

Individual research in manuscript studies

Patrons and Artists at the Crossroads: The Islamic Arts of the Book in the Lands of Rūm, 1270s–1370s

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My doctoral dissertation, submitted to the University of Oxford in 2017 under the supervision of Zeynep Yürekli-Görkay, is the first book-length study to analyse the production and patronage of Islamic illuminated manuscripts in late medieval Rūm in their fullest cultural contexts and in relation to the arts of the book of neighbouring regions. Although research concerning the artistic landscapes of late medieval Rūm has made significant progress in recent years, the development of the arts of the book and the nature of their patronage and production has yet to be fully addressed. The topic also remains relatively neglected in the wider field of Islamic art history. This thesis considers the arts of the book and the part they played in artistic life within contemporary scholarly frameworks that emphasise inclusivity, diversity and fluidity. Such frameworks acknowledge the period's ethnic and religious pluralism, the extent of cross-cultural exchange, the region's complex political situation after the breakdown in Seljuk rule, and the itinerancy of scholars, Sufis and craftsmen.

Analyses are based on the codicological examination of sixteen illuminated Persian and Arabic manuscripts, none of which have been published in depth. In order to appropriately assess the material and to partially redress scholarly emphases on the constituent arts of the book (calligraphy, illumination, illustration and binding), the manuscripts are considered as whole objects. The manuscripts' ample inscriptions (e.g. dedications, colophons and *ex libris*) also help to form a clearer picture of contemporary artistic life. Evidence from further illuminated and non-illuminated manuscripts and other textual and material primary sources is also examined.

The introductory chapter outlines the thesis' methodology (with particular emphasis on the role of codicology) and reviews academic scholarship relevant to the study of late medieval Anatolian history, Sufism and the Islamic arts of the book. This chapter also lists and describes the main textual sources that are used, such as Ibn Bībī's history of the Seljuks, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's travelogue and Šams al-Dīn Aflākī's hagiography of the early Mawlawis.¹

1 Ibn Bībī 1956, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa 1962, Aflākī 1961 and 2002.

Chapter One focuses on the earliest illuminated manuscripts produced in Rūm after the region became the de facto western frontier of the Ilkhanid empire in the second half of the thirteenth century. In terms of themes and structure, this chapter sets the scene for subsequent discussions. To begin with, I focus on two important manuscripts, neither of which have been published in depth or discussed in their socio-cultural contexts. These are a monumental *Maṭnawī-i Maʿnawī* of Ġalāl al-Dīn Rūmī and a very small Qurʾan, both produced in Konya in 1278.² After a thorough examination of the visual properties of these manuscripts, such as the illumination, calligraphy, and bookbinding, and their relationship to contemporary manuscripts from other milieux, I describe the socio-political context and the nature of production and patronage in more depth.

The second chapter concerns manuscripts produced in Konya and Sivas between 1311 and 1332. This period roughly coincides with the rise of Turkmen principalities on Rūm's political scene and the final decades of Ilkhanid rule which ended in 1335 after the death of the ruler Abū Saʿīd (r. 1316–1335). The seven core manuscripts that comprise the focus of this chapter were produced for Turkmen princes and Mawlawi dervishes. The manuscripts made for beylik patrons include a small 1311 copy of a relatively obscure work concerning Sufism, entitled *al-Fuṣūl al-Aṣrafiyya fī al-Qawāʿid al-Burhāniyya wa al-Kaṣfiyya*, produced in Konya for an Ashrafid *bey*,³ and a large two-volume Qurʾan produced in 1314/1315 for a Qaramanid *bey* in Konya.⁴ Works closely connected to the Mawlawi group of dervishes include a 1314 *Intihānāma*, a circa 1332 *Maṭnawī* (both by Sulṭān Walad), a 1323 *Maṭnawī* of Ġalāl al-Dīn Rūmī⁵ and a previously unknown illuminated *Maṭnawī* of Ġalāl al-Dīn Rūmī which was copied in the madrasa of Šams al-Dīn Ġuwaynī in Sivas by a Mawlawi scribe in 1318.⁶ This chapter expands the analysis concerning the involvement of the Mawlawis in illuminated manuscript production that was introduced in the previous chapter and further explores the contexts of production in Konya. It also discusses the historiography of the beyliks, a thread that will be taken up in Chapters Three and Four.

Chapter Three discusses two modest manuscripts that were produced for Hamidid *beys* in the mid-fourteenth century. These manuscripts, both copies of Nağm al-Dīn Rāzī Dāya's *Mirṣād al-ʿIbād min al-Mabdāʾ ilā al-Maʿād*,

2 Konya, Mevlana Müzesi, 51 and Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Is.1466.

3 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya 2445.

4 Konya, Mevlana Müzesi, 12.

5 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Supplément Persan 1794 and Konya, Mevlana Müzesi, 74 and 1177.

6 Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Nafiz Paşa 650.

were produced in İstanos (Korkuteli) in 1349 and 1351.⁷ This chapter, which shifts focus from Konya to western, coastal Rūm, explores the ‘mirrors for princes’ genre in more depth, the cosmopolitan nature of the immediate area and the possible impact of bubonic plague on artistic production. After the two copies of *Mirşād al-ʿIbād*, there are no illuminated manuscripts that have been securely identified as products of Rūm from the second half of the fourteenth century. Since there appears to be no obvious explanation for this, it is possible that the plague, which devastated many of Rūm’s towns from the late 1340s onwards, hampered illuminated manuscript production.

The fourth and final chapter focuses on the patronage of one individual, who emerges from surviving material as the most prolific manuscript patron of late medieval Rūm. The three manuscripts discussed in this chapter are connected to one Šaraf al-Dīn Sātī ibn Ḥasan, an *amīr* and a Mawlawi devotee. The key manuscripts examined in this chapter are a copy of the *Maṭnawī* of Sulṭān Walad from 1366, a two-volume *Dīwān-i Kabīr* from 1367/1368 and a 1372 copy of the *Maṭnawī*, both by Ğalāl al-Dīn Rūmī.⁸ The distinctiveness of the manuscripts’ illumination generates a discussion concerning the relationship between the arts of the books of Rūm, Armenia and the Mongol successor states. Even though a production centre is not named in the manuscripts, the patron had strong connections to Erzincan and Konya. In this chapter, I outline and contextualise the political and cultural activities of Sātī and his son Mustanjid (also a bibliophile), and question where the manuscripts may have been produced.

Based on this evidence, this dissertation demonstrates that Rūm’s towns had active cultural scenes despite the frequent outbreak of hostilities and the absence of an effective imperial government. The lavishness of some manuscripts from this period also challenges the often-assumed connection between dynastic patronage and sophisticated artistic production. Furthermore, the identities and affiliations of those involved in the production and patronage of illuminated manuscripts reinforces the impression of an ethnically and religiously diverse environment and highlights the role that local *amīrs* and Sufī dervishes in particular had in the creation of such material.

References

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7 Respectively, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Fatih 2841 and Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Ayasofya 2067.

8 Respectively, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod.Mixt 1594 and Konya, Mevlana Müzesi, 68, 69, and 1113.

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