

People of the Prophet's House Artistic and Ritual Expressions of Shi'i Islam

Edited by
Fahmida Suleman

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in association with
The Institute of Ismaili Studies
in collaboration with the
British Museum's Department
of the Middle East

In Memoriam

Oleg Grabar 1929–2011

Melanie Michailidis 1966–2013

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Cover: Blue doors with door knockers in the
form of female hands (*khamsas*). Believed to
protect the home and sometimes identified with
the five members of the Prophet's household.
Sidi Bou Said, Tunisia

Frontispiece: The Prophet, 'Ali, Fatima, al-Hasan
and al-Husayn, with the Christians at Najran.
Painting from al-Biruni's *Āthār al-bāqīya*, Cairo,
circa 1560, Bibliothèque Nationale de France,
Paris MSO ARABE 1489

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Dhu'l-faqār and the Ottomans

Zeynep Yürekli

The sword known as *Dhu'l-faqār* was transformed into a celebrated commemorative object as a result of the legends that grew around it. Abbasid sources state that the Prophet Muhammad gave it to 'Ali b. Abi Talib during the Battle of Uhud (3/625), while Shi'i tradition reports that Imam Husayn fought with it at the battle of Karbala (60/680). Its presence is recorded in the Abbasid palace in Baghdad, whence Ismaili supporters managed to take it to Fatimid Cairo.¹ The sword then seems to have disappeared, leaving behind a plethora of legendary accounts.

While the shape of the original *Dhu'l-faqār* (literally meaning 'with notches') is not known, it came to be represented with a two-pointed blade in the medieval period.² That is how it appears in the hand of 'Ali b. Abi Talib in early 14th-century Ilkhanid illustrated manuscripts.³ Among other scenes, it figures in key events in Shi'i history. A painting in one manuscript of al-Biruni's *al-Āthār al-bāqiya* (The Vestiges of the Past), for example, illustrates the famous episode during the Farewell Pilgrimage in which Prophet Muhammad stopped at a place called Ghadir Khumm, between Mecca and Medina. There he designated as his successor his cousin and son-in-law, 'Ali, who is shown girt with the double-pointed *Dhu'l-faqār*.⁴

This particular shape of sword remains an attribute of 'Ali till today. For example, in the 1976 film, *Muhammad, the Messenger of God* (released as *The Message* in the USA), the presence of 'Ali, who like the Prophet never appears in person, is indicated by the tip of a two-pointed blade entering the frame. No further clue was required to suggest his presence to modern Muslim cinemagoers. During the centuries that elapsed between the Ilkhanid manuscripts and the film, painters continually depicted 'Ali holding a sword of this shape and the object became inextricably connected to him. Over the course of time, the bifurcated sword depicted on its own also came to represent 'Ali.

Although few motifs have such clear associations with Islam, the exact meaning of the motif depends on the context. For the Twelver

Shi'a, the *Dhu'l-faqār* belongs to the Imams, and will reappear in the hand of the Mahdi. Thus as a signifier of Muslim leadership handed down from Muhammad to 'Ali and then to his son al-Husayn and the later Imams, the motif has served to express allegiance to the *Ahl al-bayt*. However, its significance has not been restricted to the Shi'a. As a signifier of invincibility, it served as an amulet, especially on the battlefield, and was adopted as an emblem by groups devoted to *ghazā* (war for the faith) also by those who did not consider themselves Shi'i. In fact, in the 16th century, the Sunni Ottomans seem to have used it more frequently on ceremonial objects than their Shi'i rivals, the Safavids.

Dhu'l-faqār as an Ottoman emblem and amulet

The image of the *Dhu'l-faqār* seems to have entered the Ottoman world primarily as an element of the folklore of *ghazā*. The earliest Ottoman references to it come from this milieu. Konstantin Mihailović, a Serbian warrior who fell captive to the Ottomans in 1455 and fought with the Ottoman Janissaries until 1463, records what he heard from them about the sword:

The heathens hold 'Ali to be a prophet like Mohammed. For the heathens greatly praise 'Ali because he was a mighty and brave man, and had a sword called *dilfficary* of such wondrous keenness and also hardness, so say the heathens, that whatever 'Ali struck with his sword *dilfficary*, whether iron or steel, was hewn like a spider-web. Some heathens say that his wife Fatima was some kind of sorceress, that she placed such hardness and keenness upon the sword.⁵

In the late 15th century, the imperial policies of Mehmed II (r. 1444–1446, 1451–1481) began to threaten the ideology of *ghazā*. This led those who were eager to preserve and protect the *ghāzī* ideals to record the

oral traditions of the frontier warriors in writing. 'Ali figures prominently in these accounts. The *Şaltūk-nāme* (Book of Saltuk), which is based on legends compiled from oral sources in the Balkans in the 1470s for the Ottoman prince Cem, portrays the medieval protagonist, Saru Saltuk, riding 'Ali's horse and using his sword.⁶ This motif is repeated in the late 15th-century versified biography of an Ottoman raider commander, Mikhal-oghlu 'Ali, based in the Balkans; he, too, rides his revered namesake's horse and uses the *Dhu'l-faqār* against the Christians.⁷

In the reign of Mehmed's son Bayezid II (r. 1481–1512), historical accounts written about the first two centuries of the Ottoman dynasty purposely presented the early Ottomans as frontier warriors for the faith (i.e. *ghāzīs*). Bayezid thus sought to bolster the links between his dynasty and the culture of *ghazā'*, which had been weakened by his father.⁸ At the same time, he looked for ways of preventing his Shi'i subjects from sympathising with the growing Safavid threat from the east. It is in this context that we should place the replica of 'Ali's bifurcated sword made for Bayezid.⁹ In addition to the Qur'anic 'Throne Verse' (*Āyat al-Kursī*, 2:255) and the sultan's name, the sword is inscribed with the names of the four Righteous Caliphs (the *Rāshidūn*), including the three who preceded 'Ali and were rejected by the Shi'a. Bayezid's *Dhu'l-faqār* thus projected a patently Sunni image at a time when the Safavid ruler Shah Isma'il I (d. 1524) was exploiting the Shi'i-millennarian connotations of the same sword in his poems, claiming: 'Muhammad's miracle and the Shah's *Dhu'l-faqār* / Are in my hand as signs. Here I come.'¹⁰

Bayezid's son Selim I (r. 1512–20) adopted a harsh policy towards the Safavids in the east and towards Shi'i groups within his empire. He waged open war against Shah Isma'il, defeating him at Chaldiran in 1514. That victory was followed by another military campaign in 1517, which brought an end to Mamluk rule and resulted in the Ottoman annexation of Egypt and Syria. The banner used by Selim during his campaigns demonstrates that his anti-Shi'i policy did not prevent him from using the *Dhu'l-faqār* motif (fig. 1). The enormous banner, mounted on a pole with a pinnacle inscribed with the sultan's name, measures approximately four by two and a half metres.¹¹ Embroidered with gold thread on a red silk background, the banner features the

bifurcated sword with a rounded pommel in the shape of a crescent encircling a star, and two dragons' heads emerging from the hilt. The two blades of the sword are inscribed with Qur'anic verses reiterating the notion of holy war (*al-Fath*, 48:1–4):

(1) We have given you a manifest conquest, (2) so that Allah may forgive you for your past sins and those to come, complete His favour upon you, and guide you on a right path. (3) Allah grants you a powerful victory/help. (4) It is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of believers so that they might add faith unto their faith. [The rest of the verse was omitted on the banner probably for lack of space: 'To Allah belong the soldiers of the heavens and the earth, and Allah is the Knower, the Wise.']

The inscribed band at the hoist end repeats the first three verses several times. The sword is flanked by a row of three inscribed crescents on each side. The two crescents closest to the hoist end, flanking the pommel, encircle the invocation 'O Muhammad' and contain the Qur'anic verse (*al-Shaff*, 61: 13): 'A victory/help there is from Allah, and a conquest is near, so give good tidings to the believers!' The inscriptions of these



Fig. 1

each other. The other four crescents contain mirror-image inscriptions of the *shahāda*: 'There is no god but Allah. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah'.

After Selim's defeat of the Mamluks, memorabilia from the time of the Prophet Muhammad and the first caliphs that were kept in the Mamluk palace in Cairo were transferred to the imperial palace (now the Topkapı Palace) in Istanbul. The *Dhu'l-faqār* was allegedly one of them, but none of the swords currently in the Topkapı Palace collection that have been ascribed to Muhammad and the first caliphs can be reliably identified as such.¹²

The image of the two-pointed *Dhu'l-faqār* then appears on the banner of the infamous red-bearded pirate known in the multilingual milieu of 16th-century Mediterranean seafarers variously as Barba Rossa, Barba Roja, Barbe Rousse and Barbaros (d. 1546). He was appointed admiral (*kapudân-ı deryā*) by the Ottoman sultan Süleyman (r. 1520–1566) in 1533 and charged with the reorganisation and expansion of the fleet with the aim of turning the Ottomans into the dominant power in the Mediterranean. The admiral's banner bears the image of the *Dhu'l-faqār* at its centre, and an inscribed band at the hoist end with an invocation of the Prophet's name and Qur'an 61:13, as on Selim's flag (fig. 2).

This banner is decorated with two more motifs to which Muslims around the Mediterranean attributed protective powers. One is the Seal of Solomon, the six-pointed star positioned between the two tips of the *Dhu'l-faqār*. The other, depicted on one side of the sword's hilt, is the Hand of Fatima, known in the Ottoman world as *Pençe-i âl-i 'abā* (the Palm of the Family of the Mantle) from the Persian *Panj âl-e 'abā* (the Five Members of the Family of the Mantle), referring to Muhammad, 'Alī, Fatima, al-Hasan and al-Husayn. Perhaps because the coupling of the Hand of Fatima with the *Dhu'l-faqār* might easily be taken to imply Shi'i affiliation – and the Ottomans certainly wished to avoid such an implication – they are surrounded by the names of the first four caliphs, as on the replica of the *Dhu'l-faqār* made for Bayezid II. In the view of Sunni Ottoman scholars, the Safavid practice of cursing the first three caliphs in public rituals (established by Isma'il I) was a blasphemy that justified a call to holy war against the Safavids. Barba Rossa's tenure as admiral (1533–1546) witnessed an escalation of

tensions between the two sides, which would only be eased by the peace treaty of 1555, by the terms of which the Safavid ruler Shah Tahmasp was compelled to proscribe the cursing of the caliphs in his territory. The coupling of the names of the four caliphs with iconographic references to the *Ahl al-bayt* (the Hand of Fatima and the *Dhu'l-faqār*) parallels the position of Ottoman religious policy-makers, who supported Sunni orthodoxy whilst remaining determinedly resolved not to allow the Safavids to monopolise the legacy of the *Ahl al-bayt*.

The same attitude may have informed the practice of decorating the interior of imperial mosques with large medallions bearing the names of al-Hasan and al-Husayn in addition to those of the *Rāshidūn* caliphs. These two names seem to have been included for the first time in the inscriptional programme of the Süleymaniye (1550–1558) and became standard features in later mosques built by the chief imperial architect Sinan.¹³ The medallions in Sinan's mosques are similar in form to the roundels that contain the names of the *Rāshidūn* caliphs in gold letters on Barba Rossa's flag.

The banner of Barba Rossa, which today is housed in the Maritime Museum in Istanbul, used to be in the admiral's tomb next to the museum. A photograph from 1913 and a painting by the Turkish artist



Fig. 2

Fig. 1
Banner of Selim I, Topkapı Palace
Museum, Istanbul, no. 1/824

Fig. 2
Banner of Barbaros Hayreddin Pasha,
Maritime Museum, Istanbul, no. 2964

anachronistic claims that the Janissary corps was established by Hacı Bektaş – was posited in some sources from the late 15th century onwards, it was contested in others.¹⁷

The *Dhu'l-faqār* was, in fact, just one of many Janissary insignia, the wide variety of which is demonstrated in the drawings of Count Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli from the early 18th century (fig.3).¹⁸ An album commissioned by Bartholomäus von Pezzen, Austrian ambassador to Constantinople from 1586 to 1591, shows the Jannissaries carrying similar insignia on their processions, including not only the *Dhu'l-faqār* but also the Hand of Fatima, animals, tents and ships (fig.4).¹⁹ Furthermore, it is not only the Janissaries who carry the *Dhu'l-faqār* motif there, but also the *delis*, front-line warriors who were the Ottoman counterparts of the Norse *berzerks* (fig.5).

Besides being a symbol of holy war, the *Dhu'l-faqār* was put on amulets to protect soldiers from disaster, as related by Konstantin Mihailović:

Now the heathens have small books by the name of *hama hely* [*hamā'il*, i.e. 'carried things' or amulets] and keep them as a sacred thing, just as we have the Holy Scripture. And they always carry them with them under the arm, and especially at war. And on them the sword *dilfficari* is painted from below; and they say that it is very helpful to them in wars.²⁰

The protective powers ascribed to the *Dhu'l-faqār* are also evident in an inscribed undershirt made for sultan Murad III in order to ward off evil and protect him from his enemies (fig.6). A *Dhu'l-faqār* motif is embroidered in the middle of the shirt, standing on its hilt and pointing upwards, with the two tips of the blade framing the neckline. On both sides of the blade are written invocations to 'Ali and the well-known saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad: 'There is no hero but 'Ali. There is no sword but *Dhu'l-faqār*'. According to a note



Fig 4



Fig 5

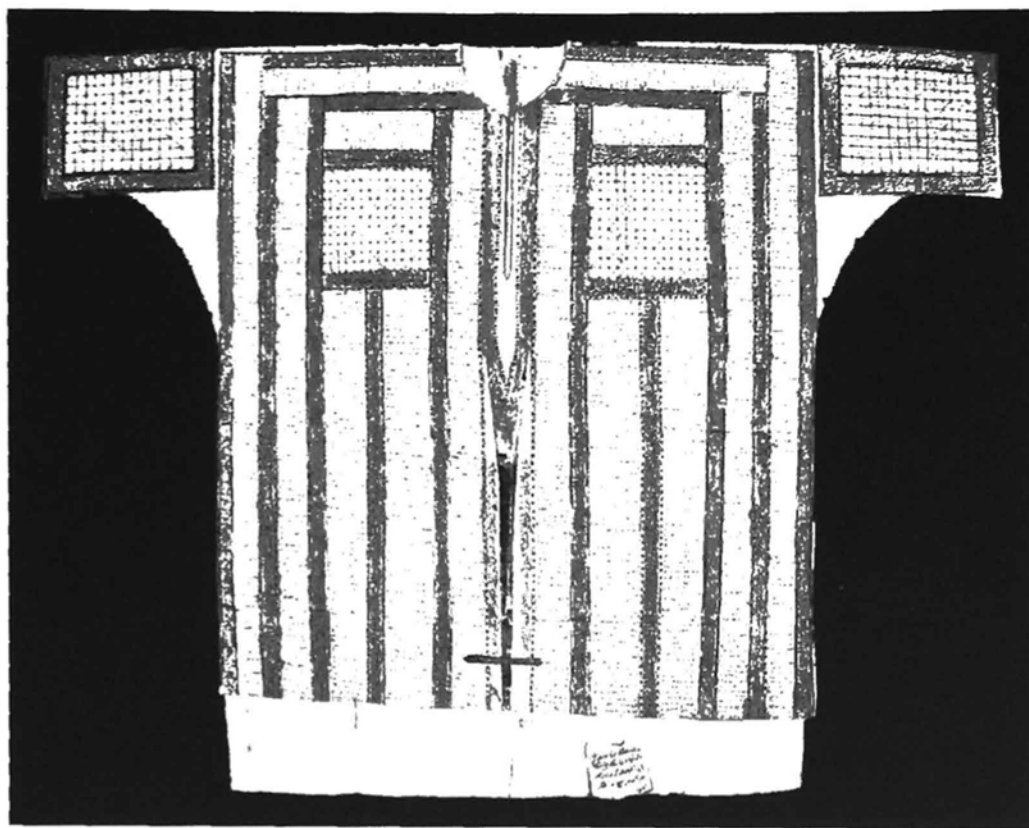


Fig.6

attached to the undershirt, Murad's mother Nurbanu gave it to him as a present when he came to visit her in the palace on the last day of Muharram 990 (24 February 1582).²¹ In trying to understand the meaning of the *Dhu'l-faqār* motif on the sultan's undershirt, should we really be looking any further than a mother's concern for her son's health? She must have been worried about her overworked son who had recently found himself in charge of an empire that was in the midst of a grave economic crisis approaching the point of bankruptcy, and would soon necessitate a dramatic debasement of silver coinage.²² Murad's times seemed laden with uncertainty; it is understandable that his notoriously protective mother resorted to protective amulets such as the sword of 'Ali.

If the sultan wore the *Dhu'l-faqār* to protect himself, it should not come as a surprise that the rest of the Ottoman military class did too,

especially given the association of the symbol with the war for the faith. An image of the *Dhu'l-faqār* also appears in a Persian 'Book of Omens' (*Fālnāma*), which was produced in the late 16th century and must have entered the Ottoman treasury at some point before the early 18th century.²³ The lengthy interpretation accompanying the image, telling the augury seeker that his/her wish will be realised beyond doubt, highlights the downright auspicious connotations of the *Dhu'l-faqār* in the socially prevailing realm of established beliefs that many of us now tend to dismiss as superstition.

Dhu'l-faqār on a pasha's *dhahabiyya*

Banners depicting the *Dhu'l-faqār* appear in a different context in the *Vekāyi'-i 'Alī Paşa* (The Incidents of 'Ali Pasha), the early 17th-century illustrated account of the governorship of Yavuz 'Ali Pasha (d. 1604) in

Fig.6
Undershirt of Murad III, Topkapı
Palace Museum, Istanbul, no.13/1135

Fig.7
Kelami, *Vekāyi'-i 'Alī Paşa*
(The Incidents of 'Ali Pasha),
circa 1603-1604, MS Istanbul,
Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi
612, folios 26b and 14a, bound as
24b-25a

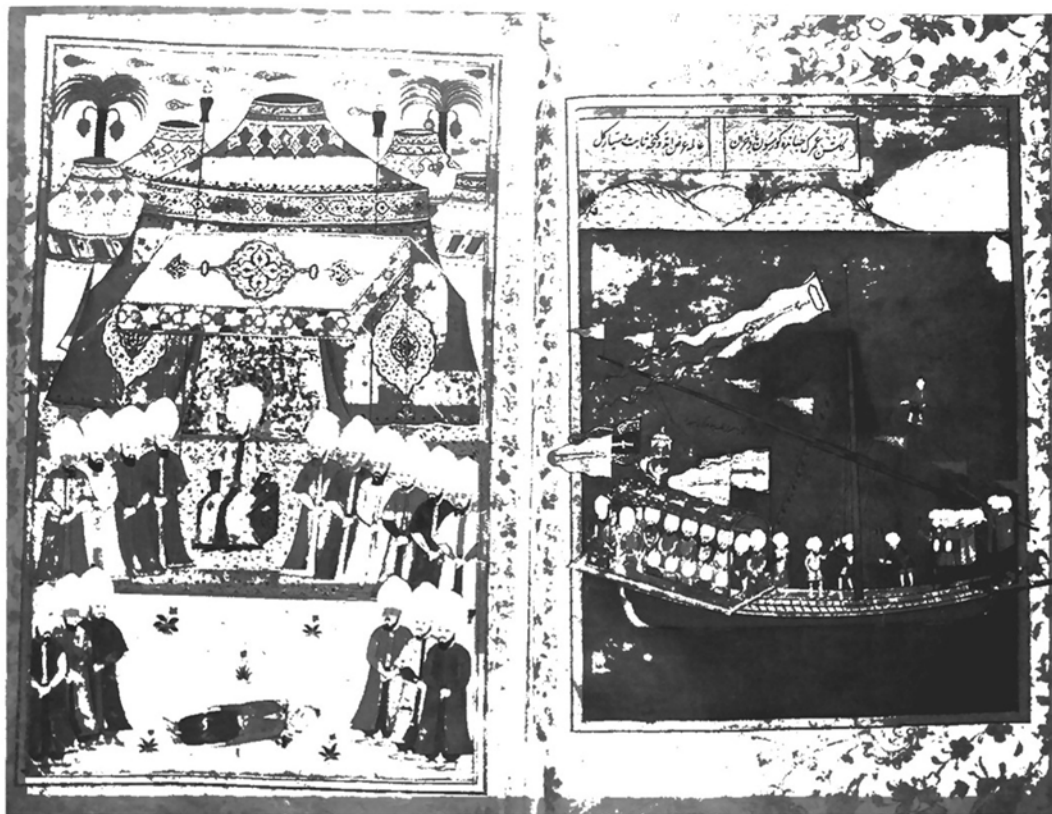


Fig. 7

Egypt from 1601 to 1603, written by the poet and scribe Kelami.²⁴ The illustrated manuscript was produced around the time Yavuz 'Ali Pasha was appointed grand vizier in 1603.²⁵ It has one double-page and six single-page paintings executed in the contemporary style of the Ottoman court atelier. Four out of the first 26 folios were misplaced when the manuscript was bound or rebound.²⁶ All of the paintings are within the first 56 folios of the 149-folio manuscript (folios 5b, 7b-8a [bound as 9b-10a], 14a [25a], 15b [6b], 26b [24b], 32a, 56b), and illustrate the narrative portion of the work, which turns into an anthology of poems from folio 61b. Empty frames facing three of the paintings (folios 6a [8a], 13b [26b], 16a [7a]) and the use of different paper for illustrated folios suggests a lapse between the writing and illustration of the text. This complicated codicology may be explained with Yavuz 'Ali Pasha's promotion during the manuscript's production. Though the

project started while he was still in Cairo and the text may have been written there, the paintings were probably added in Istanbul during his 14 months as grand vizier. The manuscript seems to have been left incomplete after his death in 1604.

The *Dhu'l-faqār* figures prominently in the fifth painting (folio 26b [24b]) (fig. 7), which shows Yavuz 'Ali Pasha aboard a vessel that resembles a small galleon. He sits under a canopy at the stern accompanied by a group of men in turbans, while another group of men stand playing music in the bows. The surrounding text on the five pages that precede the painting (folios 24a [22a]-28a) tells us about a festival that Yavuz 'Ali Pasha organised on the occasion of the flooding of the river Nile, following a long Cairene tradition dating back to Fatimid times. The festivities included night-time performances by singers, musicians and various artists, for which the city was lit with torches. And for that particular

occasion, Yavuz 'Ali Pasha had a *dhahabiyya* (sailing vessel) gilded and adorned for a night ride on the Nile. The governor and his distinguished guests sailed along the Nile all night, eating confectionery, listening to music and watching the city, which was alive with the lights of torches lit for the festivities along the banks. In the painting, which is a depiction of this excursion, the *dhahabiyya* appears, in imitation of the galleons of the Ottoman fleet, adorned with a huge banner hanging from its mast. The banner bears the image of the *Dhu'l-faqār* embroidered in gold. The same motif adorns the standards at the four corners of the canopy. Yavuz 'Ali Pasha came from the Malkoch-oghlu family, which produced generations of illustrious raider commanders committed to the concept of *ghazā*. The enormous golden *Dhu'l-faqār* flying above his vessel may have served to advertise his familial identity, even though contemporary Ottoman sources hint at his aversion to warfare.²⁷

When the manuscript was bound, almost certainly after the patron's death, or rebound later, this painting was coupled with another painting (folio 14a [25a]), which actually illustrates an earlier part of the text. It depicts Yavuz 'Ali Pasha seated in front of his tent near Alexandria, en route to his new post in Cairo, overseeing the execution of a criminal. Sixteen men in turbans and cloaks stand next to him. With their hands clasped respectfully on their bellies, they look sternly towards the beheaded man who lies in their midst. Curiously, the executioner who severed the head from the body is nowhere to be seen. This execution scene bears striking similarities to a series of paintings in the *Siyer-i Nebī* (Life of the Prophet) produced by the imperial atelier in 1594–1595 under the supervision of Naqqash Hasan Pasha. They show 'Ali b. Abi Talib wielding the *Dhu'l-faqār* to slay his enemies and, in one instance, a dragon, highlighting the sword's potency as an instrument of good versus evil, and of justice and vengeance against opponents of the new Muslim community. In one painting he is shown beheading 'Ataba, a Qurayshi opponent of the Muslims (fig. 8).²⁸ The artist, who clearly perceived the early *umma* in Ottoman imperial terms, depicted the Prophet Muhammad seated on a throne accompanied on one side by religious scholars, or officers, in turbans and cloaks, and on his other side, by an army led by 'Ali with the *Dhu'l-faqār* in hand, advancing towards the enemy. The anonymous artist who made the paintings of the *Vekāyi'-i 'Alī Paşa* may have worked with Naqqash Hasan Pasha on the *Siyer-i*



Fig. 8

Fig. 8
'Ataba slain by 'Ali b. Abi Talib at the Battle of Badr, from a 17th- or early 18th-century copy of Darir, *Siyer-i Nebī*, vol. 4, based on an original from circa 1594–1595 that is now in a private collection. MS Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Art Museum, T.1974, folio 253b

Nebī project, which was completed in 1595.²⁹ Images designed for this massive sultanic commission may have inspired the execution scene in the grand vizier's manuscript. Yet, the concept of warfare that is so prominent in the *Siyer-i Nebī* is entirely missing from the *Vekāyi'-i 'Alī Paşa*. No army is in sight in any of the paintings. In the execution scene, the pasha's entourage consists solely of civilian officers in turbans and cloaks. Even the sword that cut off the head of the condemned man is absent from the picture.

Thanks to an arguably very cunning binder, the legendary sword that beheads the enemy commander in the *Siyer-i Nebī* painting appears in the *Vekāyi'-i 'Alī Paşa* on the facing page, but in a very different context: it adorns the vessel of the pasha entertaining his guests at night. Earlier in the text Kelami compares Yavuz 'Alī Pasha's virtues to those of his revered namesake, 'Alī b. Abī Talib.³⁰ The adornment of the vessel with 'Alī's sword may be a visual pun. Perhaps this inspired a further pun during the binding process, achieved by rearranging the folios so that the *Dhu'l-faqār* in one scene points towards the executed man in the other scene – one which was modelled after an image of 'Alī b. Abī Talib to start with. When seen together, the two paintings encapsulate the public persona of 'Alī Pasha, whose governorship, Kelami says, brought unprecedented prosperity to Egypt as well as justice and order, raising the profile of the Ottoman sultan in the region.³¹ The *Dhu'l-faqār* motifs that adorn the pasha's *dhahabiyya* thus assume a meaning that the artist does not seem to have intended, given that the original context of the folio does not have any reference to the concept of justice or the memory of 'Alī b. Abī Talib.

Conclusions

The evidence I have presented here would suggest that the Ottomans succeeded in stripping the *Dhu'l-faqār* of its Shi'i connotations within their realm. Under the Ottomans, the *Dhu'l-faqār* motif was employed as a protective charm and military emblem by warriors on land and sea. It also transcended its military connotations and became a symbol of justice and governance, as we have seen from the illustration of an excursion enjoyed by the Ottoman governor of Egypt.

However, though the Ottoman establishment conceived of the *Dhu'l-faqār* as a non-sectarian motif, its Shi'i connotations continued

to be recognised by some marginal groups, such as the itinerant dervishes known as Abdals. Writing in 1522, Vahidi describes the Abdals, one of eight groups of dervishes whom he considers deviants from the true religion, as itinerant holy fools who went about barefoot and half naked, wearing only a felt garment secured with a wooden belt.³² Both 'Alī's name and the outline of his sword *Dhu'l-faqār* were incised or tattooed on their chests. They carried on one shoulder a hatchet associated with Abu Muslim, the leader of the Abbasid revolt in Khurasan who was later adopted as a Shi'i hero and whose legend was cultivated in militant millenarian movements in Iran and Anatolia, including the early Safavid state.³³ In Vahidi's view, these amulets and charms signalled that the Abdals were 'the enemies of Imam 'Alī's enemies', since they considered him their guide and cherished his descendants, the Ithna 'ashari Imams.

Paradoxical though it may appear, it was the orthodox Sunni stance of the Ottoman state that compelled the Ottomans to display the symbols of the Prophet's family in public, in order to prevent the Safavids (and their sympathisers in the Ottoman lands) from laying sole claim to the 'love of the *Ahl al-bayt*', a widespread and politically potent element of Islamic heritage. As deepening hostilities led to ever more frequent conflicts with the Safavids, the Ottomans tried to associate themselves more closely with the *Ahl al-bayt*. They did this by means of ceremonial veneration of the Prophetic memorabilia transferred from Cairo to Istanbul after Selim's defeat of the Mamluks in 1517; and the public display of symbols like the *Dhu'l-faqār*. Any supposed Shi'i associations that such practices may have generated were refuted by juxtaposing them with invocations of the *Rāshidūn* caliphs. Just as imperial mosques were decorated with medallions inscribed with the names of Allah, Muhammad, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Alī as well as those of al-Hasan and al-Husayn, so too, the memorabilia stored in the imperial palace included those of the first three caliphs as well as 'Alī, Fatima and al-Husayn. The mosque medallions were matched by the roundels inscribed with the names of the *Rāshidūn* caliphs, which surrounded the image of the *Dhu'l-faqār* on flags and banners. In this way, the Ottomans managed to neutralise the Shi'i connotations of the 'love of the *Ahl al-bayt*' and prise the *Dhu'l-faqār* symbol from the hands of their Safavid enemies.

- 1 For the early history of the sword, see David Alexander, 'Dhu'l-Fağâr and the Legacy of the Prophet: Mirâth Rasûl Allâh', *Gladius*, 19 (1999), pp.157–187, 157–163. For the *Dhu'l-fağâr* motif under the Ottomans, see Jane Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory, and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen* (Albany, 2003), pp.167–180.
- 2 E. Mittwoch, 'Dhû'l-Fağâr', *EI2*, vol.2, p.230.
- 3 al-Bal'amî, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, MS Washington DC, Freer Gallery of Art, F. 1957, undated, circa 1300; al-Birûnî, *al-Âthâr al-bâqiya*, MS Edinburgh University Library, Arab 161, dated 1307–1308; Rashîd al-Dîn Faḍl Allâh, *Jamî' al-tawârīkh*, MS Topkapı Palace Museum Library, H. 1653, dated 1314. See Serpil Bağcı, 'Ali in Manuscript Painting', in A. Y. Ocak, ed., *From History to Theology: 'Ali in Islamic Beliefs* (Ankara, 2005), pp.229–263, pp.236–240 and figs 2–4; Teresa Fitzherbert, *Bal'amî's Tabari. An Illustrated Manuscript of Bal'amî's tarjuma-yi tarīkh-i Tabari in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington* (F57.16, 47.19 and 30.21), (Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2001); Priscilla Soucek, 'The Life of the Prophet: Illustrated Versions', in Soucek, ed., *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World* (University Park, PA, 1988), pp.193–218, 195–198; Priscilla Soucek, 'An Illustrated Manuscript of al-Biruni's Chronology of Ancient Nations', in P. J. Chelkowski, ed., *The Scholar and the Saint: Studies in Commemoration of Abu'l-Rayhan al-Biruni and Jalal al-Din Rumi* (New York, 1975), pp.103–168; Robert Hillenbrand, 'Images of Muhammad in al-Biruni's Chronology of Ancient Nations', in R. Hillenbrand, ed., *Persian Painting from the Mongols to the Qajars: Studies in Honour of Basil W. Robinson* (London, 2000), pp.129–146.
- 4 MS Edinburgh University Library, Arab 161, fol.162a; Soucek, 'An Illustrated Manuscript', pp.154–155, fig.25; Hillenbrand, 'Images of Muhammad', pp.134–135, 141, fig.13.
- 5 Konstantin Mihailović, *Memoirs of a Janissary*, tr. Benjamin Stolz, ed. Svat Soucek (Ann Arbor, 1975), pp.6–7.
- 6 Ebû'l-Hayr-ı Rûmî, *Şaltuk-nâme*, ed. Şükrü H. Akalın (3 vols, Ankara, 1987–1990), vol.1, pp.5, 8.
- 7 Agah Sırrı Levend, *Gazavât-nâmeler ve Mihaloglu Ali Bey'in Gazavât-nâmesi* (Ankara, 2000), pp.278, 300.
- 8 Cemal Kafadar, *Between Two Worlds: The Construction of the Ottoman State* (Berkeley, 1995), p.97.
- 9 Topkapı Palace Museum, no.1/384.
- 10 Vladimir F. Minorsky, 'The Poetry of Shâh Ismâ'il I', *BSOAS*, 10, 4 (1942), pp.1006a–1053a, 1036a; *Il Canzoniere di Shâh Ismâ'il Hâfâ'î*, ed. Tourkhan Gandjei (Napoli, 1959), p.109.
- 11 Topkapı Palace Museum, no.1/824; Fevzi Kurtoglu, *Türk Bayrağı ve Ay Yıldız* (Ankara, 1938), pp.76–78.
- 12 Alexander, 'Dhu'l-fağâr and the Legacy of the Prophet', pp.178–182; Tahsin Öz, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi ve Emanat-ı Mukaddese* (Istanbul, 1953), pp.36–46, figs 17–35.
- 13 Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (London, 2005), pp.202, 219.
- 14 Murâdi, *Gazavât-ı Hayreddin Paşa* (MS 2639 *Universitätsbibliothek Istanbul*): *Kommentierte Edition mit Deutscher Zusammenfassung*, ed. Mustafa Yıldız (Aachen, 1993), p.245.
- 15 These banners include the admiralty banner of Müezzinzade 'Ali Pasha (d. 1571), which according to the records of the Maritime Museum in Istanbul, was captured by the Christian fleet in the battle of Lepanto in 1571 and donated to the museum by Pope Paul VI in 1946; see Rasim Ünlü, *Deniz Tarihimizde İz Bırakanlar, Türbe ve Mezarları*, 3 vols (Istanbul, 2007), vol.1, p.222. For an Ottoman flag captured by the Knights of St Stephen, see Alessandro Martinelli, 'Bandiere turche a Pisa', *Vexilla Italica*, 31, 2, n.58 (2004), pp.38–43, figs 2 and 6.
- 16 Nâdiri, *Şehnâme-i Sultân 'Osmân Hân*, MS Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H.1124, folios 286–29a.
- 17 The late-15th-century historian, 'Aşıkpaşazade, refutes the claims that the Janissary corps was connected to the Bektashis: 'Aşıkpaşazade, *Tevârih-i Âl-i 'Osmân* (Istanbul, 1332/1913–1914), p.205; 'Aşıkpaşazade, *Die altosmanische Chronik des 'Aşıkpaşazade auf Grund mehrerer neuentdeckter Handschriften*, ed. Friedrich Giese (Leipzig, 1929), p.201.
- 18 Luigi Ferdinando Marsigli, *Stato militare dell'Imperio Ottomanno, incremento e decremento del medesimo* (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1732), vol.2, plates 20–21; Zdzisław Zygmunt, *Ottoman Art in the Service of the Empire* (New York, 1992), pp.29–32.
- 19 Austrian National Library, Codex Vindobonensis 8626; Alberto Arbasino, ed., *I Turchi. Codex Vindobonensis 8626* (Parma, 1971).
- 20 Mihailović, *Memoirs*, pp.8–9.
- 21 Topkapı Palace Museum, no.13/1135; Hülya Tezcan, *Topkapı Sarayındaki Şifalı Gömlekler* (Istanbul, 2006), p.71.
- 22 Cemal Kafadar, 'Les troubles monétaires de la fin du xvie siècle et la prise de conscience ottomane du déclin', *Annales: Economies, sociétés, civilisations*, 11 (1991), pp.381–400; Şevket Pamuk, *A Monetary History of the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.131–138.
- 23 Massumeh Farhad with Serpil Bağcı, *Falnama: Book of Omens* (London, 2009), p.280; MS Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, H. 1702, folios 31b–32a.
- 24 MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi 612; Soner Demirsoy, *Kelâmi-i Rûmî: Vekâyi'-i Ali Paşa [Yavuz Ali Paşa'nın Mısır Valiliği (1601–1603)]* (Istanbul, 2012).
- 25 Tülün Değirmenci, *Resmedilen Siyaset*: 11. *Osman Devri (1618–1622) Resimli Elyazmalarında Değişen İktidar Sembolleri*, Ph.D. thesis, Hacettepe University, Ankara, 2007, pp.55–60; Emine Fetvacı, 'Enriched Narratives and Empowered Images in Seventeenth-Century Ottoman Manuscripts', *Ars Orientalis*, 40 (2010), pp.245–266, 248–252.
- 26 The original folio order has been reconstructed in Demirsoy's edition; see n.24 above.
- 27 Değirmenci, *Resmedilen Siyaset*, pp.57–59.
- 28 The painting, detached from the fourth volume of the work which is currently in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, is now in a private collection (Newport, Rhode Island, John Slocum Collection); see Zeren Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi: İslam Tasvir Sanatında Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı* (Istanbul, 1984), p.34. The painting reproduced here is from a later copy of the same volume; MS Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Art Museum (TIEM), T.1974, fol.253b; Tanındı, *Siyer-i Nebi*, plate 56.
- 29 Serpil Bağcı et al., *Osmanlı Resim Sanatı* (Ankara, 2006), p.209.
- 30 MS Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi 612, fol.10b [12b].
- 31 Ibid., fols 20b–21a [18b–19a], 24a [22a].
- 32 Vâhidi's *Menâkıb-ı Hıvoca-i Cihân ve Netice-i Cân: Critical Edition and Analysis*, ed. Ahmet T. Karamustafa (Cambridge, MA, 1993), pp.7–8, 126–128 (fols 41a–43a).
- 33 Irène Melikoff, *Abû Muslim: le 'Porte-Hache' du Khorassan dans la tradition épique turco-iranienne* (Paris, 1962).