in the collection. An exquisite little painting, dated about 1600, shows two figures in landscape (plate 5). The Persian poetry appearing on the page is unrelated to the image as is frequently seen in albums. A striking perspective is achieved by the brook which coils into the background with a small bridge over it, and by the relative sizes of the trees. In the foreground a courtly figure reclines against a cushion having unburdened himself of his **kavuk** and outer garments. An attendant kneeling before him seems to be removing his shoes to which he objects with a raised hand. A wine bottle and a bowl of fruit complete the scene, giving an atmosphere of pleasure and serenity. It is significant that the setting receives as equal an importance as the figures, reflecting the trend of independent single images.

Another album painting is more problematic, combining certain archaistic features within a new form. Representing a religious episode, it shows Abraham thrown into the fire (plate 6). Abraham appears on the right, conversing with an angel, both surrounded by flames. The interior of the fire pit has become a verdant meadow. The miracle is observed by King Nimrud and his wife from a window with a **div** and three other spectators below. The peculiarities of the image indicate that it is derived from various sources. The garments and headgear of the figures are related to early 15th century images as well as the architectural features. The placement of figures on the lower left corner is rather peculiar with most of them appearing suspended. The mechanical contraption, resembling a catapult, is not connected with the story. The episode from the Koran (XXI: 59-69) states that after Abraham destroyed the idols he was thrown into the fire which became coolness and peace for him, often interpreted as a foliated green area in the images. This painting includes extra elements which are not iconographically related to the story, expanding the subject into a more elaborate narrative. With inclusion of King Nimrud, spectators, and the angel,<sup>4</sup> it follows a more extensive historical text with a variety of models. Religious themes generally illustrate historical texts and their appearance as single images is quite unusual. In the early 17th century there exists a number of **Falname** album paintings some of which depict religious sub-

4) To my knowledge this is the only image which shows an angel joining Abraham in the fire pit.

jects.<sup>5</sup> They are oversized miniatures and constitute a unique group with a specific style. It is possible that this image may have been inspired by such a genre.

There is an unfinished single image belonging to the Ottoman school of painting which is pasted vertically on an unrelated page of text (plate 7). The left portion has been trimmed and was probably rounded off as the remaining end. The unique dimensions of this thin and long strip is not to be found in album images and suggests another purpose, perhaps a sketch for penbox decoration. The style of the image is also most unusual, showing a battle scene with an interesting use of perspective. The foreshortening of the figures (especially evident in the horses), soldiers, cannons, and other elements diminishing in size as they recede into the picture, and the massing of figures in the background indicate a western influence. The great activity and movement representing the fervor of the battle is also rather unique. It seems to depict two forces, Ottoman and European, and yet no distinction of sides are made between some of the combatant couples.

Dating a painting so problematic is difficult. We are either dealing with a 15th century image, relative to the mixed styles seen in the portrait of the Ottoman painter, or a late 17th or 18th century object. The later dating seems more probable as there were European influences coming into the Ottoman world at that time with singular paintings showing a strong western impact. Until more comparable and datable miniatures come to light, we will have to be content with the tentative dating of the second half of the 17th century, which is the most problematic period in Ottoman painting with very few images in existence.

Among the drawings pertaining to the Ottoman school there is a scene which shows a lion attacking a **chi-lin** and a dragon attacking a bird (plate 8). This image fits into a group of drawings reflecting Chinese influences, most of which are collected in various albums in Istanbul. A great number of these drawings depict dragons and other mythical animals in combat. The Freer image with the distorted movements of the animals and foliage, the calligraphic use of thick and thin lines, and pale tints is a characteristic example of this series which date from the 16th century. Parallels to the

5) As the *Falname* of Kalender Paşa at the Topkapı Palace Museum (H 1702, between 1604-17) and three separate images owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (nos. 50.23. 1-2 and 35.64.3).

be discussed below. In this drawing the dragon grasps foliage with his paws while devouring a small bird perched on a branch and the lion twists Far Eastern influences will be seen in the pottery of the period which will around, biting into the hind quarters of the **chi-lin**, this portion engulfed by a curving vine with large lotus blossoms. The entire scene is conceived with great energy reflected in the violent and contorted movements of the elements.

The influence of another tradition appears in a contemporary drawing of a flying **peri** who holds a wine flask and goblet (plate 9). This image bears an attribution to Shah Kuli whose authenticity is highly questionable. From the archives at the Topkapı Palace Museum we know that Shah Kuli came from Tabriz to Amasya, and was then brought to Istanbul.<sup>6</sup> He was working in the imperial painting studio in 1520. Although mentioned in 1545 **Ehl-i Hiref** entries, his name does not appear in the ensuing register of 1558, which indicates that he died sometime between these two dates. As there is no clear indication of his style, this drawing cannot be attributed to him with certainty.

The theme of **peris** was a popular one in the mid 16th century with numerous examples appearing in albums at Istanbul. Some of these may have been executed by Persian artists who worked in the palace studios, as Shah Kuli and Vali Jan, others by the Turkish painters who were influenced by this theme. The overall patterns on the figure, stylization of the wings and flowing ribbons, stiffness in drapery and brushwork, and a schematic formal arrangement leads us to believe that the flying **peri** was painted by a Turkish artist working in the imperial studio when the Persians were employed.

Aside from this drawing the Freer owns another **peri** who is seated and holds a flask and cup (no. 33.6). It combines certain features seen in the flying **peri** images with the flowing movement of line observed in the drawing depicting animals in combat.

The images described above clearly indicate the many modes involved in the development of Ottoman painting. Strong western influences seen in the late 15th century (plate 2) and once again in the later period (plate 7) point to one of these trends. Influences from the east, as Chinese (plate 8) and Persian (plate 9), are the other significant features. We are

6) Topkapı Palace Archives, D 9613-1. I am indebted to Mrs. Filiz Çağman for supplying me with the information of Shah Kuli's activities.



fortunate in having not only the images which show these trends at their purest possible form but also images which are characteristically Ottoman. From the classical period the most significant and monumental Ottoman genre, historiography, is represented (plate 3) as well as the rare literary tradition (plates 4 A-B). The popularity of album painting is presented in the single paintings and drawings (plates 5-9). Portraiture, which will exist in all periods, is observed at its most interesting and early stage (plate 2).

A cross section of techniques, themes, and influences from the 15th to the 17th century is well illustrated and provides ample material for the thorough study of Ottoman painting. This even distribution in time and style is the most significant feature of the Freer Gallery as Ottoman miniatures were traditionally executed for the imperial libraries with relatively few complete cycles available in foreign collections.

### Ceramics

Similar distribution of techniques, types, and shapes is observed in the collection of Ottoman pottery at the Freer Gallery. There exist some thirteen pieces which cover all phases of the development of the art of Iznik potters as well as about five later objects which give an indication of the post-Iznik tradition.

Belonging to the early blue-and-white wares is a rare and well preserved plate with a white body and underglaze blue painting (plate 10). It is dated around 1500 when this style becomes established. The breakdown into contour panels with decoration reserved on dark ground in the rim and center, alternating with a pure white cavetto is a characteristic of this group which has comparatively few examples in existence. Greatly inspired by the blue-and-white Chinese tradition of the 14th century, it employs Far Eastern motifs as a lotus blossom scroll on the rim and interlacing floral elements mixed with cloud bands in the central medallion. The impact of Chinese porcelains on Iznik ware was considerable and will be seen throughout the 16th and early 17th century with varying intensities. The great value placed upon Chinese ceramics is evident from the imperial collection at the Topkapı Palace whose origin dates back to the last quarter of the 15th century.

Another plate which shows a different aspect of the early Iznik group has a central medallion decorated with three vases holding flowers, set within a polylobed arch (plate 11). The central vase is placed on a tabouret

resembling an architectural structure. The cavetto is adorned with eight flower sprays, reflecting Chinese themes, while the flat rim has a band of tulips. The existence of typically Turkish flowers link this plate with the second Iznik group although it lacks the manganese purple commonly associated with the later type. This plate shows features which are found in the early blue-and-white wares, especially noticeably in the floral branches which adorn the arch in the center, floral sprays of the cavetto, and the formal arrangement of contour panels. The appearance of turquoise color as well as the carnations, roses, and tulips seen in the later period makes it a valuable object which determines the transformation of one type into another. Here we have not only an object which reveals the intermediary stage between two types of Iznik wares but also a combination of Chinese and indigenously Turkish decorative elements.

The Freer Gallery owns two other plates which also possess transitional qualities, although they themselves fall into a unique group with their themes directly derived from the Chinese porcelain of the early 15th century. The first plate, painted in cobalt blue under a transparent glaze, has three bunches of grapes amid leaves, tendrils, and a scrolling vine in the center while the cavetto is decorated with thirteen flower sprays (plate 12). The foliate rim shows a stylized wave pattern. The outside is adorned with twelve flower sprays, repeating the cavetto design, a common feature on Chinese porcelain and those which imitate them in Persia and Turkey. The color scheme and motifs used in decoration are directly taken over from Ming porcelain as can be seen from one such example, also at the Freer (plate 13). Although the Ming plate employs a different pattern on the rim, a floral scroll, Chinese porcelain at the Topkapı Palace and in other collections frequently show the wave pattern in conjunction with the grape motif.

The other plate with a grape design possesses touches of turquoise in addition to the blue, a much more common color combination for this type which links it with the second group of Iznik wares (no. 70.25). This object has a more stylized representation of the fruit and floral motifs, but the scroll with blossoms in the cavetto and on the outside adheres to the Chinese repertoire. It has a plain rim which becomes more popular toward the end of the 16th century, replacing the foliate ones seen earlier. Following the style seen in the second quarter of the 16th century, it reveals the continuation of this theme for another fifty years.

The fully established second type of Iznik pottery which appears between 1525 and 1555 and itself forms a link between the early blue-and-

white and later polychrome ware, is represented by one plate (plate 14). It is painted in the characteristic hues of light blue, purple, and white on a dark blue ground. Springing from a central root, another Far Eastern convention, there are oversized roses, pomegranates, and sprays of hyacinths. The motifs used here are purely Turkish and Chinese elements so prevalent in the earlier pieces have been considerably subdued.

The introduction of brilliant red into the color scheme appears in a unique plate painted in turquoise and blue showing an ogival floral medallion in the center, flanked by pendants and large palmettes against a scale-pattern ground (plate 15). This type of background appears in the mid 16th century Iznik ware and continues up to the end of the century, perhaps also into the 17th. The trefoils on the rim is another feature of the period.

The spectacular series of plates belonging to the third Iznik group is well represented at the Freer Gallery. One such plate has the central medallion painted in coral red, forming a unique background for the floral motifs (plate 16). Around the medallion is a polylobed frame and the flat rim displays the popular wave pattern. Although it employs contour panels of the earlier type, the polychrome palette and the serrated leaves with tulips and roses in the central medallion indicate that it belongs to the third type.

The wave pattern adorning a foliate rim appears on two other Iznik plates. One of them has a central cypress tree flanked by large leaves, fully bloomed roses and rosebuds (plate 17). Painted in blues, greens, red and black against a white ground, the plate exemplifies the fully established third Iznik type.

A similar plate, painted in blue, turquoise and red, shows a far more refined painting technique. The central lotus blossom is attached at a looped stem from which symmetrically drawn leaves, roses and floral sprays shoot up (plate 18). The graceful movement of the leaves and stems reflect the high aesthetic values of the Iznik potters. Even the wave pattern on the rim has a softness and delicacy rarely seen in this type. The red on this plate is a deep dark red, not like the bright coral tone seen in the others. This may well be one of the earlier examples of the third type, still retaining the strong linear quality so highly esteemed in the second group. The characteristics of the polychrome ware, feathery leaves and flowers, stylized wave pattern borders, and foliate rims, are all preserved in this example.

A variation is seen in another plate (no. 69.26) with alternating sprays of blue tulips and red blossoms adorning the foliate rim. In the center symmetrically arranged roses and tulips spring from a cluster of leaves.

Aside from the plates, there are two polychrome containers, the first of which is a large tankard with an angular handle (plate 19). Its decoration shows boats with the sails in full wind, passing through small islands with castles and cypresses on them. Each piece of land has a large bird in the center, transforming this seascape into a fantastic image. One island appears upside down on the rim, reminiscent of the early 16th century cartographic illustrations with almost a bird's-eye-view representation of the scene.

The other vessel is in the frequently seen form of a single-handled jug (no. 69.2). There is a highly stylized cloud collar on the rim with horizontal bands of blossoms, overlapping petals, and trefoils decorating the body. Tankards and jugs of this type are generally dated in the third and fourth quarters of the 16th century.

Among the Ottoman tiles in the collection, there is a truly magnificent specimen from the early 17th century showing two confronting parrots perched around a fountain with serrated leaves, sprays of hyacinths and other flowers surrounding them (plate 20). Aside from the cobalt blue and warm red, a brilliant emerald green appears. Although the rich colors and profusion of elements may seem overwhelming at first, the clarity of representation and the white ground setting off the decoration gives it an airy well-balanced overall impression. As there are relatively few tiles which show animals and birds, this piece is quite unusual.

Of the later Ottoman ceramics, the Freer Gallery owns an 18th-19th century Kütahya bottle painted in brown and blue (no. 05.244), an 18th century large polychrome tile panel showing a cypress and vine scroll rising from a bulbous vase (no. 08.193), and several late monochrome tiles (nos. 09.4, 03.198, and 03.199).

A comprehensive survey of Ottoman ceramics from 1500 to the 18th century is represented by the objects at the Freer Gallery. The complete history of the production of Iznik workshops can be obtained through the study of plates, tiles, and other containers. The most exciting pieces are the transitional ones which show elements from two different groups. These are invaluable for the art historian in tracing the themes and techniques, and relating them to the preceding and ensuing styles, thus determining the tradition of this art form.

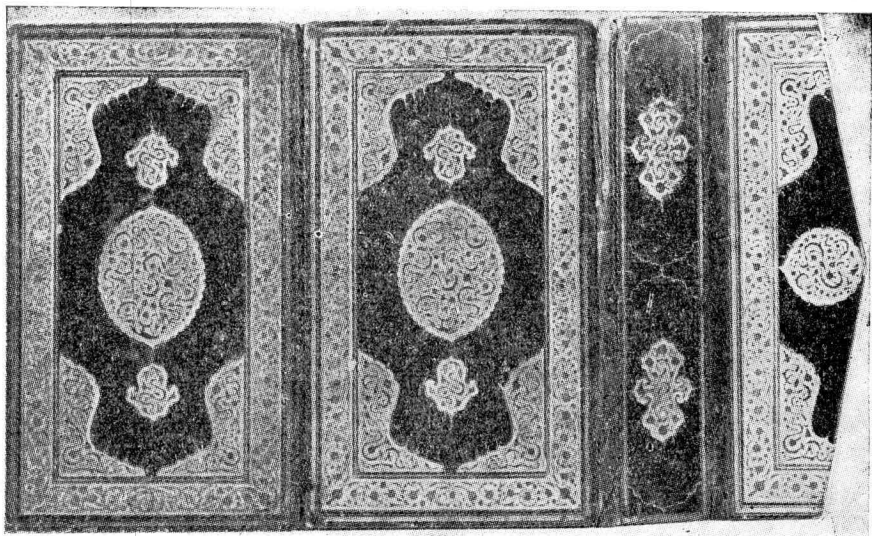
We can observe the development of Ottoman ceramics from its early blue-and-white stage showing strong Chinese influences to a combination of

purely Ottoman themes mixed with the Far Eastern motifs. In the second quarter of the 16th century the imported elements become a part of the indigenous vocabulary of the Iznik potters, employed to create a particular style which will be uniquely Ottoman.

### **Conclusion**

In an attempt to study the Ottoman creative world one is faced with a many-faceted problem as its cultural milieu incorporates a number of features found in the various traditions absorbed by the vast empire or exposed to it through the extensiveness of its contact. Divergent influences from within and without are reflected in the by-products of its culture, in its art. Trends and motifs coming in from the East and the West appear in various stages, seen in their purest form at their initial introduction, eventually to be absorbed by its own tradition, resulting in a style characteristic to the Ottoman world.

It is this importation and assimilation of themes which makes the study of Ottoman art a fascinating one. Objects which reveal various stages of this development are invaluable in understanding the phenomena we call Ottoman art. The Freer Gallery collection is most unique in this respect as each object exposes a particular facet of the development of themes and the final establishment of the indigenous genres. Covering a wide range of time, styles and techniques, a comprehensive view of Ottoman painting and ceramics is provided by the objects themselves. Once the meaning of the objects are determined, the development of Ottoman art takes a new significance, broadening our understanding of its tradition, achievement, and the morphology of its culture which gave birth to it.

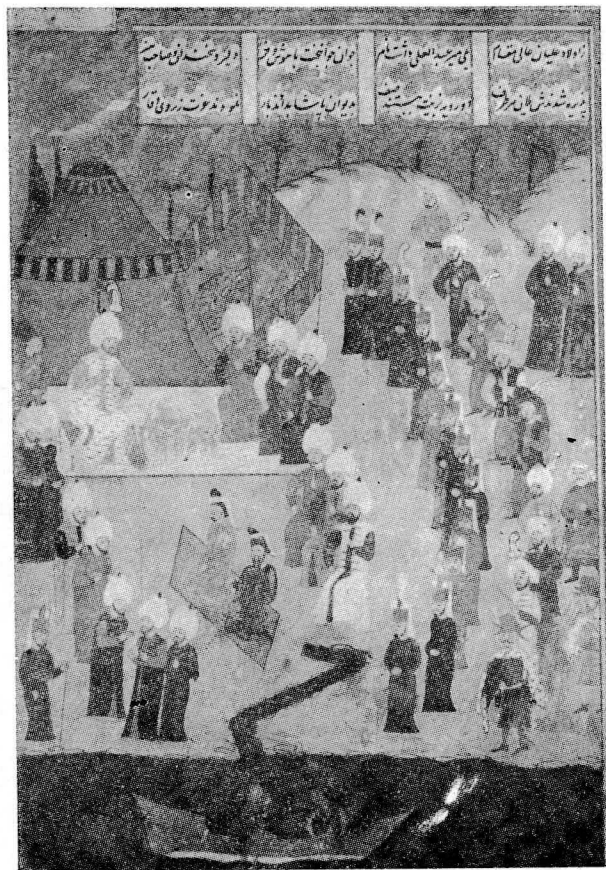


1. Bookbinding, late 16th-early 17th cen. 33.9 x 20,5 cm. no. 29.20



2. *Portrait of an Ottoman Painter*, late 15th cen. 18.8 x 12.7 cm. no. 32.28.





3. *Reception on a Desert Encampment*, 1580's 27.1 x 18.8 cm. no. 29.75.



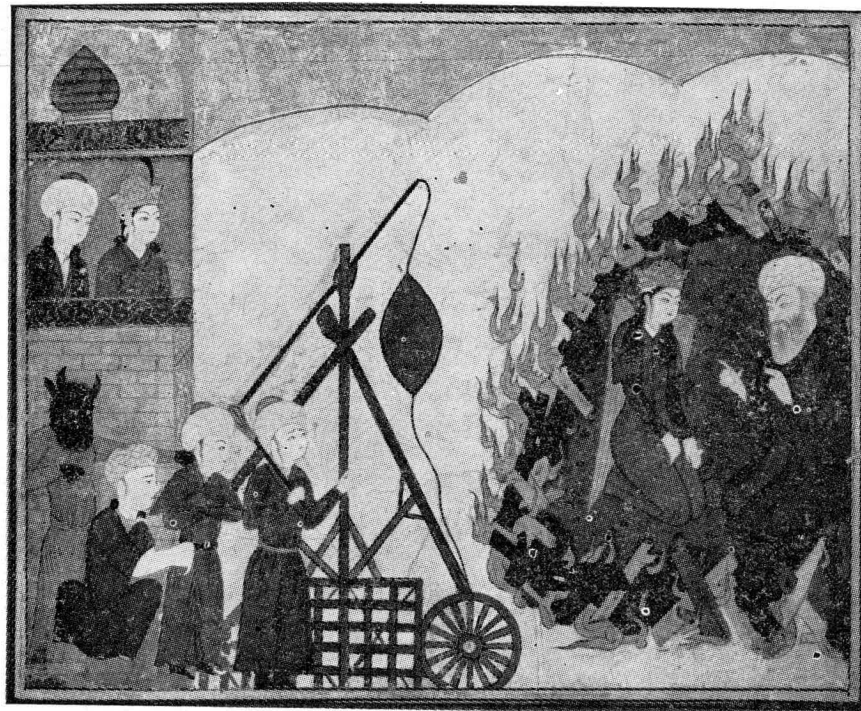
4A. Sadi, *Gulistan* : Youth Offering a Refreshing Drink second half of the 16th cen. 10.7 x 4.8 cm. no. 49.2A.



4B. Sadi, *Gulistan* : Visit of the King to the Kadi second half of the 16th cen. 10.7 x 6.3 cm. no. 49.2B.



5. *Figures by a Brook*, ca. 1600 8.6 x 6.0 cm. no. 62.32.



6. *Abraham Thrown into the Fire*, early 17th cen. 19.0 x 23.0 cm. no. 68.8.



7. *Battle Scene*, second half of the 17th cen. 5.0 x 29.0 cm. no. 28.8.

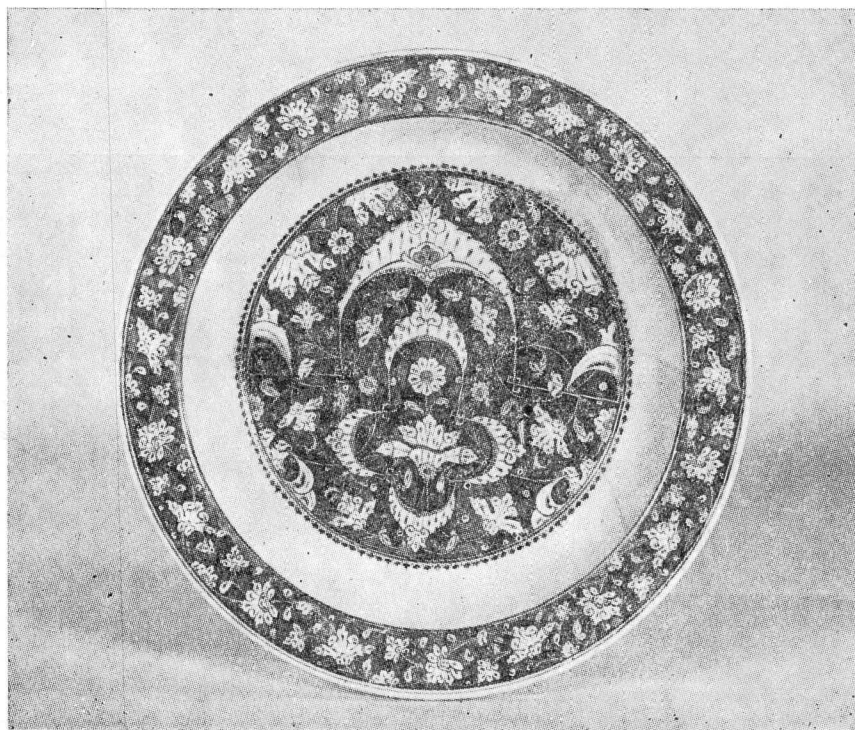


8. *Dragon, Bird, Lion, and Chi-Lin*, mid 16th cen. 17.5 x 28.5 cm. no. 48.17.

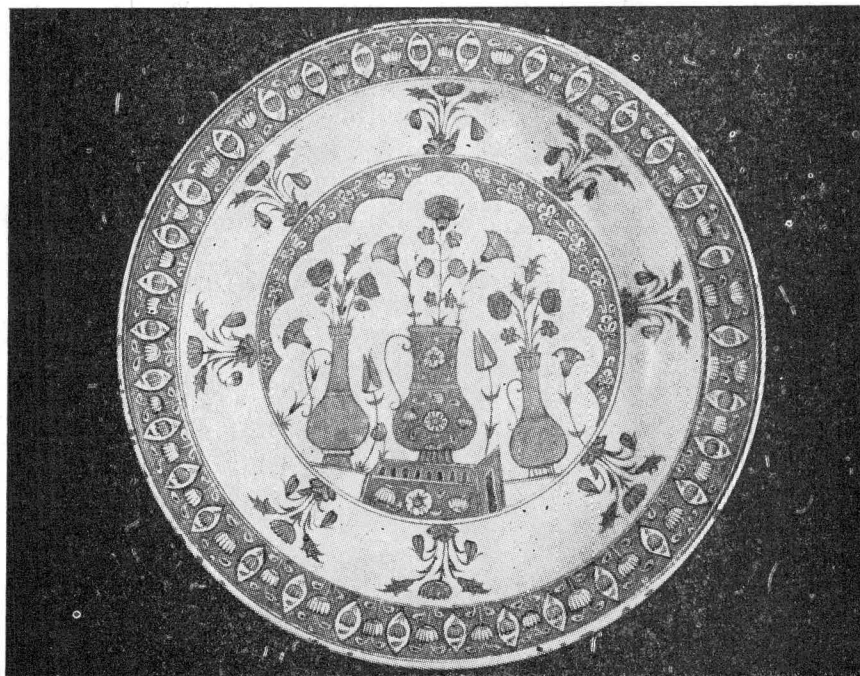


9. *Flying Angel*, mid 16th cen. 18.0 x 13.5 cm. no. 37.7.

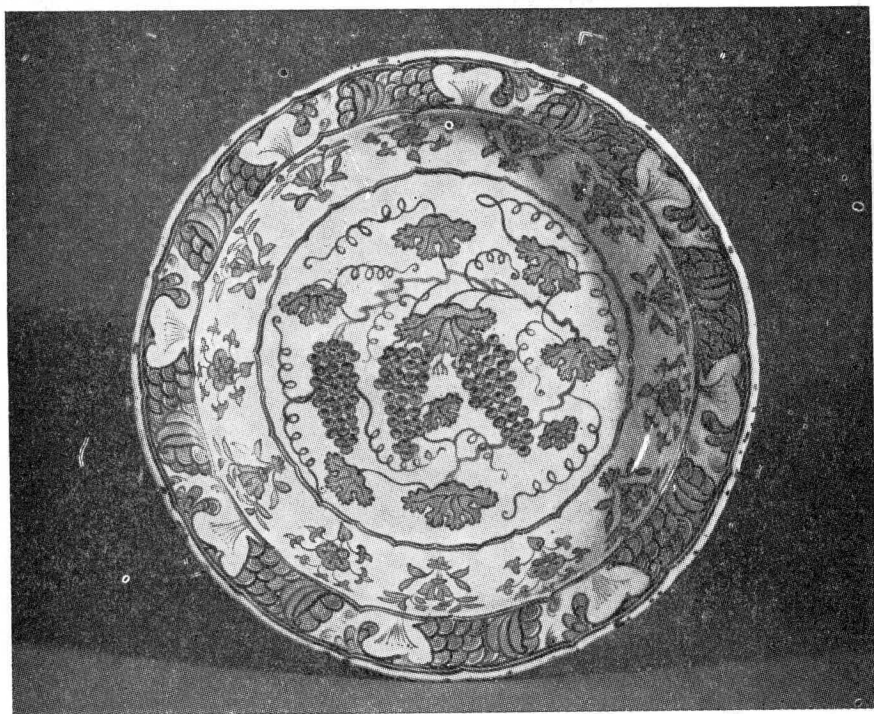




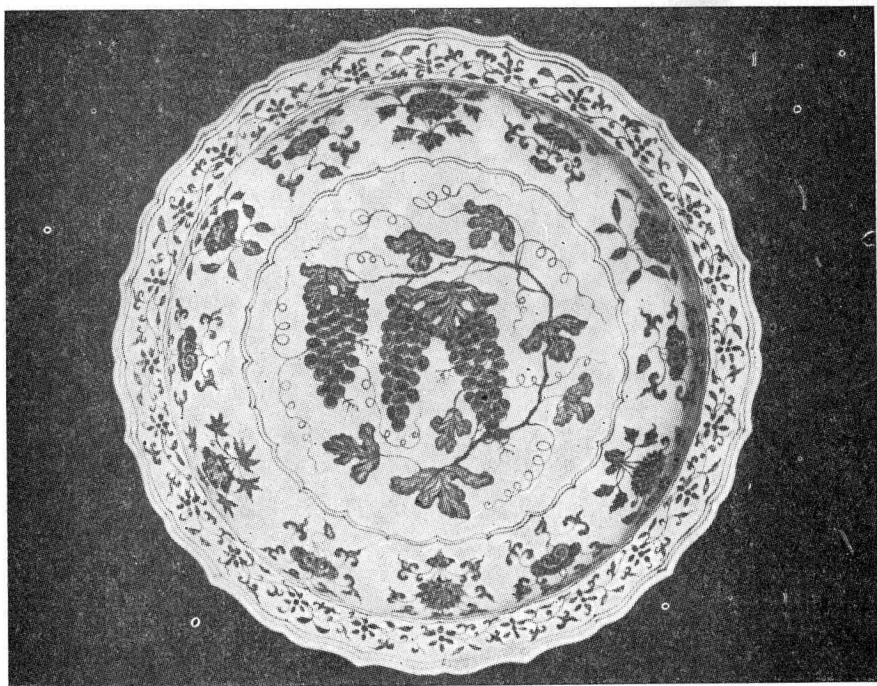
10. Plate : Iznik Type I, ca. 1500 39.3 cm. no. 54.3.



11. Plate : Iznik Type II, mid 16th cen. 37.6 cm. no. 55.8.



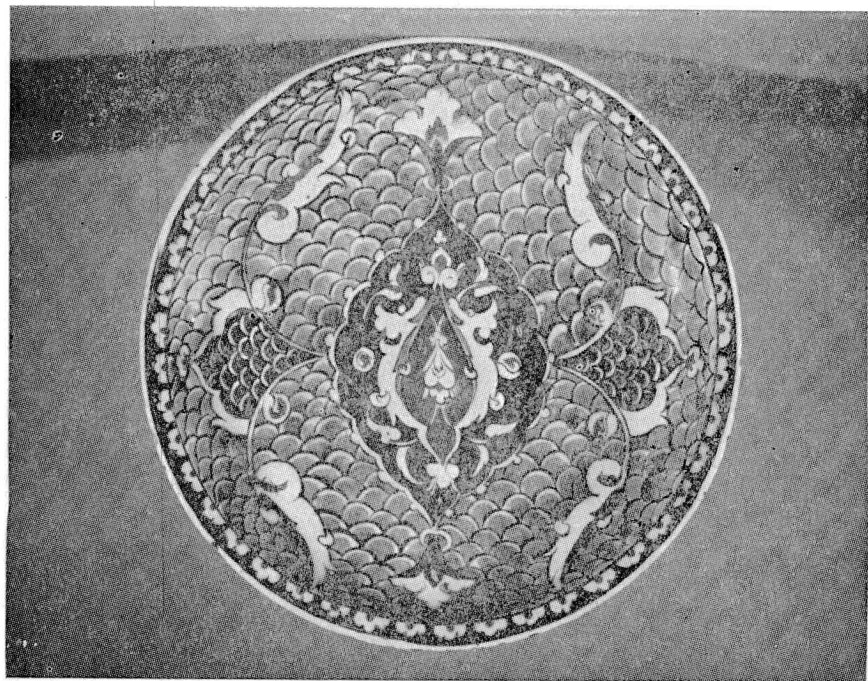
12. Plate : Iznik Type I, early 16th cen. 39.2 cm. no. 70.2.



13. Plate : Chinese, Ming Dynasty, early 15th cen. 44.7 cm. no. 53.77.



14. Plate: Iznik Type II, mid 16th cen. 31.2 cm. no. 63.7.



15. Plate: Iznik Type III, mid 16th cen. 27.0 cm. no. 69.1.





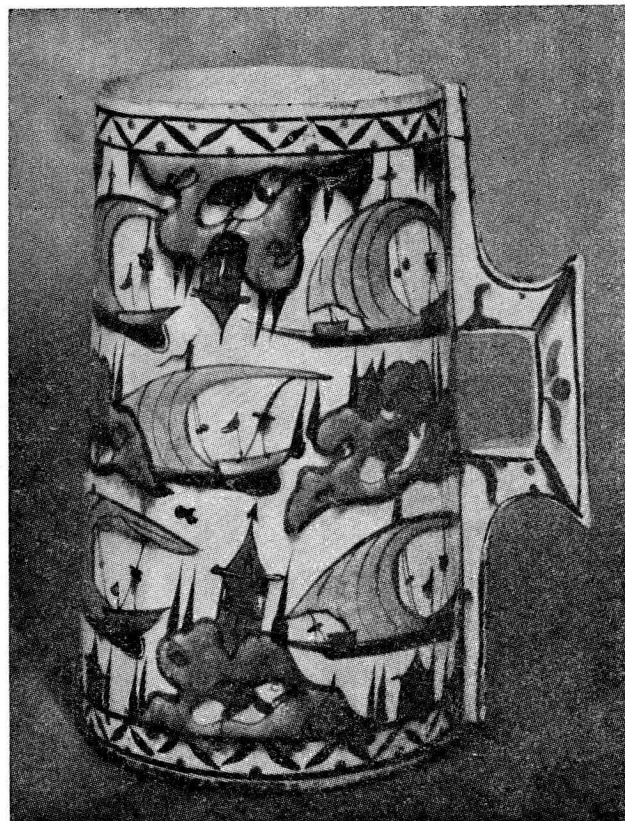
16. Plate : Iznik Type III, mid 16th cen. 33.3 cm. no. 66.21.



17. Plate : Iznik Type III, mid 16th cen. 29.1 cm. no. 66.25.



18. Plate: Iznik Type III, mid. 16th cen. 31.7 cm. no. 69.25.



19. Tankard: Iznik Type III, late 16th cen. 21.0 x 12.0 cm. no. 68.68.



20. Tile: Iznik Type III, early 17th cen. 26.0 x 24.0 cm. no. 66.12.

## **FREER GALLERY'DEKİ OSMANLI ESERLERİ**

### **Özet**

**Esin ATIL**

Washington, D.C.'deki Freer Gallery of Art, Amerikanın en nadide müzelerinden biridir. Uzak ve Yakın Doğu sanat eserlerinden başka meşhur Amerikalı ressam James McNeill Whistler'in en zengin koleksiyonuna da sahiptir. Eserler ve müze binası Charles L. Freer tarafından Smithsonian Institution'a hediye edilmiş ve kendisinin 1920'de ölümü ile 9,500 kadar eser Washington'a getirilmiştir.

Galerinin 1923'de açılışından beri gelen eserlerle beraber bugün müzede toplanan 12,000 kadar objenin çoğunluğunu Çin, Japon, Kore, Yakın Doğu, ve Hint eserleri teşkil eder. Müzede ayrıca etüd için ayrılan parçalar halinde binlerce keramik ve porselen, kitap, fotoğraf ve diyapozitif kütüphanesi, Herzfeld Arşivi, teknik laboratuvar, oriental resim monte kısmı, fotoğrafhanesi, ve marangozhane vardır.

Müze açıldığı zaman 500 parça kadar Yakın Doğu eserinden başka zengin bir Eski Mısır cam koleksiyonu vardı. Son elli sene içinde bu kısma katılan Arap, İran, ve Osmanlı yazmaları, seramikleri ve metal işleriyle esaslı ve geniş bir koleksiyon meydana getirilmiştir.

İslâm sanatının bütün konularını içine alan bu koleksiyonun büyüklüğünden dolayı makalede yalnız Osmanlı sanatına ait eserlerden bahsedeceğiz. Koleksiyonun ufak bir bölümünü teşkil etmesine rağmen Osmanlı sanatının değişik devirlerini gösteren bu eserler hem bu sanatın tipik elemanlarını hem de problematik ve intikal safhalarını belirtirler.

### **Minyatürlü yazmalar ve kitaplar :**

Freer Gallery'de Osmanlı sanatına ait dört dinî yazma, iki sayfa güzel yazı, bir kitap cildi, içinde iki minyatür bulunan nadide bir edebî eser ve sekiz adet tek minyatür vardır.

Dini kitaplardan biri 16 ıncı asra ait olup Kuran'dan on sureyi (LXVII-LXXVII) içine alan 28 varaklı bir yazmadır (no. 37, 40). İkincisi ise Kuran'dan **Münacat-i Kuran-i Şerif** adlı 17 inci asırda yazılmış 53 varaklı bir kısımdır (no. 37, 37). Diğeri ise 1198/1783 tarihli XXXVI inci sure üzerine Türkçe yazılmış 70 varaklı **Şerh-i Yasin**'dir (no. 06, 301). Sonuncusu da 1222/1807'de Süleyman tarafından kopya edilmiş 10 varaklı ufak bir **Yevminame**'dir (no. 06, 307). Nestalik ile yazılmış iki sayfa ise 16 ıncı asırdan Türkçe bir mecmuaya aittir (no. 29, 66-67).

16 ıncı asrın sonuna veya 17 inci asrın başına ait kırmızı deriden kitap kabı Osmanlı cilt sanatının inceliğini belirtir (Resim 1). Dış kısmındaki altın yaldızlı şemse ve köşebentler geniş bir bordürle çevrelenmiştir.

Minyatür koleksiyonu Osmanlı resminin değişik üslûp, ve niteliğini açıkça gösterecek mahiyettedir. En entresan eser bir Türk nakkaşının portresidir (Resim 2). Sayfanın kenarında sonradan ilâve edilen «Behzad» kelimesi sanat tarihçilerini hayli uğraştırmış, bu resmi İranlı bir sanatkârın yaptığı iddia edilmiş ve hattâ Gentile Bellini'nin bir eseri olduğu bile ileri sürülmüştür. Teknik ve üslûp bakımından hem Batı hem de Doğu özellikleri göstermesi bu eserin Bellini İstanbula geldiği sıralarda Osmanlı nakkaşlarından biri tarafından yapılmış olduğunu belirtir.

On altıncı yüzyıl Osmanlı tarihi yazmalarına ait bir sayfa açık sahada bir kabul sahnesini tasvir eder (Resim 3). Hangi kitaba ait olduğu henüz bilinmemekle beraber üslûp olarak 1580 senelerinde III. Murat için yazılan Farsça şahnameler gurubuna girer. Minyatür sayfasındaki metne göre Mîr Abdül-Ali adlı bir şahıs bir Paşa tarafından kabul edildikten sonra İstanbula gider ve babasının ülkesine varis olarak gösterilir. Bu figürlerin tarihî hüviyetleri tespit edilmediği halde esas yazmanın II. Selim ve III. Murat zamanında Arabistana veya Afrikaya yapılan sefelerden birini tasvir ettiği zannedilmektedir.

Klasik ekole ait nadir edebî yazmalardan biri Freer Gallery'de bulunan Sadî'nin **Gülüstan**'ıdır. 153 varak olan bu eseri hattat Recep b. Hayrettin Farsça olarak yazmıştır. Kolofonun tahrir edilmesine rağmen 972/1564 tarihini göstermesi muhtemeldir. İçindeki iki minyatürün üslûbu da 16 ıncı asrın ikinci yarısını gösterir. Açık havada geçen sahnede bir genç tarafından şaire bir bardak soğuk su verilmesi gösterilir (Resim 4 A). Diğer minyatür ise Sultanın Kadıyı ziyaretini anlatır (Resim 4 B). Kıyafetler, kavuklar, mimarî özellikler ve guruplandırma III. Murat devrine aittir.

17 inci asrın başından sonra ehemmiyet kazanan albüm resimleri ara-



sında ufak ve gayet güzel işlenmiş bir minyatür iki figürün nehir kenarında dinlenmesini gösterir (Resim 5). Orijinal bir perspektifle 1600 sıralarında yapılmıştır. Diğer bir albüm sayfası ise İbrahim Peygamberin ateşe atılmasını canlandırır (Resim 6). Firavun Nimrut, karısı, ve diğer şahıslarla beraber ateşin ortasına bir melek konulması, ayrıca bir de katapult ilâve edilmesi, ikonografik problemler meydana getirir. Üslûbu, erken örneklerle dayanmakla beraber 17 inci asıra ait bir eser olduğunu gösterir.

Geç bir Osmanlı albüm resmi ise bir savaş sahnesini tasvir eder (Resim 7). Figürlerin arkaya doğru ilerledikçe küçülmesi ve bir kütle olarak gösterilmesi kuvvetli Batı tesirine işaret eder. İnce uzun bir resim olan bu tamamlanmamış eserin bir kalem kutusu dekorasyonu olarak düşünülmesi ve 17 inci asrın sonunda yapılmış olması kabildir.

Siyah çizgi ile yapılmış resimler arasında bir ejder ile aslanın saldırılarını gösteren minyatür 16 ıncı asra ait albümlerde toplanmış Çin tesiri belirten resim'ler gurubuna girer (Resim 8). Başka bir tesir ise uçan meleğin tasvirinde belirir (Resim 9). Burada Veli Can'ın ismi verildiği halde eserin İranlı sanatkârların Osmanlı nakkaşhanesinde çalıştığı devirde bir Türk ressamının elinden çıktığı aşikârdır.

Yukarıda temas edilen eserlerde görüldüğü gibi Osmanlı resim sanatının değişik safhaları Freer Gallery'deki minyatürlerden etraflıca öğrenilebilir. portre sanatı, tarihî ve edebî konular, albüm resimleri Osmanlı minyatür geleneğini aydınlatır ve değişik niteliklerini belirtir.

### **Keramik :**

Aynı üslûp ve teknik değişiklikleri Freer Gallery'deki Osmanlı keramiklerinde de görülür. On üç eser İznik sanatının bütün safhalarını kapsar ve diğer beş parça ise geç Osmanlı sanatını açıklar.

Erken mavi-beyaz guruba ait (1550 seneleri) bir tabak bu üslûbun tipik eserlerinden biridir (Resim 10). Panolara ayrılmış, ortası ve kenarı mavi zemin üzerine beyaz Uzak Doğu motifleriyle işlenmiş bu eser 14 üncü asır Çin porselenlerinin tesirini gösterir. Birinci İznik gurubunun pano ayrımı ve Çin motifleri gibi hususiyetlerini gösteren diğer bir tabakda firûze rengin ilâvesi ve lâle, karanfil gibi halis Türk motiflerinin bulunması bunu ikinci guruba dahil eder (Resim 11).

Aynı şekilde ilk gurubun ikincisine geçişini belirten mavi-beyaz bir tabakta görünen üzüm salkımları, kenarında bulunan çiçek demetleri, ve



kaya dalga bordürü bunun Ming porselenlerinden ilhamla yapıldığının işaretidir (Resim 12). Freer Gallery'de bulunan 15 inci asır başına ait bir Ming porseleni model olarak kullanılan stili gösterir (Resim 13). Renk anlamı, motifler, ve satıh aranjmanı aynıdır. Topkapı Sarayında bulunan Çin porselen koleksiyonu da bu eserlere verilen kıymeti belirtir. Aynı motifi gösteren diğer bir Osmanlı tabağında firûze rengin bulunması bu temanın 16 ıncı asrın sonuna kadar devam ettiğini belirtir (no. 70, 25).

İkinci İznik gurubuna ait tek eser koyu mavi zemin üzerinde açık mavi, mor, beyaz gül, nar çiçeği, ve lâle motiflerini tasvir eder (Resim 14).

Parlak mercankırmızısının İznik keramiklerinde belirmesiyle başlayan üçüncü guruba ait tabaklardan ilkinde balık pulu zemin üzerine rûmî, palmet madalyon görünür (Resim 15). Bu guruba dahil tabaklardan bir diğeri ortada mercan kırmızısı fon üzerine yapraklar, güller, ve lâleler kenarlarda kaya dalga bordürü ile süslenmiştir (Resim 16). Aynı bordür yapraklar ve güllerin çevrelediği bir selvi ile işlenmiş başka bir tabakda da mevcuttur (Resim 17). Bu bordürle en güzel tabaklardan biri de mercan kırmızılı olup, diğerlerine nazaran daha hafif ve işlek bir tarzda merkezi lotus çiçeği etrafına yapraklar ve çiçek gurupları ile dekorludur (Resim 18). Bir başka eser ise tek kökten çıkan çiçekleri gösterir, fakat bordür olarak çiçek kümeleri kullanılmıştır (no. 69, 26).

Tabaklardan başka diğer polikrom keramikler arasında yelken açmış gemiler ve ufak adaları tasvir eden kulplu bir bardak mevcuttur (Resim 19). Bir de yatay bantlarla çiçekler, bulut motifleri, ve yapraklarla süslenmiş bir tek kulplu vazo vardır (no. 69, 2).

Koleksiyonda bulunan çiniler arasında erken 17 inci asra ait gayet enteresan bir eser görülür (Resim 20). Bir fıskiyeinin iki yanına konmuş iki papağan dallar ve çiçeklerle çevrelenmiştir. Bu çinide mercan kırmızısı ve kobalt mavisinden başka parlak zümrüt yeşili kullanılmıştır.

Geç Osmanlı keramikleri kısmında 18 inci - 19 uncu asra ait bir Kütahya vazosu (no. 05.244), 18 inci asırdan selvili büyük bir çini pano (no. 08.193) ve birkaç tane monokrom çini görülür (nos. 09.4, 03.198, 03.199).

Osmanlı keramik sanatının 1500 senelerinden 18 inci asra kadar olan tarihçesi Freer Gallery'deki eserlerde görülebilir. İlk mavi-beyaz gurubdaki kuvvetli Çin etkisi, ikinci devirdeki tipik Türk motifleriyle Uzak Doğu elemanlarının karışımını, ve nihayet Osmanlı kültürünü tam mânasıyla aksettiren 16 ıncı asrın ortasında beliren ve bu motifleri benimsiyen İznik stilini

müzedeki eserlerden tetkik etmek mümkündür. Üç İznik gurubunu birbirine bağlayan tranzisyonel eserler ise bu bölümün en kıymetli objelerindendir.

### **Sonuç :**

Osmanlı sanatının yaratıcı kuvvetini etüd etmeğe başlıyanlar karışık bir problemle karşılaşır. İmparatorluğun genişliğinden ve diğer kültürlerle olan temaslardan içten ve dıştan gelen tesirler sanata aksettirilmiştir. Doğu ve Batı gelenekleri ve motifleri başlangıçta asıl formlarıyla görüldüğü halde zamanla kendi eritilerek Osmanlı dünyasının özel ve karakteristik üslûbu meydana gelir.

Bu tesirlerin belirmesini ve benimsenmesini tespit etmek Osmanlı sanatının değişik devirlerini açıklayan eserleri incelemekle mümkün olur. Freer Gallery'deki Osmanlı eserleri minyatür ve seramik sanatının bütün safhalarını aksettirdiğinden bu koleksiyon sanat tarihçileri için paha biçilmez değerdedir. Ancak eserlerin mânâsı aydınlandıktan sonra Osmanlı sanatının mahiyeti ortaya çıkar ve onun niteliği, gelenekleri, ve kültürünün morfolojisini anlamamıza yardımcı olur.