CHAPTER 12

# A Stamped Talisman

*Francesca Leoni*

> Il est curieux de voir tout le mal que prennent les auteurs des livres de magie pour augmenter, au rebours des écrivains strictement religieux, la confusion entre le saint et le sorcier; qu'on lise le chapitre de la Terbia, c'est-à-dire l'éducation (magique) dans un de ces livres, on n'y trouvera que des conseils de morale, d'ascétisme, absolument comme s'il s'agissait d'un mourid ou aspirant dans une confrérie religieuse….
>
> —EDMOND DOUTTÉ[1]

Edmond Doutté's dated remark about the confusion between saint and magician observed in Islamic magical texts reflects, in fact, a long-standing conviction that the two operate in entirely separate spheres. Accordingly, while saints or "friends of God" (Arabic *walī*, pl. *awliyā'*) are holy individuals venerated for their spiritual virtues and miracles (Arabic pl. *karāmāt*), and called upon for salvific interventions, magicians (Arabic *sāḥir*, pl. *suḥḥār*) are generally mobilised to alter the course of events for allegedly corrupt aims, thereby posing a more overt threat to divine authority and order.[2] Until

[1] "It is surprising to see how far the authors of magic texts can go to increase the confusion between saint and sorcerer, contrary to strict religious authors. If we were to read a chapter of the Terbia, that is, (magical) training in one of such books, we would not find but moral suggestions or asceticism, absolutely as if it was about a *murid* or aspiring member of a religious confraternity…"; Edmond Doutté, *Magie et Religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Alger: Adolphe Jourdan, 1908), 55.

[2] Richard J. McGregor, "Friend of God," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, eds. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Consulted online on 4 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/15733912_ei3_ COM_27194; Toufiq Fahd, "Siḥr," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth,

relatively recent, the material forms taken by their activities were also considered on the basis of the same binary, with devotional objects (i.e., blessed images, prayers, etc.) linked to the domain of popular piety, on the one hand, and amuletic gadgets (i.e., charms, curative stones, etc.) associated with the world of superstition, on the other hand.[3] Objects in which the seemingly irreconcilable resources of the two spheres are combined, instead, produced unease or remained overlooked.[4]

This article provides the opportunity to reconsider this stark division and reflect more broadly on the fact that, in some instances, the "devotional" and "magical" spheres could, in fact, merge in relation to specific objectives. The large talisman that is the main subject of this essay provides the ground for this argument (Figure 12.1).[5] By combining pious texts and magical formulas for the same

---

E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 4 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_7023.

[3] For the first category, see, for instance, Alexander Fodor, "Types of Shīʿite Amulets," in *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism: Historical Dimensions, Religious Practice and Methodological Considerations*, ed. Frederick De Jong (Utrecht: M.Th. Houtsma Stichting, 1992), 118-34; David J. Roxburgh, "Visualising the Sites and Monuments of Islamic Pilgrimage," in *Architecture in Islamic Arts: Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum*, ed. Margaret Graves (Geneva: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2011), 33-41; Christiane Gruber, "Prophetic Products: Muhammad in Contemporary Iranian Visual Culture," *Material Religion* 12, no. 3 (2016): 259-93. For the second category, in addition to early works such as Edward W. Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians* (London: J. Murray, 1860), esp. chaps. 10-12; Ernest A. W. Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions* (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1930), 33-81; and Bess A. Donaldson, *The Wild Rue: A Study of Muhammadan Magic and Folklore* (London: Luzac, 1938), esp. chaps. 1, 18 and 16, more recent contributions include Christopher Gandy, "Inscribed Silver Amulet Boxes," in *Islamic Art in the Ashmolean Museum, Part I*, ed. James Allan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 155-66; Jürgen W. Frembgen, "The Scorpion in Muslim Folklore," *Asian Folkore Studies* 63, no. 1 (2004): 95-123; and Ziva Vesel, "Talismans from the Iranian World: A Millenary Tradition," in *Art and Material Culture of Iranian Shiism*, ed. Pedram Khosronejad (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 254-75.

[4] The dichotomy persists even in works that have transformed the way in which this type of material evidence is approached. In her influential introduction to the two-volume catalogue on scientific and talismanic objects in the Khalili Collection, for instance, Emilie Savage-Smith underscores the protective and God-bound nature of the Islamic magical tradition, but links invocations addressed directly to jinns and demons with illicit magic and its practitioners, "conjurors and sorcerers," considering them more rare. Emilie Savage-Smith, "Magic and Islam," in *Science, Tools and Magic*, eds. Francis Maddison and Emilie Savage-Smith, 2 vols. (London: Nour Foundation, in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1997), 1:59-60.

[5] About the word "talisman" and associated terminology, see Emilie Savage-Smith, "Introduction," in idem, *Magic and Divination*, xxii-xxiii, and, more recently, Christiane Gruber, "From Prayer to Protection: Amulets and Talismans in the Islamic

protective aim, this object not only defies categorisations and assumptions, but, I argue, pushes us to reconsider accepted notions (and associated limits) of everyday devotion, and, ultimately, to question established and dominant views of what constitutes belief. The article begins with a detailed analysis of the talisman's content and layout. Attention is here given to textual and iconographic formulas used therein, both in their own right and with respect to their positions and functions. I then move onto the object's context in order to address issues of production and authority and understand how this and cognate examples operated and signified.[6]

Before proceeding with the analysis of the talisman, it is worth noting that although unusual, it is not unique. In fact, it belongs to a group of documents attested in the late Ottoman world that share a number of features (Figures 12.2-3).[7] First, they are all the same medium-paper-

---

World," in *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural*, ed. Francesca Leoni (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2016), 33.

[6] In doing so, this article joins a number of recent studies aiming to reconstruct the vocabulary and logic structuring amuletic and talismanic material. See, in particular, Massumeh Farhad, with Serpil Bağcı, *Falnama: Book of Omens* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009); Venetia Porter, with Robert Hoyland and Alexander Morton, *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 2011); Heather Coffey, "Between Amulet and Devotion: Islamic Miniature Books in the Lilly Library, in *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, ed. Christiane Gruber (Bloomington: Indiana, 2009), 79-115; Özgen Felek, "Fears, Hopes, and Dreams: The Talismanic Shirts of Murad III," *Arabica* 64, nos. 3-4 (2017): 647-72; Rose Muravchick, "Objectifying the Occult: Studying a Talismanic Shirt as an Embodied Object," *Arabica* 64, nos. 3-4 (2017): 673-93; Venetia Porter, Liana Saif, and Emilie Savage-Smith, "Amulets, Magic, and Talismans," in *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, eds. Finbarr Barry Flood and Gülru Necipoğlu (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2017), 1:521-56; and Christiane Gruber, " 'Go Wherever You Wish, for Verily You Are Well-Protected': Seal Designs in Late Ottoman Amulet Scrolls and Prayer Books," in *Visions of Enchantment; Occultism, Spirituality, and Visual Culture* (London: Fulgur, 2019), 22-35. To these, a couple of interesting doctoral dissertations should also be added: Rose Muravichick, "God is the Best Guardian: Islamic Talismanic Shirts from the Gunpowder Empires," Ph.D. dissertation (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 2014); and Yasmine al-Saleh "The Touch and Sight of Islamic Talismanic Scrolls," Ph.D. dissertation (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 2015).

[7] Halûk Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım Mühürleri* (Istanbul: Halûk Perk Müzesi Yayınları, 2010), 111-26. A further large-scale version, with dimensions similar to the one considered in this study, is currently at the Ankara Ethnographic Museum (inv. no. 16340); see Sabiha Göloğlu, "Depicting the Holy: Representations of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in the Late Ottoman Empire," Ph.D. dissertation (Istanbul, Koç University, 2018), 273-74, fig. 177; and idem, "Linking, Printing, and Painting Sanctity and Protection: Representations of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in Late Ottoman Illustrated Prayer Books," in *The Miraj of the Prophet and Stations of His Journey*, eds. Ayşe Taşkent and Nicole Kançal-Ferrari (Ankara: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism;

available in various formats and all likely produced during the 19th century.[8] Second, they all show signs of wear and tear, which are not simply a mark of their age or their support's fragility, but also reflect various forms of physical interaction—from touching, rubbing and, possibly, kissing, to folding and rolling for storage purposes and easy carrying. This, in turn, indicates degrees of mobility and a range of settings for their final employ that complicate the objects' nature and function. Third, and last, they all exhibit an impressive variety of imprinted motifs, featuring texts, images, and diagrams whose content ranges from the pious to the occult. These impressions have all been applied by means of seals, which are generally made of a durable material, mostly copper alloys, and are inscribed with phrases and motifs in the negative (Figures 12.4-5).[9] A handle on their back enabled for the easy transfer and repetition of their formulas. Yet the fact that the prop could occasionally be removed indicates that these matrices could also function as amulets in their own right, dispensing the benefits that they were seemingly designed to transfer.[10] Elaborately laid out yet accessible, these printed talismans provide quick, attractive and more affordable alternatives for personalised hand-written and painted versions documented both in scroll and codex forms over the centuries across various Islamic societies.[11] As such, they open a window on additional makers and consumers of talismanic arts, revealing the preoccupations and needs that prompted people to commission and accumulate them in the first place.

## The Talisman's Contents

---

Independent Art Foundation, forthcoming). I take this opportunity to thank Dr Göloğlu for sharing images of this and other talismans and for liaising with the Perk collection for the purpose.

[8] This dating is here suggested on the basis of some of the pictorial elements appearing on this and other talismans, as their analysis will demonstrate later on.

[9] Various examples are illustrated in Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım*, 35-110, and Porter et al. *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 169-72.

[10] For a discussion about the practical and apotropaic functions of amulets, see Venetia Porter, "Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?" *University Lectures in Islamic Studies* 2, ed. Alan Jones (London: Altajir World of Islam Trust, 1998), 135-49 [reprinted in Savage-Smith, *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, 179-200].

[11] For an overview and several examples, see Leoni, *Power and Protection*, esp. cat. nos. 62-3, 88-90, 95, 105-6. For earlier examples, see al-Saleh, "'Licit Magic'," esp. 79-178.

Carrying the shelf number Mss1179 in the Nasser D. Khalili Collection, our talisman is an impressive 86.6 x 60.9 cm brown sheet of paper entirely covered by seal impressions in black and red inks (Figure 12.1).[12] Its surface bears traces of burnishing, as well as the residues of an oily patina, most likely the result of a spill.[13] In addition to the areas of wear corresponding to where it was folded, small losses of paper at the top and the bottom, as well as on the right-hand side, indicate that the sheet was possibly only a couple of centimetres longer and wider. Yet as the distribution of the seal impressions indicates, what survives is not a section of a larger object. This fact is confirmed by the other talismans in the group, all of which were originally executed on paper surfaces that probably match their current dimensions, save for the detectable areas of wear (Figures 12.2 and 3). The presence of a mostly unmarked perimetral band, as opposed to the contiguous, and often overlapping, distribution of the seal marks, further corroborates this point, in addition to shedding light on how the talisman was produced.

The larger and most visually compelling impressions appear to have been laid out first in key areas of the surface and in a somewhat symmetrical fashion, with the smaller stamps used as fillers on the sides and in the interstitial spaces to maximise the space and the device's effectiveness (Figure 12.6).[14] Even though the level of discoloration, the different shades of ink and the ways in which the seal marks overlay could suggest that they were applied over an extended period of time, and, possibly, at multiple venues, their humble and disposable nature makes it more likely that they were imprinted in one session, and by individuals possessing both the tools and the knowledge to realise protective devices addressing a range of needs.[15] Unfortunately, their

---

[12] I take this opportunity to thank Nahla Nassar, of the Khalili Collection, for first bringing this object to my attention while working on the exhibition *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural* held at the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford from 20 October 2016 to 15 January 2017. Since then, the Khalili Collection acquired a further example of this kind accompanied by its pouch in which it was rolled and stored (Mss0793).

[13] Bands of this varnish-like substance, marked by an orange tinge and running horizontally across the entire surface, are visible about 1/3 and 2/3 down the length of the object. I thank Alexandra Greathead, head of paper conservation at the Ashmolean Museum, for pointing this out to me following a close examination of the object in 2015.

[14] A comparable logic can be observed on the scroll versions (Figures 12.2-3), where the short and oblong nature of the support has inspired an equally ordered and visually balanced application of the different impressions.

[15] Halûk Perk, who has amassed an extensive collection of engraved seals and stamped talismans over the last three decades, indicated that he often found talismans folded

somewhat ordered, yet not progressive or sequential, placement on the surface of our object reveals little about the way in which the composition was viewed or utilised by its intended users. We may thus only speculate as to whether individual images or formulas prompted close engagement (as discussed below), or whether the cumulative and combined effect of the impressions dominated the ways in which people interacted with the device.

The seal marks can be regrouped in several categories, which will be analysed in detail below:

a) impressions made exclusively of text (Figures 12.7.1-7.2 A-M);
b) impressions combining letters and numbers (Figures 12.8 N-P);
c) impressions combining text and images (Figures 12.9.1-9.2 Q-X);[16]
d) calligrams (Figure 12.10 Y); and, finally,
e) diagrammatic images of sanctuaries and shrines (Figures 12.11-12 Z-AA).

*Impressions with Text*

The textual stamps draw on both familiar and less familiar sources. To the former group belong Qurʾanic excerpts, hadith and invocations featuring some of the so-called "beautiful Names of God" (*al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā*). Taken from *sūrat al-Qalam,* the verse "And the Unbelievers would almost trip thee up with their eyes when they hear the Message, and they say: Surely, he is possessed!" is reproduced twice on the upper-right corner of the sheet (Figure 12.7.1 A).[17] This passage is considered amongst the most effective verses against the evil eye, a phenomenon mentioned in the Qurʾan, recognized in Islam, and a key preoccupation, as the occurrence of other texts and apotropaic symbols on this talisman suggest.[18] Also inscribed in a roundel, but reproduced more frequently

---

inside manuals on talismanic arts. Further, as he acquired seals in batches rather than as individual items, he believes that they were owned in equal large quantities by their users, who would then select from them based on the specific needs of the client. Personal communication with the author, January 17, 2018. I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Perk for granting access to his collection while doing research in Istanbul and for kindly providing the high resolution images for the items included here. Thanks are also due to Christiane Gruber for introducing me to the collection.

[16] This includes those featuring well-known apotropaic symbols such as the *khamsa* or the cypress, which will thus be addressed therein.

[17] Qur. 68:51. All Qurʾanic translations are from Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qurʾan* (London: Wordsworth, 2000).

[18] Philippe Marçais, "ʿAyn", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 30 October 2017 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0908>.

across our page, is the divine saying (*ḥadīth qudsī*) "Were it not for you (O Muḥammad) I would not have created the universe" (*law laka la-mā khalaqtu al-aflāk*) (Figures 12.7.1-7.2 B).[19] Attributed to God himself, the phrase was popular in Sufi circles, where it was considered a divinely inspired "ecstatic utterance", one that could be witnessed during a mystical experience.[20] Yet the expression also captures the intensity of God's love for the Prophet and what inspired his veneration. This aspect is intrinsically connected to stamped talismans such as the one considered in this article and whose efficacy heavily relied on devotions to venerable individuals, as the forthcoming analysis will reveal.[21]

In a single rectangular panel we find some of the divine attributes of God, another source of relief whose magical uses were theorized in works attributed to one of the key medieval contributors to occult sciences, Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad al-Būnī (Figure 12.7.2 C).[22] "The most beautiful names belong to God; so call on Him by them" recites an often-quoted verse of the Qurʾan,[23] which reinforces the belief that He is bound to respond to any appeal that makes use of them.[24] In her study of the seals in the British Museum collections, Venetia Porter noted that when used on amulets, God's names do not follow a standard order,[25] but are rather paired on the basis of assonance and correlation, or else, conform to specific verbal forms.[26] This rule appears to be followed in our case as well; the panel opens with *yā raḥman* ("O Merciful"), *yā raḥīm* ("O Compassionate"), each repeated twice, followed by others epithets, including *yā dayyān* ("O Creditor") and *yā mannān* ("O

---

[19] The expression refers to sayings of the Prophet Muḥammad whose transmission goes back to God.

[20] William A. Graham, *Divine Word and Prophetic Word: A Reconsideration of the Sources, with Special Reference to the Divine Saying or Ḥadîth al-Qudsî* (The Hague: Mouton, 1977), esp. 53-4 and 69-71.

[21] Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 215.

[22] Porter et al., "Medieval Islamic Amulets," 1:531, 536. For a recent discussion of al-Būnī's works, see Noah Gardiner, "Forbidden Knowledge? Notes on the Production, Transmission and Reception of the Major Works of Aḥmad al-Būnī," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12 (2012): 81-143.

[23] Qur. 7:180.

[24] Tewfik Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," *Berythus* 4 (1937): 69-110, 80. See also L. Gardet, "al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 30 October 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0070.

[25] They are listed in Qur. 59:22-4.

[26] Porter et al., *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 132.

Bountiful"), which do not appear in conventional lists of the divine attributes, but are recorded in some hadith collections and *dhikr* practices.[27]

The *al-asmā' al-ḥusnā* are not the only names called upon in the talisman. In addition to those of Abrahamic prophets, to be addressed later, two groups of seals invoke other interlocutors. The first, confined to the top left-hand corner of the sheet and featuring a quatrefoil shape, records the names of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, in addition to Muḥammad and Allah (Figure 12.7.1 D). Unusually however, ʿAli's name is not along the circumference, as those of the other three caliphs, but appears in the centre of the seal along with that of Muḥammad as part of the invocation *yā ʿAlī meded*, "O ʿAli help us". ʿAli is therefore singled out in this instance both for his political and spiritual leadership, the latter emphasised by the direct appeal.

The second seal mark, reproduced in the central area of the talisman, consolidates the link with Sufism seen earlier on by evoking Qandil Nūranī Sayyid Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Gīlanī (1077-1166), and Sayyid Aḥmad Rifāʿī (1118-1181), followed by the eulogy *qaddasa [Allāh] sirrahu*, "may God glorify his secret" (Figure 12.7.1 E).[28] Popular devotion for ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Gīlanī, aptly known as "the sultan of the *walī*s," was extensive in the regions dominated by the Qādiriyya order, from Anatolia to the Indian subcontinent, well into modern times.[29] A provider of assistance and a saint appealed to for protection from adversities and sickness, Gīlanī was also viewed as a master of evil spirits, as reflected in the many caves and deserted spots associated with his charisma and veneration cult across North Africa and the Near East.[30] Similarly, his cousin Aḥmad Rifāʿī, also the founder of the popular Rifāʿiyya *ṭarīqa*, came to be venerated for his miraculous powers and celebrated during dedicated festivals and other popular annual celebrations from the Balkans through the Maghreb.[31] Their presence on this sheet, therefore, represents a call for their intervention in

---

[27] Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham Kabbani, *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition: Guidebook of Daily Practices and Devotions* (Fenton, MI: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2004).

[28] Qandīl Nūrānī was one of Gīlanī's alternative names. K.H. Muḥammad Sholikhin, *17 Jalan Menggapai Mahkota Sufi Syaikh 'Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani* (Yogyakarta: Mutiara Media, 2009), 7.

[29] Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 247-8.

[30] Ibid. See also Tewfik Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London: Luzac & Co., 1927), 19-20, 246, 274-5.

[31] C.E. Bosworth, "Rifāʿiyya", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 12 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6296.

worldly affairs, but also a pointer to the cultural sphere in which this and comparable talismans were produced and consumed, an aspect to which I shall return in the second part of this paper.

The plea for supernatural intercession against life tribulations continues in two large impressions prominently located at the very top of our talisman (Figure 12.7.1 F). Made up of four concentric bands arranged around verse 20 from *sūrat al-Baqara* ("Allah hath power over all things"), they contain shorter and longer supplications interspersed with names. Beginning with the innermost circle:

لا اله الا الله سعد بن (ابي) وقاص محمد رسول الله عبيدة الله بن الجراح محتج لمحمد سعيد
بن يزيد انت منصور عبد الرحمن بن عوف توجه حيث شئت طلحة بن عبيد الله فإنك
منصور زبير بن عوام

> There is no God but God (Saʿd ibn Qaqqās), Muḥammad is the Messenger of God (ʿUbayd Allāh ibn al-Jarrāḥ), You are the Affirmer of Muḥammad (Saʿīd ibn Yazīd), You are Victorious (ʿAbd al-Raḥman ibn ʿAwf), You direct to wherever You will (Talḥa ibn ʿUbayd Allāh), You are Triumphant (Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwām).

The six names mentioned in this frieze are from amongst the ten *al-mubasharūn bi al-janna*, the Companions of the Prophet to whom heaven was promised during their lifetime. Their names are also found in circular arrangement on textiles associated with the Kaʿba. This seal mark's placement on either side of a stamp representing Mecca's *masjid al-ḥarām* may thus not be fortuitous and was possibly designed to evoke their blessings in ways comparable to the furnishings prepared for the *ḥarāmayn*.[32]

Continuing with the reading, the intermediate circle recites:

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد و آدم و نوح وإبراهيم وموسى وما بينهم النبيين صلاة الله
على الغير اللهم صلّ على سيدنا محمد اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد النبي الامي وآله
وصحبه اجمعين

> O God, keep our lord Muḥammad, and Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and all prophets amongst them, God's protection upon [all] others / O

[32] I thank Liana Saif for bringing this to my attention. I am equally grateful to Dr Saif for many clarifications and additional readings of several inscriptions on this talisman.

God, keep our lord Muḥammad / O God, keep our lord Muḥammad, the illiterate Prophet, his Family and all his Companions.

Finally, in the outermost band, we find the following *du'ā'*, a variant of a protective prayer attested across the Arab world as *ṣalāt tunjinat*:[33]

اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد في الارواح وصل وسلم على (؟) في الاجساد سبحان الله
وبحمده سبحان الله العظيم و(؟) لا حول ولا قوة إلّا بالله العظيم (؟) تنجينا بها من جميع
الوال و الآفات و تقضي لنا بها جميع الحاجات و تطهرنا بها من جميع السيئات
وترفعنا بها اقصى الغايات من جميع الخيرات في الحيواة وبعد سلمات

O God pray upon our lord Muḥammad in the souls, pray and have mercy … in the bodies / May God be exalted with praise / May God the Mighty be exalted … There is no might or power except in God / May you save us by it from all vagaries and afflictions… and from all the needs. May You purify us with it from all our faults and elevate us to the highest degrees of all blessings in life and after death.[34]

The most significant aspect of this formula is the evocation of Muḥammad's beneficial intercession by pleading God to honour and bless him. It is maybe no coincidence that the associated seal mark bears some resemblance with a version of Muḥammad's *ḥilya*, the verbal portrait of his physical and moral qualities.[35] Calligraphed *ḥilya*s were first developed by the Ottoman calligrapher Hafez Osman (d. 1698) and were

[33] Another version recites: اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد صلاة تنجينه بها من جميع الوال و الآفات و تقضي لنا بها جميع الحاجات و تطهرنا بها من جميع السيئات و ترفعنا بها عندك على درجات و تبلغنا بها اقصى الغايات من جميع الخيرات في الحواة و بعد المات و على آله و صحبه و سلم تسليما كثيرا (O God pray for our lord Muḥammad a prayer by which we will be saved from all evils, that will take care of all our needs, by which we will be cleansed of all our faults, that will raise us in your presence to higher levels, and makes us achieve the best good in both this life and the next; praise be on his family and his companions, may he be granted safety and peace). Hüseyin Hilmi Işık, *Se'âdet-i ebediyye - Endless Bliss*, first fascicle (Istanbul: Hakîkat Kitabevi, 1993), 92; Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham Kabbani, *Salawat of Tremendous Blessings* (Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2012).

[34] The intermediate band also uses the formula *allāhumma ṣalli 'alā sayyidinā Muḥammad*, repeated several times, and including the names of other Abrahamic prophets.

[35] See for instance the version with a similar clover-shaped arrangement of the letter ع signed by İbrahim Edhem ibn Ahmed Rifet illustrated in Nabil E. Safwat, *The Art of the Pen: Calligraphy of the 14th to 20th Century* (London: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1996), cat. no. 37.

considered acts of sincere devotion by those who executed them,[36] as well as vehicles for the provision of the blessings associated with Muḥammad's physical traces and remains.[37] "It is as though he who sees my *ḥilya* has seen me in person," recites a hadith attributed to ʿA'isha, which hints at how the Prophet's presence and his beneficial influence could also be obtained through scripted means.[38] Unsurprisingly, in addition to being hung in private and public spaces, excerpts from *ḥilya*s were also popular on portable amulets and talismans, extending the referent's influence to the personal sphere and everyday existence of individuals.[39]

Supererogatory prayers and supplications invoking divine protection from evil are the bridge to the second, rather more challenging, category of texts available on this talisman. Still classified as *duʿā* or supplication by their headings, two of these texts address not saints but demons. The first one, stamped twice on the top half of the talisman, is opened by a cartouche with the heading "prayer of Umm Ṣubyān"[40] (Figure 12.7.1 G) and begins with a series of names, possibly referring to spirits,[41] followed by the three divine epithets "the Pre-existent" (*al-qadīm*), "the Eternal" (*al-azalī*), "the Everlasting" (*al-abadī*). Umm Ṣubyān, literally "mother of the children" or child-witch,[42] is a female

[36] Muhammad Zakariyya, "The Hilye of the Prophet Muḥammad," *Seasons* (Autumn-Winter 2003-2004): 13-22.

[37] References about the use, collection and distribution of some of Muḥammad's bodily remains, i.e. nail parings, hair, saliva and sweat, occur in both hadith literature and historical sources. For a recent discussion, see Brannon Wheeler, "Collecting the Dead Body of the Prophet Muḥammad: Hair, Nails, Sweat and Spit," in *The Image of the Prophet Between Ideal and Ideology: A Scholarly Investigation*, eds. Christiane Gruber and Avinoam Shalem (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 45-61.

[38] Annemarie Schimmel, *And Muḥammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 36.

[39] See, for instance, Porter et al., *Arabic and Persian Seals*, cat. no. A100 and Safwat, *The Art of the Pen*, cat. no. 24.

[40] This is followed by the word *būdir* whose meaning remains unclear.

[41] Drawing on several sources, Tewfik Canaan reported variant names for demons like Umm Ṣubyān, generally ending in *-hūsh*, *-hīsh*, *-hāsh*, *-tāsh*, *-tūsh*. Quoting Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī he also lists names such as *qartūsh* of which the opening words of the above supplication seem to be a further variation. Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," 86.

[42] Alexander Fodor, "Types of Shīʿite Amulets from Iraq," in *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism: Historical Dimensions, Religious Practice and Methodological Considerations*, ed. Frederick De Jong (Utrecht: M.Th. Houtsma Stichting, 1992), 118-34, Anne Regourd, "Représentations d'Umm Sibyān dans les contes yéménites: de la dévoreuse d'enfant à la djinniyya possédant les humains," in *Femmes médiatrices et ambivalentes: Mythes et imaginaires*, eds. Anna Caiozzo and Nathalie Ernoult (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012), 63-72.

demon traditionally held responsible for diseases in children, as well as for problems of fertility and miscarriage in women.[43] Her figure is often linked to Solomon who is said to have obtained a protective remedy from her known as the "seven covenants of Solomon".[44]

On this talisman the *duʿā* of Umm Ṣubyān is joined to a second stamp in a reddish hue featuring an verse from *sūrat al-Burūj*, which declares "Those who persecute the Believers, men and women, and do not turn in repentance, will have the Penalty of Hell, they will have the Penalty of the Burning Fire", a warning whose proximity to the main invocation seems to suggest that these would be the consequences experienced by those persisting with their wrong-doing.[45] Hence, this verse lends the protection and efficacy of the Holy Scripture to the appeal, legitimising an invocatory practice that in the eyes of at least some 19th century observers could prove problematic.[46]

A similar combination of profane subject and pious supplication also characterises the second entity addressed by the talisman: Ūghrī ʿAbbās.[47] The plea reads as follows (Figure 12.7.2 H):

---

References to Umm Ṣubyān also appear in earlier literature, including Hans A. Winkler, *Salomo und die Karīna: eine orientalische Legende von der Bezwingung einer Kindbettdämonin durch einen heiligen Helden* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1931) and Samuel M. Zwemer, *Studies in Popular Islam: A Collection of Papers Dealing with the Superstitions and Beliefs of the Common People* (London: The Sheldon Press, 1939), esp. chap. 5.

[43] On her connection with Qarīna, another popular she-demon, see Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," 85.

[44] Samuel M. Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islam* (London: Central Board of Missions and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1920), 192-6. This elaborate formula—made up of invocations to God, the four archangels, the Prophet Muḥammad, as well as recording the story of Solomon's first encounter with the demon—specifies other areas exposed to her negative influence, which encompass trade and personal property. It also stresses the necessity for people to carry the prayer with themselves to ensure protection, which explains its appearance also on lithographed scrolls still available for sale in Egypt in the early twentieth century

[45] Qur. 85:10. The same sequence of text blocks is observable on other talismans of the same type, which confirms their semantic link; see Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım*, 114.

[46] This is especially in view of the open condemnation of all forms of divination and magic articulated by nineteenth-century revivalist thinkers. For an overview, see Natana J. Delong-Bas, *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), esp. chapters 1 and 2. For the various forms of Islam in the late Ottoman period, see also Hasan Kayalı and A. Kevin Reinhart, "Studies in Late Ottoman Islam," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 19 (2001): 193-303.

[47] Although numerous versions of the *duʿā'* of Ūghrī ʿAbbās exist in the popular domain, this figure remains elusive appearing mainly in popular folklore. Old ladies in Istanbul used to keep the prayer close to their chest for protection against his negative influence.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم اللهم إني إستغفرك من كل ما تبت عنه إليك ثم عدت فيه اللهم
إنّي إستغفرك من كل ما وردت به وجهك فخالطني ما ليس فيه رضاؤك

O God I ask you for forgiveness from everything I repented for to you and then returned to / O God I ask you for forgiveness from everything with which I sought your face but was mixed up with what does not contain your favour.

The list of requests continues immediately below (Figure 12.7.2 I):

اللهم إنّي إستغفرك من كل ما وعدتك من نفس ثمّ لم اؤف اللهم إني إستغفرك من كل نعمت
انعمتها على فوقها على ما (؟) اللهم إني إستغفرك من الذنوب التي لا يعلمها غيرك و لم
يطلع عليها سواك و لا يسعها إلّا رحمتك و لا ينجي منها إلّا مغفرتك و (؟) لا إله إلّا انت
سبحانك إن كنت من الظالمين اللهم إني إستغفرك من كل (الذنوب)

O God I ask You for forgiveness for everything I have promised you but didn't fulfil / O God I ask You for forgiveness for every blessings that You bestowed on me and above and … / O God I ask You for forgiveness for all sins that no one knows but You and no one has seen except You and that cannot be encompassed except by Your mercy and from which one cannot be saved except by Your forgiveness and (?) / And there is no God but You, Glory be to You; I was amongst the unjust; I do ask You for forgiveness from all [wrongdoing].[48]

Completing the sequence is then a paragraph which is visually separated from the previous ones despite representing their continuation (Figure 12.7.2 J):[49]

كثيرة و عندني عبادك فاني عبد من عبادك او امت من اماتك ظلت في بدنه او عرضه (؟) او
لم تستطع من خزانتك التي لا تنقص (و أسالك ان تكرمني) برحمتك بالخيرات (الله على) كل

[48] The name of Ūghrī ʿAbbās here appears in a large و at the centre of the panel along with the heading *hādhā duʿā-i Ūghrī ʿAbbās*.
[49] See also Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım*, 115.

شيء قدير هركيم كي بوغري عبّاس دعاسني اوزرنده گنورسه دنيوي و اخروي مرآدينه
نائل و ولور باذنالله تعالى تمت[50]

> … the many… of Your servants, for I am a servant amongst Your servants or a slave amongst Your slaves / whose sins have remained in his body and honour… are You not able [to give] from Your Bounty which thanks to Your mercy never diminishes in blessings / [Allah] is powerful over everything / Everyone who will get this prayer of Ūghrī ʿAbbās will have all his material and spiritual wishes granted, God Almighty willing. The end.

This supplication is unlike the ones examined so far, as it also features a selection of images including a conical building, a flag[51] and three of Muḥammad's personal effects (*mukhallafāt*): his sandals, shirt and sword.[52] The building has been identified as a stylised representation of Aḥmad Rifāʿī's mausoleum,[53] which incidentally appears, in more elaborate fashion, in a second impression at the bottom of our talisman.[54] If correct, the association of the building with Rifāʿī helps to clarify the remaining two objects on our impression; a mace resembling the *topuz*,[55] a tool used in a ritual specific to the Rifāʿī order known as *bürhan göstermek* ("infallible proof"),[56] and a ridged cap with a coloured cloth band wrapped around it, likely representing the headdress worn by the order's affiliates. While their combination here and full meaning remain elusive, these revered designs, I argue, provide the

---

[50] For an alternative version of this invocation, to be employed during the month of Rajab, see Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham Kabbani and Muhammad Nazil Adil al-Haqqani, *Pearls and Coral: Secrets of the Sufi Way* (Fenton, Mich.: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2005), appendix. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Ruba Kanaan for assisting with the reading and translation of this and other passages.

[51] The flag contains the star and crescent found in the modern Turkish flag but harking back to a late 18th century - early 19th century Ottoman design.

[52] I will elaborate more on the role of similar figures in talismans in the next section.

[53] M. Baha Tanman, "Depictions of the Mausoleum of Seyyid Ahmed el-Rifa'î in Late Dervish Convent Ottoman Art," *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 4 (2001): no. 41, 1-37.

[54] See my discussion of this below, 18-20.

[55] This is smeared on our talisman but visible on other seal stamps produced from the same matrix; see for instance Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım*, 118, cat. no. 2.1.05.01. For an illustrated example of this tool, see Jürgen W. Frembgen, *Kleidung und Ausrüstung islamischer Gottsucher: ein Beitrag zur materiellen Kultur des Derwischwesens* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999), 150-1, cat. no. 49.

[56] Tanman, "Depictions of the Mausoleum," 4.

pictorial equivalent of the Qurʾanic verses accompanying the prayer of Umm Ṣubyān. Imbued with comparable sacredness, the motifs extend their protective aura to the nearby invocation lending reassurance and legality to its remedial intent.[57]

Last, but not least, in the group are three more panels, all reproduced only once yet all containing precious information about the nature of the object, its makers and users (Figure 12.7.2 K-M). The first of these texts is especially revealing in so far as it sheds some light on the interaction of makers and clients and the sensitivities attached to the use of talismanic material in everyday life (Figure 12.7.2 K):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم إن استطعتم يا مشعر الجن والانس بالله الواحد القهار العارف الدافع ويعهد الذي اخذه عليكم ملء هذا الكتاب وان تشركوه في اخده الله وحمايته و وصل الله على سيدنا محمد و آله اجمعين الطيبين الظاهرين و سلم تسليما كثيرا يا الله يا الله يا الله يا رحمن يا رحيم

In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate / O assembly of jinns and men, obey to the only Lord, the Conqueror, the Knower, the Protector / He who filled this book made you take an oath to participate, with him, in accepting God and his protection / May God praise our master Muḥammad and all the pure and good members of his family and grant them peace / O God, O God, O Merciful, O Compassionate.

The text is noteworthy for its reference to an "oath" that clients to-be would be asked (implicitly or not) to take. Such a statement formalises the recognition that all remedies and cures do not lie in the object itself but in God as its powers' sole provider, making sure to communicate explicitly, to users and observers alike, the terms under which this and related objects could be used.

Found on the lower corner of the talisman, the other two panels reiterate the idea by also listing the wide-ranging applications of the device (Figure 12.7.2 L-M):

[57] Another recipe for amulets against miscarriage and deemed efficacious against Umm Ṣubyān is given by Zwermer, *The Influence of Animism*, 118-22. It is attributed to a sheikh, Aḥmad al-Dirbi, who details it in his book *Kitāb al-Mujaribāt* (first printed in 1328 AH/1910 AD) and similarly makes abundant use of sacred verses and names, as well as to the protective powers of the mysterious isolated letters found at the beginning of certain Qurʾanic suras (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭaʿāt*).

روايت اولنور كه هر كيم بوحمائل شريف اعتقاد كامل و نيت خالص اوزر كتوره ويا
اوقويه هر مطلب و مراد باذن الله حاصل اوله حق تعالى كندي خزينه غيبندن رزق ايد
ياوز كوزدن ياوز دلدن سحر مكر(ندن؟) مكار مكرندن و ظالملر شرندن امين اوله جمله
دشمان اولسه بر قلنه خطى كتيرميه لر ناذن الله تعالى

دوشمان اوزرينه غالب او... باشوكوز وقولاق و نزله نظر و صيمه يل و صيزيدن امين
اوله ذريتي اولميان خاتون ديري اوله باذن الله تعالى ذريتي يشاميان باذن خداى محبت
ايچون فايده سى چوق اوله

It is related that whosoever bears or reads this noble [?] amulet with full belief and pure intention may, God willing, attain all [his] wishes and desires; that the Lord Almighty may provide [for him] from His own invisible treasury; that he may be kept safe from the evil eye, from wicked tongues, from witchcraft, from deceit, and from cruelty; that if all should be [his] enemies, they may not harm one hair [on his head], God Almighty willing; that he may prevail over his enemies; that he may be kept safe from [ailments of] the head, eyes, and ears, from the cold, from the evil eye [?], from fever and rheumatism, and from pain; that if [his] wife is childless, she may be youthful, God Almighty willing; and that if her children should not survive, she may, Lord willing, offer much in the way of affection.[58]

*Impressions Containing Letters and Numbers*

Although sparsely utilised on our talisman, this category of impressions relies on various combinations of individual letters, numbers or alphanumeric sequences (Figure 12.8 N-P). The recourse to separate letters, foremost amongst them the so-called *al-ḥurūf al-muqatta'āt*, is a well-known magical technology that relies on the inherent power of the letters to control angels and spirits.[59] The sequences of single letters on our seal impressions, presented both in continuous rows or interspersed with numbers, reflect this practice. They also show the use of different styles characteristic of magical writing, including Kufic, the angular script known to have been used in early Islamic amulets and

[58] The author is grateful to Dr Ünver Rustem for reading and translating this passage.
[59] For an introduction on the science known as *'ilm al-ḥurūf* ("science of letters"), see Pierre Lory, *La science des lettre en Islam* (Paris: Editions Dervy, 2004).

here seen in one of the inscriptions.[60] In one instance the four archangels, preside over the letters' efficacy (Figure 12.8 O). In others, elaborate knots make up most of the mark, increasing its magical potency (Figure 12.8 N).

*Impressions Combining Text and Images*

As numerous as the first group, is the third category of seal marks in which figurative motifs are imaginatively combined with textual references. The simplest one in the shape of a cypress, a traditional symbol of eternity,[61] occurs four times on the central panel of the top half of the talisman (Figure 12.9.1 Q). It reminds the readers and users of the Qurʾan's salvific and restorative nature by citing the following *āyat*: "And We sent down from the Qurʾan that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss".[62] This is followed by a call for blessings on the prophet Mūsā.

More prominent than the cypress is what is possibly the most recognizable protective design amongst those employed on our document, the *khamsa*, otherwise known as "hand of Fāṭima" or "the hand of ʿAbbās,"[63] reproduced in two different forms in the upper and lower half of the sheet (Figures 12.9.1-9.2 R-S). In the first version, the hand is purely textual, combining the *shahāda* (thumb), Q 13:61 (on the index) and 11:88 (at the base of the palm), and several of the *al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā* (middle, ring and little fingers, as well as the palm) with the names of the twelve Shiʿi imams, inscribed in roundels bordering the palm (Figure 12.9.2 R). In the second *khamsa*, instead, the design utilises a more varied vocabulary, beginning with the names of Allah, Muḥammad and ʿAli (thumb), those of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus and their dog Qiṭmīr (other four fingers), Q 17:82, and the phrases "O Allah, heal, as You are the Healer" and "O Allah, mend, as You are the Mender!" (الله اشف

[60] Venetia Porter, "The Use of Arabic Script in Magic," in *The Development of Arabic as a Written Language*, ed. M.C. A. MacDonald, Supplement to the *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 40 (2010): 131-4.

[61] Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, "Ornament and Pattern" in *The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, eds. Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/ opr/t276/e705. Consulted online on 6 October 2017.

[62] Qur. 17:82.

[63] Fahmida Suleman, "The Hand of Fatima: In Search of Its Origins and Significance," in *People of the Prophet's House: Artistic and Ritual Expressions of Shiʿi Islam*, ed. Fahmida Suleman (London: Azimuth Editions in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies in collaboration with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East, 2015), 173-86 and Leoni, *Power and Protection*, 40-1.

فانت الشافي الله عاف فانت الآفي, Figure 12.9.1 S). These verses encircle the motif found at the centre of the hand, that is two stylised scorpions, whose bodies are marked by the phrases "O Sufficient, O Healer" (*yā kāfī yā muʿāfī*).

The *Ghāyat al-ḥakīm*, one of the most influential medieval works on astrological magic, reports a story dating back to 9th century Egypt in which seals inscribed with images of scorpions are used to counteract or avoid these insects' punctures on the basis of sympathetic magic, or *similia similibus curantur*.[64] Significantly, the tale employs the term *khātim* both for the inscribed ring and the impressions produced with it, which would suggest a custom of transferring potent designs on various media in order to disseminate their benefits.[65] That this image was employed across the Islamic world for protective and prophylactic purposes from the start is further documented by its adoption in key monuments and city landmarks, such as mosques, gateways and bridges, effectively perpetuating a centuries-old custom.[66] Efficacious yet still profane, in our specific case the motif's pagan origin is mitigated by the phrases and expressions inscribed in its proximity, which subordinate its efficacy to Allah, the ultimate source of remedy.

Last but not least, the second *khamsa* impression carries another meaningful seal mark, the "seal of the Great Name of God," placed around a pentagram/hexagram or "seal of Solomon" and appearing twice.[67] The seal consists of a sequence of motifs that can be combined in various sequences, as evocatively described by al-Būnī: "three sticks are lined up after a seal, at their head is like a bent head of a lance, a *mim* squashed and amputated, then a ladder than leads to every hoped-for object but which is nonetheless not a ladder; four objects resembling fingers have been lined up, they point towards good things but are without a fist, a *ha* in half then a *waw* bent over like a tube of a cupper

---

[64] Hellmut Ritter and Martin Plessner, *"Picatrix"; das Ziel des Weisen, von Pseudo-Maggrīṭī* (London: Warburg Institute, 1962), 55, cited in Porter, "Islamic Seals," 141. The text enjoyed broad success in Europe, where it became known as *Picatrix*, following its translation into Castilian first and Latin afterwards; David Pingree, ed. *Picatrix: The Latin Version of the Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (London: Warburgh Institute, 1986).

[65] For examples of amulets inscribed with images of scorpions, see, Tewfik Canaan, *Dämonenglaube im Lande der Bibel* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1929), 13-4, and Perk, *Osmanlı Tılsım*, 55-6, cat. nos. 1.1.22-25.

[66] Finbarr Barry Flood, "Images against Nature: Spolia as Apotropaia in Byzantium and the *dār al-Islām*," *The Medieval History Journal* 9, no. 1 (2006): 143-66, esp. 151-2.

[67] J. M. Dawkins, "The Seal of Solomon," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1944): 145-50; Gruber, "'Go Wherever You Wish," 7-10.

(*hijam*) but which is not a cupping glass."[68] Less legible than other marks yet just as common, "the seal of the Great Name of God" appears to have gained special popularity in the Ottoman sphere, adding to the range of methods deemed acceptable to counteract spirits. This is not only due to its connection to Solomon, who obtained power over the jinn through a signet ring carrying the same signs, but mostly because it declares trust in God and His power.[69]

Not far from this *khamsa,* two further stamps shaped as double-tipped swords are visible (Figure 12.9.1 T).[70] Known as *dhū'l-fiqār* and employed as an auspicious symbol in Ottoman art, this motif mythologises the invulnerable weapon captured by Muḥammad during the Battle of Badr and subsequently donated to his cousin and son-in-law ʿAli, with whom it came to be subsequently associated.[71] The link with ʿAli is reiterated by the inscription *yā ʿAlī* (O ʿAli) on one of the tips, and with the formula لا فتى إلّا علي ولا سيف إلّا ذو الفقار ("There is no brave youth except ʿAli, there is no sword but *dhū'l-fiqār*") near the hilt.[72] This is combined with Q 48:1 "Indeed, We have given you a clear victory" also found on the grip, and additional verses along the blade which however are too faint to be deciphered.

In the same area of the talisman we also find an oval stamp with an elaborate frame reproduced four times (Figure 12.9.1 U). In it several symbols related to the Day of Judgment can be discerned, beginning with the *liwā' al-ḥamd* ("banner of praise"), two pulpits labelled *minbar al-anbiyā'*, or "pulpit of the prophets", three high chairs identified *kursi al-ʿulamā'*, "chair of the scholars", and a scale. The *liwā' al-ḥamd* is amongst the most tangible expressions of the Prophet's ability to intercede for his community. According to several traditions it is under this banner that he will gather the true believers in order to

---

[68] G. C. Anawati, "Le nom supreme de Dieu," in *Atti del Terzo Congresso di Studi Arabi ed Islamici, Ravello, 1-6 Settembre 1966* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1967), 7-58, esp. 26-7, and Porter et al., *Arabic and Persian Seals*, 166.

[69] Gruber, "'Go Wherever You Wish," 8.

[70] Fodor, "Amulets from the Islamic World," 96, no. 117. For the use of the motif against evil spirits, see Fodor, "Types of Shīʿite Amulets," 122.

[71] Zeynep Yürekli-Görkay, "The Sword Dhū'l-Faqār and the Ottomans," in Suleman, *People of the Prophet's House*, 163-72.

[72] Mistakenly the word *fata* is here replaced by the word *sayf*. The motto and associated military symbol acquired special relevance for the Bektashi order, functioning as symbols of sanctity; Zeynep Yürekli-Görkay, *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman empire: The Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), 77.

protect them from the tribulations of Doomsday.[73] The scale of justice or *mīzān* too refers to the judgment taking place on that day; people's deeds will be weighed on it and the outcome will determine their eternal destiny. By looking beyond the realm of human existence, therefore, this seal mark ensures that its protection will cover users in this life as well as the next.

Belonging to the text-image category are also two seal marks that stand out for their heraldic quality and explicit links with the Bektāshī and Rifāʿī orders respectively (Figures 12.9.1-9.2 V-W).[74] The design of the first one is inscribed in lobed cartouche and is centred on a tall, ridged cap on top of an elaborate plinth and flanked by two ceremonial axes (*tabar*) (Figures 12.9.1-9.2 V). Along each shaft the names of Aḥmad Rifāʿī and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Gīlānī are preceded by the titles *abā muslim tabardār* and *sulṭān shāh-i naksh-i band*.[75] The axes' handles extend at the base of the image sinuously transforming into the name of ʿAli, whose calligraphic treatment and prominence in the composition reflect the central position held in Bektāshī creed.[76] The name of Muḥammad, executed in mirror writing (*muthanna*), hovers over the turban, while the names of Abrahamic prophets are evenly distributed around it along with those of the four archangels placed at the four corners.[77] Hanging beneath the headdress is also the *teslim taşı*, the stone of surrender, which represents the union of human individuality with the Eternal Truth.[78] The second design also centres on a Sufi headgear (*tāj*) and is recognized as "the coat of arms" of the Rifāʿīyya order (Figure 12.9.2 W).[79] Placed on a polygonal stool and above a bowl, the order's headgear is flanked by banners invoking Aḥmad Rifāʿī and ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Gīlānī. Gīlānī's name occurs again on an inscription at the base of the stamp alongside

---

[73] Schimmel, *And Muḥammad Is His Messenger*, 282.

[74] Frederick De Jong, "The Iconography of Bektashiism: A Survey of Themes and Symbolism in Clerical Costume, Liturgical Objects and Pictorial Art," *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 4 (1989): 7-29, and idem, "Pictorial Arts of the Bektashi Order," in *The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey* ed. Raymond Lifchez (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 228-41.

[75] The expressions can be translated literally as "Abū Muslim's axe-bearer" and "the embroiderer of Sultan Shah".

[76] John Kingsley Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes* (London: Luzac, 1994), 131-45.

[77] The list of twenty-four begins with Adam, first man and first prophet according to Islam, in a roundel at the very top, and ends with Jesus (ʿĪsā), found at the very base of the seal mark. Curiously, Dhū'l-Qarnayn is also mentioned here, possibly to be identified with Khiḍr, given the latter's prominence in certain Sufi *ṭarīqa*s.

[78] De Jong, "The Iconography of Bektashiism," 10-1.

[79] Tanman, "Depictions of the Mausoleum," 23, fig. 6.

those of the four archangels, while the *shahāda* embroiders the canopy framing the *tāj-i şerif*.

Through their explicit reference to the Bektāshīyya and Rifāʿīyya orders, these designs not only strengthen the association with Islamic Sufi traditions seen elsewhere on the talisman, but also add specific saints to the personalities petitioned by it, expanding the object's intercessory potency. Sainthood (*wilāya*), based on the belief that select special individuals manifest the attributes of God and partake the Prophet's exemplary virtues, represented a central concept in Sufism.[80] Hence renowned leaders and their deeds came to be recognised as sources of continuous *baraka*. Taking into account the large involvement of spiritual leaders and dervishes in the provision of healing remedies and protective devices to their followers, these two stamps may indeed point at their direct participation in the production of this and similar apotropaia, a possibility that will be explored in the second part of this essay.

Finally, it is worth mentioning another frequently reproduced round stamp consisting of a domed building with a crescent inscribed in a star-shaped motif and the invocation اللهم ارزقنا علما ناصعا ورزقا واسعا و(؟) برحمتك يا رحيم ("O God bestow on us a benevolent sign, ample blessing and (?) by your grace, O Compassionate") (Figures 12.9.1-9.2 X).

### *Impressions with Calligrams*

A single yet popular example represents this category on our talisman: a large boat whose hull is made of the names of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, the *aṣḥāb al-kahf* or "Companions of the cave" recorded in the Qurʾan (Figures 12.6 Y and 12.10).[81] The presence of the Sleepers' names, referring to the six Christians and a shepherd who survived persecution by miraculously falling asleep in a cave for centuries,[82] is

---

[80] M. Baha Tanman, "Setting for the Veneration of Saints," in *The Dervish Lodge*, ed. Lifchez, 130-71, 131.

[81] Qur. 18:9-26.

[82] Rudi Paret, s.v. "*Aṣḥāb al-kahf*," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 13 May 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0773. A classical study on the subject is that of Louis Massignon, "Les sept dormants d'Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: première partie," *Revue d'études islamiques* 22 (1954): 59-112; Louis Massignon, "Les sept dormants d'Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: deuxième partie," *Revue d'études islamiques* 23 (1955): 94-106; and Louis Massignon, "Les sept dormants d'Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: troisième partie," *Revue d'études islamiques* 25 (1957): 1-11.

fairly common on Islamic amulets and talismans.[83] Their use on boat-shaped calligrams, in particular, is common in areas with strong maritime enterprises, from the Ottoman Empire to Southeast Asia,[84] the latter likely influenced by the more popular Turkish examples following commercial contacts.[85] A saying attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad invites the believers to teach the names of the Sleepers to their children, "for if they are written on the door of a house, that house will not be burnt, or on an object, that object will not be lost, or on a ship, that ship will not sink."[86] A broad prophylactic use is likely the intended aim of this example too, enhanced by additional phrases selected for their auspicious value: the *shahāda* (left-hand flag), Q 48:1 (left-hand sail), Q 61:13 (right-hand flag), as well as sequences of numbers and isolated letters and invocations to God.[87]

### *Impressions with Sanctuaries and Shrines*

The last category of seal marks on our talisman ranges in content and legibility, although, as in previous examples, it encompasses both motifs universally accepted in Islam and sectarian formulas. The most immediately identifiable design, reproduced both at the top of the

---

[83] Sheila Blair, *Islamic Calligraphy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 506-8, Venetia Porter, "Amulets Inscribed with the Names of the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus' in the British Museum," in *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expressions*, ed. Fahmida Suleman (Oxford: Oxford University Press in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies London, 2007), 123-34, and, more recently, Jürgen W. Frembgen, "The Symbolism of the Boat in Sufi and Shi'a Imagery of Pakistan and Iran," *Journal of the History of Sufism* 6 (2016): 85-100.

[84] Filiz Çağman and Şule Aksoy, *Osmanlı Sanatında Hat* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, 1998), 83; Denise-Marie Teece and Karin Zonis, "Calligraphic Galleon," in *Masterpieces from the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, eds. Maryam D. Ekhtiar, Priscilla Soucek, Sheila R. Canby and Navina Hadjat Haidar (New York: Yale University Press, 2011), 297-8, cat. no. 206, and Farouk Yahya, "Jimat in Form of a Ship," in Leoni, *Power and Protection*, 36-7, cat. no. 105.

[85] Venetia Porter notes that the Ottoman navy was dedicated to the *aṣḥāb al-kahf*, which explains their protective use in the context of seafaring and trade; Porter, "Amulets Inscribed with the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus," 126. For a recent collection on Ottoman-Southeast Asian relations, see Andrew Peacock and Annabel Teh Gallop, *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks, and Southeast Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/British Academy, 2015).

[86] Tawfik Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," *Berythus* 5 (1938): 141-51, 146; Porter, "Amulets Inscribed with the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus," 126.

[87] In this specific version of the boat a baldachin structure can also be seen on its stern, but its significance remains unclear. An identical calligram, said to be often found on painted glass, is reproduced in Şennur Şentürk, ed., *Cam Altında Yirmi Bin Fersah: geleneksel halk resim sanatından camaltı resimleri* (İstanbul Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 1997), 68.

document and at its very centre, is that of Mecca's sacred precinct (Figure 12.6 Z and 12.11). The main image, delineated by a circular enclose with double rows of lamps marking the space of circumambulation, depicts the key-structures found at the heart of the mosque. Accessed through a single gate (*bāb banī shayba*) are a staircase,[88] the *maqām Ibrāhīm* (the sanctuary erected on the site where Abraham stood in prayer), an outdoor pulpit, the Kaʿba shrouded in black, and the *ḥaṭīm* (the semi-circular enceinte marking the spot where Ismail and Hagar found shelter). This succinct depiction is similar to other representations of Mecca featuring iconic monuments and spots.[89] In this specific instance, however, the background is replete with inscriptions with strong Alid references. Inside the precinct, starting from the right-hand side, we find the formula "The Prophet Muḥammad, may God pray for him; God's peace and blessing upon Imam ʿAli, may God be pleased with him (?) the remembrance [of ʿAli] is worship" (حضرت پیغمبر صلی الله وسلم قدس امام علي رضي الله عنه (؟) (؟) امام علي ذكر عبادة (؟)). Separated from it by the *ḥaṭīm* is the phrase "O Abū al-Qāsim" (*yā abā al-qāsim*), referring to Muḥammad, while on the left-hand side of the Kaʿba we read the expression *dhikr ʿali ʿibādat*, "the remembrance of ʿAli is worship". The Alid connection is strengthened by the well-known saying انا مدينة العلم وعلي بابها ("I am the city of knowledge and ʿAli is its gate") prominently displayed on top of the Kaʿba, as well as by the inclusion of the names of ʿAlī's wife Fāṭima al-Zahrāʾ and their two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.

The most distinctive characteristic of this seal mark when compared to the others on the page lies in its condition. Especially evident on the uppermost instance, the impression appears in fact to have been heavily rubbed, which possibly explains the transfer of ink across the upper part of the talisman following the direction in which it was folded. Direct interaction with a sacred image, itself understood as a channel to access and benefit from the qualities of the subject(s) represented in it, is often explicitly invoked in Islamic devotional literature.[90] In particular, extended gazing, skin contact—by touching an

[88] Significant is the absence of the structure giving access to the Zamzam well, which could be used to date the image after which the seal (and possibly the talisman) was produced.

[89] See some of the hajj certificates and manuscript illustrations in Venetia Porter, ed., *Hajj: A Journey to the Heart of Islam* (London: The British Museum Press, 2012), esp. 28-9, fig. 5, 32-3, fig. 8, 39, figs. 14-5, 54-5, fig. 27.

[90] For examples with instructions on how to interact with protective images, see Alexandra Bain, "The Late Ottoman Enʿam-i Serif: Sacred Texts and Images in an Islamic

object with one's hand or forehead or by kissing it—as well as forms of ingestion all contribute to activate an image's *baraka*.[91] In addition to commemorating the completion of the pilgrimage, representations of Islam's two most sacred sites, Mecca and Medina, flourished in the early modern period to popularize the visualisations of venerable, yet unreachable, destinations.[92] Their appearance in illustrated devotional texts, in particular - from Muḥyī al-Dīn Lārī's *Futūḥ al-ḥaramayn* ("Revelations of the Two Sanctuaries") to al-Jazūlī's *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* ("Guides to Happiness") - bears witness to their inclusion amongst those select formulas and symbols adopted for contemplative and apotropaic purposes alike.[93] The rubbing on the stamp reproduced on our talisman is, I argue, best understood along these lines, powerfully merging the desire to acquire the miraculous powers of Islam's most revered site fulfilled by an actual visit, with pietistic practices triggered by its bidimensional reproduction.

Last but not least, a less recognizable though similarly powerful shrine, which has been object of detailed study by M. Tanman, can be found in a single impression at the bottom of the talisman (Figure 12.6 AA and 12.12).[94] In it we recognise a tomb sheltered by a canopied structure. A lamp hangs from the central arch of this construction, a detail often found in mausolea of religious brotherhoods that facilitates the identification of the individual buried within it with the saint named in the top inscription, *ḥaḍrat sayyid Aḥmad Rifā'ī*. The image is indeed replete with references to Rifā'ī's deeds, offering a compelling

---

Prayer Book," PhD dissertation (Victoria, University of Victoria, 1999), cat. nos 16, 19-20 and 24, 26, and 28; Nabil E. Safwat, *Golden Pages: Qur'ans and Other Manuscripts from the Collection of Ghassan I. Shaker* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press for Azimuth Editions, 2000), 226, cat. nos. 57, and 228; Barbara Schmidt, *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press and The New York Library, 1992), 48, cat. no. I.11; and Gruber, "From Prayer to Protection," 51.

[91] Christiane Gruber, "A Pious Cure-All: The Ottoman Illustrated Prayer Manual in the Lilly Library," in *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, ed. Christiane Gruber (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 117-53, 132 and 140-1, and Finbarr Barry Flood, "Bodies and Becoming: Mimesis, Mediation, and the Ingestion of the Sacred in Christianity and Islam," in *Sensational Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, ed. Sally M. Promey (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 459-93, 461, 470-1.

[92] Roxburgh, "Visualising the Sites and Monuments of Islamic Pilgrimage."

[93] This ultimately explains their subsequent reproduction on more ephemeral supports, including talismans, as the ones produced with the plaque now at the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (inv. no. 54.51), engraved with images of Mecca and Medina.

[94] Tanman, "Depiction of the Mausoleum."

pictorial celebration of his miraculous power. For instance, the lions in the foreground are a reference to his legendary ability to tame these ferocious beasts.[95] Similarly, the serpent stretched between the felines symbolises the venomous animals believed to be subject to the shaykh and unable to harm his followers.[96] For this reason, this image was used against poisonous animals, as testified by the wide range of decorative objects, paintings and murals carrying it flourished in the late Ottoman period.

As for the text filling the background of the composition, beginning from the top-left corner and proceeding counter-clockwise, it reads:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم السلام عليكم يا الغيب ويا ارواح المقدسة ويا امان ويا اوتاد ويا بدلا
ويا رقبا ويا امنا ويا نجبا ويا حواريون ويا قطب الاقطاب اغيثوني بغوثة وارحمني
وانظروني بنظرة واغيثوني على المهمّات في الدنيا والآخرة بحرمة سيّد الكونين محمّد و
آله وصحبه اجمعين

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate / … the hidden world, and O blessed spirits, O Surety, O Pegs, O Substitutes, O Guardians, O Trustees, O Nobles, O Disciples of Jesus, O Pole / lend me [your] help a little, have mercy on me, cast a glance upon me and help in all [my] undertakings in this world and the next / by the sanctity of the Lord of the two worlds, Muḥammad, his family and his companions all.

Continuing under the three arches, starting on the left-hand side:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم امرابرموامرا فانا مبرمون چبان شيش ايچون[97]

بسم الله صمد (؟) قيّوم حكيم عدل (؟) إن فتحنا لك فتحا مبينا
به صلى وسلم [98]

[95] Ibid., 14. See also Tanman's elaboration on the symbolic meaning of the sphere under the lion's paw therein.
[96] In other versions of the composition, the image of a scorpion is also included. See ibid., figs. 3-5.
[97] The rest of the text is obscure.
[98] Liana Saif suggested a possible alternative reading of this as *wusima bihi*, "to stamp with it."

In the Name of God, (the) Eternal, (the) Self-Subsisting, (the) Wise, (the) Judge: Indeed We have given you [a clear conquest] [Q 48:1].

Peace and blessings upon Him.

The text around the serpent reads:

يا ايها (؟) المنبوت موت ٣ في الجلد بحق الحي الذي (؟) موت ٣ رقعة [99]

Finally, on the right-hand side area of the seal mark, from the corner down, we read:

الف صلاة (؟) الهم سلم وبارك(ة) على كنز الطلسم في النشر من لم يزل في قابناسوت
و (؟) قرب رب

A thousand prayers, O Lord pray, grant peace and bless the treasure of he who made the talisman …

الف سلام عليك يا حبيب الله

A thousand greetings to you, O God’s beloved.

و الغيث المطمطم لاهوت الجمال ناسوت الوصال طلعت الحو كسو بالانسان ازلى [100]

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم لها و لكل (؟) عظيم الف صلاة الف سلامات عليك الف صلاة منه
فيه و عليه الّهم يا عظيم انت العظيم هون علي يا عظيم الم فرج عنيّ و عن المسلم(ين؟)
بفضل الرحمن

In the name of God the Merciful and the Compassionate, (?) for her and all… great, a thousand prayers, a thousand greetings upon you, a thousand prayers from him … in him and on him. O Great Lord you

[99] This is another obscure passage in which only the following “by the right of [God] the Living One who…” is clear (*bi-ḥaqq al-ḥayy alladhī*).

[100] As for the above, these two phrases, inscribed in the two rectangles found in the upper right-hand side corner of this seal, also remain unclear.

are Great, make this easy on me, O Great [God], O Lord, relieve me and all Muslims (?) by the grace of the Merciful One.

Despite the more obscure content, this seal impression consolidates the idea of combining multiple spiritual forces observed across the talisman. As seen in previous instances, the wellbeing of the maker of the seal is equally given consideration, possibly as a way to defend and further validate his essential role as the middleman between dispensers and receivers of blessings and aid.

• • •

A few points emerge from a closer analysis of the talisman's contents. The first is that this device's potency, as well as that of others in the same category, relies on the combination of resources and their cumulative effect. In our specific instance, the aspects affected by the supplications—from gender-specific illnesses to generic apotropaic functions—as well as the object's large size, indicate that it was likely commissioned to protect the whole household, where it might even be prominently displayed. Second, the mundane perils and tribulations feared by the talisman's purported users—stings of poisonous animals, physical ailments, and the evil eye—perpetuate preoccupations voiced and fought from before the advent of Islam, but reconfigured through an Islamic lens. Pious ejaculations, prayers and invocations sacralise these archaic concerns, in so far as they now subject their resolution to God, who is consistently presented as the ultimate source of succour and guidance for mankind. Third, the mediation of God's agency through angelic and saintly intercessors is of pivotal importance for the object's efficacy. By harnessing their beneficial power through direct invocations and "meta-pilgrimages" to sacred loci, the talisman ultimately transposes, on paper, a variety of practices that remain comfortably within the parameters of everyday piety. As such the object can be best understood in relation to the strong devotional shift observed in the Ottoman sphere during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the subject to which I shall now turn.

## The Talisman's Context

The timeframe during which our talisman was most likely produced, the long 19th century, witnessed profound religious transformations across the Islamicate world. Often framed as responses to changing internal conditions and external threats, paramount amongst them European imperialism, a number of reformist movements embraced the revival of traditional Islamic values for moral, social and political reform.[101] In the Ottoman sphere, in particular, the primacy of shari'a, the emphasis on the Qur'an and early hadith, and the Prophet's example sustained this revitalization, while mystical teachings, especially those promoted by moderate and more conservative orders such as the Naqshbandiyya, added a balanced spiritual dimension to the process.[102] The urban nature of this order, which by the 19th century counted over fifty lodges in Istanbul only, meant that it obtained large support from amongst the 'ulama' and members of the ruling elite,[103] with some of their leaders becoming active players in the process of renewal sponsored by the state.[104]

Such a process of rejuvenation did not mean a despiritualised approach of Islam. Unlike the puritan stance espoused by Wahhabism, established at the heart of the Arabian peninsula in the mid-eighteenth century by the theologian Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792) with the objective to purify Islam of devotional practices and behaviours deemed innovations (*bid'a*) and, as such, negations of the fundamental principle of *tawḥīd*, Ottoman Islam gave value to ritual practice and private devotions as ways to embrace God's unity. In similar fashion, the Prophet was upheld as a prime example of conduct and an infallible guidance, which led to an increase in his veneration. The visitation of sites associated with Muḥammad's life and physical traces, and the flourishing of poetic and visual meta-relics—from Turkish translations of

---

[101] On the concept of *tajdīd*, renewal, its origins and its various incarnations, see Butrus Abu Manneh, *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826-1876)* (Istanbul: Isis, 2001); for its role in contemporary revivalist movements, see Ira M. Lapidus, "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 4 (1997): 444-60.

[102] For the Sunni-shari'a-Sufi synthesis at the heart of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century revivalisms, see Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), esp. 192-224.

[103] Abu Manneh, *Studies on Islam*, 8; Butrus Abu Manneh, "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th century," *Die Welt des Islams* 22, nos. 1-4 (1982): 1-36.

[104] David W. Damrel, "The Spread of Naqshbandi Political Thought in the Islamic World," in *Naqshbandis: Historical Development and Present Situation of the Mystical Order. Proceedings of the Sevres Round Table, May 2-4, 1985*, eds. Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarconne (Istanbul: Isis, 1990), 269-87, esp. 274.

al-Būṣīrī's *Qaṣīdat al-burda* ("The Mantle Ode") celebrating the curative powers of his mantle, to copies of his blessed sandal (*naʿl*)-testify to the process. In the same way, the accumulation of sacred objects and relics associated with him in Istanbul,[105] heightened by the destructive campaigns of Wahhabis in 1799-1803 against Hijaz' holy sites, sustained the view of the Prophet as an elect conduit of Divine grace and, as such, as God's primary intercessor.[106]

The material impact produced by this enlivened devotional climate has been highlighted by Alexandra Bain in her study of late Ottoman prayer manuals.[107] Bain considers these ubiquitous books as part of the polemics surrounding Ottoman Islam and Wahhabi Islam, in light of the latter's growing influence in areas of Arabia officially under Ottoman control. More specifically, these books' combined content constitute an explicit celebration of specific practices-*tawaṣṣul* (supplicating Allah through an intercessor) and *tabarruk* (obtaining blessings from sacred objects and sites) paramount amongst them-condemned and persecuted by the fundamentalist movement.[108] Bain takes note of the individuals involved in the production and consumption of such manuals, and lists representatives of the government, scholars, and members of the royal household amongst them, thus exposing personal trajectories of devotional awakening at elite level.[109] She also delves into the content of eighteenth and nineteenth-century examples of such books, which contain selected Qurʾanic passages and prayers and incorporate litanies, blessings for the Prophet, as well as diagrams and pictures.[110] Significantly, the

---

[105] Süleyman Beyoğlu, "The Ottomans and the Islamic Sacred Relics," in *The Great Turkish Civilization*, ed. Kemal Cicek (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2001), 4:36-44. These are now collected and partially exhibited in the Pavilion of Relics and Sacred Trusts in the Topkapi Palace Museum.

[106] The notion of *tawassul*, God's supplication by means of an intermediary, was accepted in all four schools of Sunni Islam. See also Gruber's article in this volume.

[107] "The Late Ottoman *Enʿami Şerif*" and "The *Enʿami Şerif*: Sacred Text and Images in a Late Ottoman Prayer Book," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 19 (2001): 213-38. The manuals are presented under the title of *enʿam-i şerif* due to the prominence often given to *sūrat al-Anʿām*. For a discussion on alternative titles, see Gruber, "A Pious Cure-All," 117n3 and references given therein.

[108] Bain, "The Late Ottoman *Enʿami Şerif*," 41. This is in addition to helping to reiterate the idea of the Ottomans as protectors of Islam against the threat posed by the Wahhabis to their sovereignty.

[109] Ibid., 38-41. Comparable experiences at more popular level, however, are not addressed in her study, a gap that this essay partially remedies.

[110] Ibid., 79-93 and 100-6. Some of these images, such as those of the *ḥarāmayn*, became especially popular in another body of devotional texts focussing on the Prophet's veneration, including al-Jazūlī's *Dalāʾil al-khayrāt*, which grew in popularity from the eighteenth century.

progressive inclusion of images and texts for the purpose of *taʿwīz*—a practice using images for talismanic and auspicious purposes—point at a transformation of these manuals into protective and therapeutic vademecums firmly rooted in religious piety.[111] Renderings of prophetic relics and select sacred seals—which include the "seal of prophecy" (*muhr al-nubuwwa*), the seal of the Great Name of God, and the seal of the eye upon God (*ʿayn ʿalā Allāh*)—in particular, acquired a double-function as props for contemplation and viable sources of blessing (*baraka*) and healing (*shafāʿa*) for those unable to access the originals at the source, thus emerging as the most telling manifestation of this phase of revamped piety.[112]

A crucial facet of these wide-ranging devotional products is the role played by members of some Sufi orders both in their realization and in sustaining the modalities of pious interaction that underpinned their efficacy, an aspect that is of particular importance for the talisman considered in this article.[113] As Bain demonstrates, members of the Naqshbandiyya featured both as teachers of prominent patrons and calligraphers of devotional manuals, or were makers themselves.[114] Sufi spirituality was also tied to urban crafts and their guild system,[115] to the extent that it exerted some degree of influence and, possibly, control on their products.[116] If Evliya Çelebi's observation on the

---

[111] See Gruber's detailed study of one of such specific instances now in the Lilly Library at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (Misc. Uncat. II.C.4), "A Pious Cure-All."

[112] Their power, particularly when related to specific individuals like the Prophet Muḥammad, resided on "an indexical chain of contact" with his body "that imbued every mundane or profane materials with a sacrality capable of further transmission." Flood, "Bodies and Becoming," 463.

[113] Modes that gravitated around the principle of "human physicality as locus and mediator of spiritual presence and power." Patricia Cox Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 5.

[114] Bain, "The Late Ottoman *Enʿami Şerif*," appendix II, 347-63.

[115] Amongst the many Sufi-oriented guilds there were metalworkers such as silversmiths and goldsmiths, as well as paper and bookmakers.

[116] Sufi shaykhs could even be leaders of some of these guilds, imparting a specific working ethics that often echoed the mechanics of order membership, from the tight master-pupil relationship and the value assigned to *silsila*s or chains of transmission at the heart of specific crafts, to the adoption of Sufi-inspired liturgy in daily activities to guarantee success. See Laleh Bakhtiar, *Sufi Expressions of the Mystic Quest* (New York: Thames and Hudson 1976), 94; J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 234; and, more recently William Rory Dickson, *Unveiling Sufism from Manhattan to Mecca* (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2017), 131-2.

thriving business of Istanbul's guild of seal-makers was still applicable in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the sheer quantity of surviving matrices appears to suggest, then even this activity was likely exposed to the same influence.[117] The mystical connotations and, at times, explicit Sufi content of some of the seal impressions on our talisman further corroborate the possibility that aspects of their production was informed by Sufi ideas and would go as far as to support some of their communal functions. The specific practice of *taʿwīz* discussed earlier, for instance, was often explicitly undertaken by Sufi shaykhs, whose spiritual training and knowledge equipped them with the necessary tools to produce reliable and authoritative measures against human tribulations. Increasingly recognised by the populace as guides to worldly fulfilment and otherworldly salvation, Sufi leaders and dervishes were even accused by some to have become overly preoccupied with the production of amulets and talismans in the late Ottoman period,[118] a fact that ultimately points at their popularity as the go-to authorities for the creation of similar protective devices.[119]

When we consider the content and tone of the devotional miscellanea mentioned above, their Qurʾanic references, prayers, supererogatory acts, intense remembrance of God, and the invoking of blessings onto the Prophet reproduce the standard devotions performed by members of the Sufi orders in the confined and tangible form of the manuscript. Concentrated on an even smaller surface, that of a single page, these same resources equally feature on talismans as the one considered by this study, its most patent difference lying in the semi-mechanical way and impromptu circumstances in which these were realised. Both categories of works, however, rely on the long-held belief that writing, and by extension

---

[117] Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, eds. Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağli, Zekeriya Kurşun (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001), 1:312. Already in the 17th century these matrices included motifs such as magic squares, select Qurʾanic verses, as well as some of the healing seals discussed above. Gruber, "Go Wherever You Wish," 4.

[118] Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 238.

[119] During his fieldwork in Palestine in the early twentieth century, Tewfik Canaan observed the production of talismans in the proximity of sanctuaries and even mosques by shaykhs equipped with ad-hoc seals. Some of them were even produced to be fumigated over the span of an illness. Seal impression also occur on images of specific sanctuaries. Khaled Nashef, ed., *Ya Kafi Ya Shafi: The Tawfik Canaan Collection of Palestinian Amulets, An Exhibition, October 30, 1998-February 25, 1999* (Al Bireh: Birzeit University, 1998), 33 and cat. no. 161. See also Baha' al-Ju'beh, "Magic and Talismans: The Tawfiq Canaan Collection of Palestinian Amulets," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 22-23 (2005): 103-8.

printing, sacred verses prolongs the benefits of the uttered words, making of their materiality an essential aspect of the whole exercise.[120] Contents and channels are effectively shared, which suggests that the more expedient, single sheet talisman is but another manifestation, at the cheaper end of the scale, of the spiritual revivification affecting this part of the Islamic world in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. As such, objects like these should not be dismissed as devotional distortions or aberrations, but rather be assessed as one of the ways in which everyday piety articulated its quest for sustainment and shelter from life's many inescapable challenges.

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to express her gratitude to Nahla Nassar, Professor Aslı Niyazioğlu, Dr Liana Saif, and Dr Farouk Yahya for reading and commenting on previous drafts of this article.

## Bibliography

Abu Manneh, Butrus. "The Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya in the Ottoman Lands in the Early 19th century." *Die Welt des Islams* 22, nos. 1-4 (1982): 1-36.

Abu Manneh, Butrus. *Studies on Islam and the Ottoman Empire in the 19th Century (1826-1876)*. Istanbul: Isis, 2001.

Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. *The Holy Qur'an*. London: Wordsworth, 2000.

Anawati, G. C. "Le nom supreme de Dieu." In *Atti del Terzo Congresso di Studi Arabi ed Islamici, Ravello, 1-6 Settembre 1966*, 7-58. Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1967.

Bain, Alexandra. "The Late Ottoman En'am-i Serif: Sacred Texts and Images in an Islamic Prayer Book." Ph.D. dissertation, Victoria, University of Victoria, 1999.

Bain, Alexandra. "The *En'ami Şerif*: Sacred Text and Images in a Late Ottoman Prayer Book." *Archivum Ottomanicum* 19 (2001): 213-38.

Bakhtiar, Laleh. *Sufi Expressions of the Mystic Quest*. New York: Thames and Hudson 1976.

[120] Canaan, "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans," 73.

Beyoğlu, Süleyman. "The Ottomans and the Islamic Sacred Relics." In *The Great Turkish Civilization*, edited by Kemal Cicek, 4:36-44. Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2001.

Birge, John Kingsley. *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*. London: Luzac, 1994.

Blair, Sheila. *Islamic Calligraphy*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.

Bloom, Jonathan, and Sheila Blair. "Ornament and Pattern." In *The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, edited by Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair. Oxford Islamic Studies Online, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t276/e705. Consulted online on 6 October 2017.

Bosworth, C.E. "Rifāʿiyya." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 12 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6296.

Budge, Ernest A. W. *Amulets and Superstitions*. London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1930.

Çağman, Filiz, and Şule Aksoy. *Osmanlı Sanatinda Hat*. Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü, 1998.

Canaan, Tewfik. "The Decipherment of Arabic Talismans." *Berythus* 4 (1937): 69-110 [reprinted in Emilie Savage-Smith, ed., *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, 125-77].

Canaan, Tewfik. *Dämonenglaube im Lande der Bibel*. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1929.

Canaan, Tewfik. *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine*. London: Luzac & Co., 1927.

Çelebi, Evliya. *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi*, edited by Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman, Yücel Dağli, Zekeriya Kurşun. Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001.

Coffey, Heather. "Between Amulet and Devotion: Islamic Miniature Books in the Lilly Library." In *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, edited by Christiane Gruber, 79-115. Bloomington: Indiana, 2009.

Cox Miller, Patricia. *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

Damrel, David W. "The Spread of Naqshbandi Political Thought in the Islamic World." In *Naqshbandis: Historical Development and Present Situation of the Mystical Order. Proceedings of the Sevres Round*

*Table, May 2-4, 1985*, edited by Marc Gaborieau, Alexander Popovic, and Thierry Zarconne, 269-87. Istanbul: Isis, 1990.

Dawkins, J. M. "The Seal of Solomon." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1944): 145-50.

De Jong, Frederick. "The Iconography of Bektashiism: A Survey of Themes and Symbolism in Clerical Costume, Liturgical Objects and Pictorial Art." *Manuscripts of the Middle East* 4 (1989): 7-29.

De Jong, Frederick. "Pictorial Arts of the Bektashi Order." In *The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, edited by Raymond Lifchez, 228-41. Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992.

Delong-Bas, Natana J. *Wahhabi Islam: From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Dickson, William Rory. *Unveiling Sufism from Manhattan to Mecca*. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2017.

Donaldson, Bess A. *The Wild Rue: A Study of Muhammadan Magic and Folklore*. London: Luzac, 1938.

Doutté, Edmond. *Magie et Religion dans l'Afrique du Nord*. Alger: Adolphe Jourdan, 1908.

Fahd, Toufiq. "Siḥr." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 4 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_7023.

Farhad, Massumeh, with Serpil Bağcı. *Falnama: Book of Omens*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2009.

Felek, Özgen. "Fears, Hopes, and Dreams: The Talismanic Shirts of Murad III." In *Islamicate Occultism: New Perspectives*, edited by Matthew Melvin-Koushki and Noah Gardiner. Special double issue of *Arabica* 64, nos. 3-4 (2017): 647-72.

Fodor, Alexander. "Amulets from the Islamic World: Catalogue of the Exhibition Held in Budapest in 1988." *The Arabist* 2 (1990): 1-192.

Fodor, Alexander. "Types of Shīʿite Amulets from Iraq." In *Shīʿa Islam, Sects and Sufism: Historical Dimensions, Religious Practice and Methodological Considerations*, edited by Frederick De Jong, 118-34. Utrecht: M.Th. Houtsma Stichting, 1992.

Fodor, Alexander. *Sufism and Magic: Amulets from the Islamic World.* Keszthely: Helikon Castle Museum; Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 2009.

Flood, Finbarr Barry. "Bodies and Becoming: Mimesis, Mediation, and the Ingestion of the Sacred in Christianity and Islam." In *Sensational*

*Religion: Sensory Cultures in Material Practice*, edited by Sally M. Promey, 459-93. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014.

Flood, Finbarr Barry. "Images against Nature: Spolia as Apotropaia in Byzantium and the *dār al-Islām*." *The Medieval History Journal* 9, no. 1 (2006): 143-66.

Frembgen, Jürgen W. "The Symbolism of the Boat in Sufi and Shi'a Imagery of Pakistan and Iran." *Journal of the History of Sufism* 6 (2016): 85-100.

Frembgen, Jürgen W. "The Scorpion in Muslim Folklore." *Asian Folkore Studies* 63, no. 1 (2004): 95-123.

Frembgen, Jürgen W. *Kleidung und Ausrüstung islamischer Gottsucher: ein Beitrag zur materiellen Kultur des Derwischwesens*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999.

Gandy, Christopher "Inscribed Silver Amulet Boxes." In *Islamic Art in the Ashmolean Museum, Part I*, edited by James Allan, 155-66. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

L. Gardet, "al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 30 October 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0070.

Gardiner, Noah. "Forbidden Knowledge? Notes on the Production, Transmission and Reception of the Major Works of Aḥmad al-Būnī." *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 12 (2012): 81-143.

Göloğlu, Sabiha. "Depicting the Holy: Representations of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in the Late Ottoman Empire." Ph.D. Dissertation, Istanbul, Koç University, 2018.

Göloğlu, Sabiha. "Linking, Printing, and Painting Sanctity and Protection: Representations of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem in Late Ottoman Illustrated Prayer Books." In *The Miraj of the Prophet and Stations of His Journey*, edited by Ayşe Taşkent and Nicole Kançal-Ferrari. Ankara: Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism; Independent Art Foundation, forthcoming.

Graham, William A. *Divine Word and Prophetic Word: A Reconsideration of the Sources, with Special Reference to the Divine Saying or Ḥadîth al-Qudsî*. The Hague: Mouton, 1977.

Gruber, Christiane. " 'Go Wherever You Wish, for Verily You Are Well-Protected' : Seal Designs in Late Ottoman Amulet Scrolls and Prayer Books." In *Visions of Enchantment; Occultism, Spirituality, and Visual Culture*, edited by Daniel Zamani and Judith Noble, 22-35. London: Fulgur, 2019.

Gruber, Christiane. "Prophetic Products: Muhammad in Contemporary Iranian Visual Culture." *Material Religion* 12, no. 3 (2016): 259-93.

Gruber, Christiane. "A Pious Cure-All: The Ottoman Illustrated Prayer Manual in the Lilly Library." In *The Islamic Manuscript Tradition: Ten Centuries of Book Arts in Indiana University Collections*, edited by Christiane Gruber, 117-53. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010.

Işık, Hüseyin Hilmi. *Seʿâdet-i ebediyye - Endless Bliss*, first fascicle. Istanbul: Hakîkat Kitabevi, 1993.

Ittig, Annette. "A Talismanic Bowl." *Annales Islamologiques* 18 (1982): 79-94.

Al-Ju'beh, Baha'. "Magic and Talismans: The Tawfiq Canaan Collection of Palestinian Amulets." *Jerusalem Quarterly* 22-23 (2005): 103-8.

Kabbani, Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham. *The Naqshbandi Sufi Tradition: Guidebook of Daily Practices and Devotions*. Fenton, MI: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2004.

Kabbani, Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham. *Salawat of Tremendous Blessings*. Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2012.

Kabbani, Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham, and Muhammad Nazil Adil al-Haqqani. *Pearls and Coral: Secrets of the Sufi Way*. Fenton, Mich.: Islamic Supreme Council of America, 2005.

Kayalı Hasan, and A. Kevin Reinhart. "Studies in Late Ottoman Islam." *Archivum Ottomanicum* 19 (2001): 193-303.

Lane, Edward W. *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians*. London: J. Murray, 1860.

Lapidus, Ira M. "Islamic Revival and Modernity: The Contemporary Movements and the Historical Paradigms." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 4 (1997): 444-60.

Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Leoni, Francesca, ed. *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural*. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2016).

Lory, Pierre. *La science des lettre en Islam*. Paris: Editions Dervy, 2004.

Maddison, Francis, and Emilie Savage-Smith, eds. *Science, Tools and Magic*, 2 vols. London: Nour Foundation, in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1997.

Marçais, Philippe. "ʿAyn." In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 30 October 2017 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0908>.

Massignon, Louis. “Les sept dormants d’Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: troisième partie,” *Revue d’études islamiques* 25 (1957): 1-11.

Massignon, Louis. “Les sept dormants d’Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: deuxième partie,” *Revue d’études islamiques* 23 (1955): 94-106.

Massignon, Louis. “Les sept dormants d’Éphèse (*ahl al-kahf*) en Islam et Chrétienté: première partie,” *Revue d’études islamiques* 22 (1954): 59-112.

McGregor, Richard J. “Friend of God.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Consulted online on 4 July 2017 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/15733912_ei3_ COM_27194.

Muravichick, Rose. “Objectifying the Occult: Studying a Talismanic Shirt as an Embodied Object.” In *Islamicate Occultism: New Perspectives*, edited by Matthew Melvin-Koushki and Noah Gardiner. Special double issue of *Arabica* 64, nos. 3-4 (2017): 673-93.

Muravichick, Rose. “God is the Best Guardian: Islamic Talismanic Shirts from the Gunpowder Empires.” Ph.D. Dissertation. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania, 2014.

Nashef, Khaled ed. *Ya Kafi Ya Shafi: The Tawfik Canaan Collection of Palestinian Amulets, An Exhibition, October 30, 1998-February 25, 1999*. Al Bireh: Birzeit University, 1998.

Paret, Rudi. “*Aṣḥāb al-kahf*.” In *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Consulted online on 13 May 2018 http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_0773.

Peacock, Andrew, and Annabel Teh Gallop. *From Anatolia to Aceh: Ottomans, Turks, and Southeast Asia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press/British Academy, 2015.

Perk, Halûk. *Osmanlı Tılsım Mühürleri*. Istanbul: Halûk Perk Müzesi Yayınları, 2010.

Pingree, David, ed. *Picatrix: The Latin Version of the Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*. London: Warburgh Institute, 1986.

Porter, Venetia, ed. *Hajj: A Journey to the Heart of Islam*. London: The British Museum Press, 2012.

Porter, Venetia. “The Use of Arabic Script in Magic.” In *The Development of Arabic as a Written Language*, edited by M.C. A. MacDonald, Supplement to the *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 40 (2010): 131-4.

Porter, Venetia. "Amulets Inscribed with the Names of the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus' in the British Museum." In *Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and Its Creative Expressions*, edited by Fahmida Suleman, 123-34. Oxford: Oxford University Press in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies London, 2007.

Porter, Venetia. "Islamic Seals: Magical or Practical?" In *University Lectures in Islamic Studies* 2, edited by Alan Jones, 135-49. London: Altajir World of Islam Trust, 1998 [reprinted in Emilie Savage-Smith, ed., *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004, 179-200].

Porter, Venetia, with Robert Hoyland and Alexander Morton. *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum*. London: The British Museum, 2011.

Porter, Venetia, Liana Saif, and Emilie Savage-Smith. "Amulets, Magic, and Talismans." In *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, edited by Finbarr Barry Flood and Gülru Necipoğlu, 1:521-56. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2017.

Regourd, Anne. "Représentations d'Umm Sibyān dans les contes yéménites: de la dévoreuse d'enfant à la djinniyya possédant les humains." In *Femmes médiatrices et ambivalentes: Mythes et imaginaires*, edited by Anna Caiozzo and Nathalie Ernoult, 63-72. Paris: Armand Colin, 2012.

Ritter, Hellmut, and Martin Plessner. *"Picatrix"; das Ziel des Weisen, von Pseudo-Maggrīṭī*. London: Warburg Institute, 1962.

Roxburgh, David J. "Visualising the Sites and Monuments of Islamic Pilgrimage." In *Architecture in Islamic Arts: Treasures of the Aga Khan Museum*, edited by Margaret Graves, 33-41. Geneva: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2011.

Safwat, Nabil E. *The Art of the Pen: Calligraphy of the 14th to 20th Century*. London: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions and Oxford University Press, 1996.

Safwat, Nabil E. *Golden Pages: Qur'ans and Other Manuscripts from the Collection of Ghassan I. Shaker*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press for Azimuth Editions, 2000.

Al-Saleh, Yasmine. "The Touch and Sight of Islamic Talismanic Scrolls." Ph.D. Dissertation, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University, 2015.

Savage-Smith, Emilie, ed. *Magic and Divination in Early Islam*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Schimmel, Annemarie. *And Muḥammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1985.

Schimmel, Annemarie. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.

Schmidt, Barbara. *Islamic Manuscripts in the New York Public Library*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press and The New York Library, 1992.

Şentürk, Şennur, ed. *Cam Altında Yirmi Bin Fersah: geleneksel halk resim sanatından camaltı resimleri*. İstanbul Yapı Kredi Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 1997.

Sholikhin, K.H. Muḥammad. *17 Jalan Menggapai Mahkota Sufi Syaikh 'Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani*. Yogyakarta: Mutiara Media, 2009.

Suleman, Fahmida. "The Hand of Fatima: In Search of Its Origins and Significance." In *People of the Prophet's House: Artistic and Ritual Expressions of Shi'i Islam*, edited by Fahmida Suleman, 173-86. London: Azimuth Editions in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies in collaboration with the British Museum's Department of the Middle East, 2015.

Tanman, M. Baha. "Depictions of the Mausoleum of Seyyid Ahmed el-Rifa'î in Late Dervish Convent Ottoman Art." *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies* 4 (2001): no. 41, 1-37.

Tanman, M. Baha. "Setting for the Veneration of Saints." In *The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, edited by Raymond Lifchez, 130-71. Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992.

Teece, Denise-Marie, and Karin Zonis. "Calligraphic Galleon." In *Masterpieces from the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, edited by Maryam D. Ekhtiar, Priscilla Soucek, Sheila R. Canby and Navina Hadjat Haidar, 297-8, cat. no. 206. New York: Yale University Press, 2011.

Wheeler, Brannon. "Collecting the Dead Body of the Prophet Muḥammad: Hair, Nails, Sweat and Spit." In *The Image of the Prophet Between Ideal and Ideology: A Scholarly Investigation*, edited by Christiane Gruber and Avinoam Shalem, 45-61. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014.

Trimingham, J. Spencer. *The Sufi Orders in Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Vesel, Živa. "Talismans from the Iranian World: A Millenary Tradition." In *Art and Material Culture of Iranian Shiism*, edited by Pedram Khosronejad, 254-75. London: I.B. Tauris, 2011.

Winkler, Hans A. *Salomo und die Karīna: eine orientalische Legende von der Bezwingung einer Kindbettdämonin durch einen heiligen Helden*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1931.

Yahya, Farouk. “Jimat in Form of a Ship.” In *Power and Protection: Islamic Art and the Supernatural*, edited by Francesca Leoni, 36-7, cat. no. 105. Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2016.

Yürekli-Görkay, Zeynep. “The Sword Dhū’l-Faqār and the Ottomans.” In *People of the Prophet’s House: Artistic and Ritual Expressions of Shi‘i Islam*, edited by Fahmida Suleman, 163-72. London: Azimuth Editions in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies in collaboration with the British Museum’s Department of the Middle East, 2015.

Yürekli-Görkay, Zeynep. *Architecture and Hagiography in the Ottoman empire: The Politics of Bektashi Shrines in the Classical Age*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012.

Zakariyya, Muhammad. “The Hilye of the Prophet Muḥammad.” *Seasons* (Autumn-Winter 2003-2004): 13-22.

Zwemer, Samuel M. *Studies in Popular Islam: A Collection of Papers Dealing with the Superstitions and Beliefs of the Common People*. London: The Sheldon Press, 1939.

Zwemer, Samuel M. *The Influence of Animism on Islam*. London: Central Board of Missions and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1920.