Visualising the Prophet – Rhetorical and Graphic Aspects of Three Ottoman-Turkish Poems

Süleymān Çelebi's Vesīlet en-Necāt, Yazıcıoğlu's Risāle-i Muḥammedīye, and Ḥākānī's Hilye

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Narrative and panegyric poems about the Prophet Muḥammad were among the most widely read texts in the Ottoman Empire. They made the Prophet accessible to a broad readership; they were recited during rites; and the acts of copying them with one's own hand, reading them, and presenting them as endowments promised reward on the day of judgement. There also was a strong visual aspect to the production and usage of these manuscripts: the beauty of the Prophet, the beauty of the (spoken) word, and the beauty of the handwriting were interrelated. Much can therefore be learned about the image of the Prophet Muḥammad in Ottoman society, and specifically in Ottoman book culture, by analysing this interrelation.

In my study I focus on three poems, which are preserved in large numbers in manuscript collections all over the world, and which were published in several printed editions – Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesīlet en-Necāt* (812/1409), Yazıcıoğlu Muḥammed's *Muḥammedīye* (853/1449), and Ḥākānī's *Hilye* (1007/1598–9). These have several features in common: their topic (the biography and/or the physiognomy of Muḥammad); their form (poetry); the fact that the texts are transmitted with the signature of their author; and a precise date. However, the authors employed very different strategies to visualise the Prophet, and so did the copyists, calligraphers, and illustrators.

The three texts are analysed successively. Each section begins with a short survey of the intention of the authors as described in prefaces or colophons, and, if relevant, later biographical and hagiographical texts. Then the structure of the texts and narrative, along with their poetical and rhetorical characteristics, will be described, and, in a concluding step, the interrelation with graphic aspects of selected manuscripts and printed copies is explored.

1 Süleymân Çelebi's *Vesîlet en-Necât*

Süleymân Çelebi presents his *Vesîlet en-Necât* (Means to Salvation), which is commonly known as *Mevlid* (The Prophet's Birthday), to his readers with a standard set of information about himself – his name (Süleymân), the date (812/1409), and the location (Bursa) where he finished the text. His remarks about his motivation and intention are also quite commonplace – according to the introduction he wanted to transmit knowledge about the Prophet Muḥammad, to seek God's reward, and to request intercession from his readers on his behalf.¹

Already in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the authors of biographical encyclopaedias had some difficulties identifying Süleymân Çelebi.² They agreed to locate him in proximity to the Sultan's palace. Laṭîfî's *Tezkiret eş-Şu'arâ* (953/1546) asserts that he was the son of İvaż Paşa, a grand vizier of Murâd II (reg 824–855/1421–1451). According to Muştafâ 'Âlî's *Künh el-Aḥbâr* (ca. 1008/1600) he himself was member of the council of Sultan Bâyezîd I and, after the Sultan's death, imam of the Great Mosque in Bursa.³ It is also in Laṭîfî's *Tezkiret eş-Şu'arâ* where we find a detailed narrative about the occasion which led the author to write his poem: It was a conflict over the hierarchy of prophets and of Muḥammad's distinguished and outstanding position among them.⁴ According to the narrative, a preacher in Bursa had claimed that all prophets were equal before God and referred to Q 2:285. Therefore, Süleymân Çelebi decided to write a poem about the outstanding rank of Muḥammad.

Süleymân Çelebi's text has a special focus on the creation and birth of Muḥammad – but is not restricted to these themes, as the commonly known title *Mevlid* might suggest. It contains narrative and panegyric passages and is written in a plain Old-Ottoman-Turkish language. The poetic form of Süleymân Çelebi's *Vesîlet en-Necât* is the *meşnevî*. The transmitted text is characterised by a high degree of variance: there exist versions of 150–200 verses and others of 1200–1300 verses.⁵ In 1306/1888 a certain Rızâ Efendi published a collated edition, which is the first claiming to reconstruct the "original version". This

1 Ateş, *Süleymân Çelebi*, 95 and 143–7.

2 Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 49ff.

3 Muştafâ 'Âlî, *Künh el-Aḥbar*, 5, 115–6.

4 Laṭîfî, *Tezkiret eş-Şu'arâ*, 133ff.

5 Ateş, *Süleyman Çelebi*, 61. Pekolcay also compiled her edition as her PhD-thesis in the 1950s. However, it was first published only in 1980. Pekolcay's edition again focusses on a reconstruction of the "original text", but does not give an adequate impression of its variance.

edition was reprinted several times.⁶ But it is only the edition of Ahmed Ateş in 1954 that succeeds in giving an impression of the broad variance of the text.

The chapter about Muḥammad's birth begins with an easily intelligible narrative:⁷

Âmine ḥatun Muḥammed annesi
Ol sedefden toğdı ol bir dānesi
Hem Muḥammed gelmesi oldu yakīn
Çok 'alāmetler bilürdi gelmedin
Çünkü 'Abdullāhdan oldu ḥāmīle
Vakt erişdi hafta ve eyyāmīle
Ol-gècesi kim toğdı ol ḥayrū l-beşer
Annesi anda neler gördi neler
On ikincisi Rebī'ü l-Evvelüñ
Ol düşenbe gècesi idi bilüñ

In the translation of Elias John Wilkinson Gibb this reads as follows:⁸

Lady Âmine, Muhammed's mother she,
(From this Shell it was yon Pearl did come to be.)
When Muhammed's time to come was near at hand,
Ere he came were many signs seen through the land.
Now by 'Abd-ullāh his sire had she conceived,
And the passing weeks and days the term achieved.
In the night wheron was born that Best of Men⁹
Many a marvel passed before his mother's ken.
On the twelfth 'twas of the First Rebī' it fell,
On a Monday night it tided, wot ye well!

Süleymān Çelebi's text does not particularly emphasise the physiognomy of the Prophet. References are, however, detectable in a few isolated cases. In the chapter about the miracles Süleymān Çelebi explains that Muḥammad

6 Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 127–8. According to Özege, *Eski Harflerle*, 2:1131–2, Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesilet en-Necāt* was printed 26 times. Rızā Efendi's edition is dated 18 Muḥarrem 1306.

7 The transcription follows the Turkish text in Gibb's *Ottoman Poetry*, 6:22; cf. Rızā Efendi's edition, 1306, 7, Ateş, *Süleymān Çelebi*, 103–4, and Pekolcay, *Mevlid*, 76.

8 Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, 1, 243.

9 Footnote by Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, 1, 243: "Khayr-ul-Besher or Khayr-ul-Enām, i.e. 'Best of Mankind' is a frequent title of Muhammed."

did not cast a shadow, since his body was made of pure light. In Süleymân Çelebi's *Vesilet en-Necât* this statement is important for his argument for why Muḥammad differs from the other prophets:¹⁰

Mu'cizâtın diñleñüz şevk ile hōş	Tā ki 'aql-ü cān kıla cūş-u ħurūş
Gerçi cümle nūr idi ol pāk-i zāt	İllā her 'uzvında vardı mu'cizāt
Ḥaḳ anı ayruḳ nebīye vērmedi	Hiç biri ol ērdüğine ērmedi
Evvelā ol kim mübārek cisminüñ	Gölgesi düşmezdi yere resminüñ
Nūr idi başdan ayağa göğdesi	Bu 'ayāndur nūruñ olmaz gölgesi

Translation:

Listen with pure desire about his miracles	So that your mind and soul will burn and flame
His pure existence was all of light	In all his limbs a miracle could be found
Which God didn't give the other prophets	Which none of them had archived like him
First of all, his blessed body	Didn't cast a shadow on the ground
His body was of light from top to toe	It's obvious, light has no shadow

2 The Rhetoric of the Word and the Graphic Aspects of the Manuscript

The layout and graphic characteristics of manuscripts and printed issues of Süleymân Çelebi's *Vesilet en-necât* seem quite common at first sight. They follow classic, basic strategies to communicate the poetic form and rhetorical devices of the text. Copyists and printers neither illustrated it nor developed sophisticated calligraphic forms for it. The *Vesilet en-necât* therefore contrasts with the manuscripts and prints of the two following texts – Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye* and Ḥaḳānī's *Ḥilye*. However, a closer look can help to decode the graphic strategies.

10 Ateş, *Süleyman Çelebi*, 113; Pekolcay, *Mevlid*, 100f.

One of the general characteristics of the layout in Ottoman manuscripts and prints is that poems are organised in two “pseudo-columns” for the two semi-verses (*mişrāʿ*). In contrast to usual columns (true columns) the two semi-verses are read line for line across the columns.¹¹ There are rare cases where this classic layout is changed to “true columns”, with the semi-verses arranged one below the other, or a three-column scheme, where every second verse is divided by a line break, because one line contains three semi-verses.¹² Two such cases are documented for Yazıcıoğlu’s *Muḥammedīye* and Ḥākānī’s *Hilye*, but not for Süleymān Çelebi’s *Vesīlet en-necāt*. This, however – considering the rarity – does not mean that such *Vesīlet*-manuscripts do not exist. But it is still one more indication of a rather frugal layout and illumination for this text. In both cases – “true columns” and a three-column scheme – the poetic form is disguised by the layout, for which a reason is not easily found. Maybe the copyist or editor wanted to attract the readers’ attention and encourage him to engage via language and poetic form with the content of the text.¹³

Two aspects of the reproductions of Süleymān Çelebi’s *Vesīlet en-necāt* demonstrate the desire for an authentic text transmission, as well as the copyist’s respect for author and text, namely the vowel signs and the aesthetic of the handwritten text. Manuscripts and prints of Süleymān Çelebi’s poem are fully vocalised, which should be seen far more as a graphic marker than as an aid to decipher and understand it. Even if the vowel signs still had an important function in Old-Ottoman-Turkish orthography, due to a frequent defective writing of vowels, these were no longer necessary after the transition from a phonological to a morphological orthography of the suffixes, and there remained no option for a reasonable vocalisation of a text written in New-Ottoman-Turkish orthography.¹⁴ The fully vocalised text was – consciously or not – chosen as a marker, which reminded the readers of the most familiar model, the Qurʾān,

11 Daub, *Formen und Funktionen*, 49, Gacek, *Arabic Manuscripts*, 146f. and 177ff., Deroche, *Islamic Codicology*, 173.

12 Daub, *Formen*, 103 and 113. Cf. *Hilye-i Ḥākānī*, printing shop of Maḥmud Beg, Istanbul 1307/1309/1891, 50 pages. In the same year an official printing shop (Maṭbaʿa-yi ʿĀmire?) edited the *Hilye-i Ḥākānī* with traditional layout (44 pages). For a *Muḥammedīye*-manuscript in three columns cf. Millet Kütüphanesi, Istanbul, Ali Emiri Manzum 876/1, copied by Muḥammed el-Ḥalīm b. Yaḥyā el-Üsküdarī, 1125/1713.

13 Cf. in this context the *ḥātime* in Maḥmud Beg’s edition of the *Hilye-i Ḥākānī* from 1307/1309/1891, in which the readers are encouraged by the editor to recite the text aloud like the *evrād* – i.e. verses from the Qurʾān used for daily prayer and devotions.

14 Cf. Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 111f.

in which – in contrast to Ottoman-Turkish writings – the vowel signs are an essential aid to read and understand the text.

Most prints of Süleymān Çelebi's poem used lithography, which enabled the reproduction of a handwritten manuscript and facilitated the addition of vowel signs. However, it is significant that even prints with movable type were fully vocalised – and in this case, that made the printing process more complicated. But we also have evidence that it was not only technical or economic considerations which made lithography – and in the twentieth century also facsimile prints – the preferred printing technique. The notion of proper respect for the author, for the text, and thereby the religious content, viz. the Prophet Muḥammad, was also an important factor.¹⁵ Also relevant is the blessing conferred by the process of copying with one's own hand. That concerns not only calligraphic copies in a narrow sense (i.e. copies in the classical duc-tus *nesih*, *sülüs*, or *ta'lik*), but handwritten copies in general.

Regarding the reproduction of handwritten copies, three printed editions of Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesilet en-necāt* from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are revealing. Ahmed Ateş edited the text in 1954 in Latin characters, but he included a black and white facsimile of his codex optimus, SK Fatih 5430/1, which dates from 967/1560. In this reproduction the margins outside the frame are cut off, which shows that the focus lies more on the philological aspects of the text than on its graphic and material appearance. In 1980, Pekolcay's edition – in Latin characters – included also a black and white reproduction in Arabic characters of a contemporary Turkish calligrapher (Turan Sevgili), who "modernised" Ottoman-Turkish orthography. In this edition, the handwritten copy in Arabic characters is rather meant to strengthen the attachment to the religious content of the poem.¹⁶ In 2008, the publishing house of the Directorate of Religious Affairs printed a facsimile of a manuscript of Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesilet en-necāt*, which was copied by the famous calligrapher Aḥmed Kāmil [Akdik] in 1349/1931 – two years after the introduction of Latin characters in Turkey. The copy was commissioned by Emīre Zibā [Tugay], daughter of field marshal Ḥasan Paşa. The text is based on Rızā Efendi's edition, and the manuscript has been masterfully written in *nesih* and richly illuminated. While it documents Emīre Zibā's esteem for Aḥmed Kāmil's calligraphic art, the choice of the *Vesilet en-necāt* is also telling: it is an indication for her respect for this text, its author and the topic – the Prophet Muḥammad. In the reproduction

15 These factors for the choice of printing techniques in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will be studied in an ongoing research project.

16 Pekolcay, *Mevlid*, 177, gives the names of the calligrapher (Turan Sevgili), the calligrapher of the front page (Hüsrev Subaşı), and the illuminator (Sadi Kucur).

FIGURE 19.1 Recent Facsimile Edition of a Mevlid-manuscript, copied by the famous calligrapher Ahmed Kamil Akdik in 1931, *Vesiletü'n-Necat*, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, Ankara 2008

of 2008, the process of text transmission receives an additional layer – introductory chapters about author, text, calligrapher, illuminator and purchaser locate Süleymân Çelebi's poem and Ahmed Kâmil's copy in the context of an Ottoman book culture in the early Turkish Republic.

3 Yazıcıoğlu's *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye*

Yazıcıoğlu Muḥammed, the author of the *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye* (Muḥammadan Treatise), which is commonly known as *Muḥammedīye*, gives very detailed information about himself and his work in his introduction and colophon.¹⁷ He wrote the poem in Gelibolu (Gallipoli) and finished it 853/1449. According to the introduction, he was asked by his contemporaries to write a reliable book on the biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, based on exegesis of the Qur'ān

17 Çelebioğlu, *Muḥammedīye*, 2,7 and 2, 598–606, VGM 431A, (003) and (322–4). Cf. Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 73ff.

and the prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*). At first, he was hesitant, because he thought that a large number of “mevlid books” (*mevlid kitābı*) already existed. But eventually, he received the mission directly from the Prophet himself in a dream. Yazıcıoğlu emphasises that his poem is a translation of his own work *Maghārib al-zamān* (Descendants of time) – a treatise which he had written in Arabic prose. In his preface he also names some of his teachers, among them the Sufi shaykh Hacı Bayram Velī, who was also his guide (*mürşid*), and the *ḥadīth* scholar ‘Alī b. ‘Abdullāh b. Aḥmed Zeyn el-‘Arab.¹⁸ He thus points to his Sufi lineage and places himself in a scholarly context as well.

All this information helps to locate his work among Turkish texts on the biography of the Prophet: 1. His reservation vis-à-vis the *Mevlid*-texts, and his esteem for Qur’ān and *ḥadīth*, 2. The reference to the Arabic version, a larger part of which indeed consists of *ḥadīth* texts, and 3. The claim that he was commissioned by the Prophet himself, even if the vision of Muḥammad in a dream is a well-known topos.¹⁹

Yazıcıoğlu Muḥammed is already mentioned in the earliest biographical encyclopaedias, such as the appendix of Lāmi’ī’s translation of Jāmī’s *Nafahāt al-Uns* (927/1521) or Taşköprizāde’s *Şakā’ik al-Nu’māniyya* (965/1558).²⁰ Both refer to his famous work *Muḥammedīye* and his miracles as a Sufi saint. Taşköprizāde additionally underlines the reliability of his citations of *ḥadīth* texts.²¹ Both statements confirm the points already brought up by the author himself. Yazıcıoğlu’s *Muḥammedīye* combines different poetic forms, such as the *mesnevī* and the *kaşīde*. The text is structured in two parts: 1. Creation, the history of the prophets, the biography of Muḥammad (verses 1–4756); and 2. Eschatology, the day of judgement, paradise and hell (verses 4757–9008).²² It combines narrative and panegyric texts. In the narrative passages the language is a plainly understandable Old-Ottoman-Turkish, typical for fifteenth-century literature. Striking, however, is the vocabulary, which includes rare terms that refer to the wording of the *ḥadīth* and makes the source of the respective passage recognisable to experts. The author was aware of the fact that these terms were not understandable for a broader audience, and already in the author’s

18 Çelebioğlu, *Muḥammedīye*, 1, 18–9, Çelebioğlu, *Muḥammedīye*, 2, 603, Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 74.

19 Sirriyeh, *Dreams*, 2015, 140–57, in particular 146: “Despite the great importance attached to seeing the Prophet in dreams and waking visionary encounters, the phenomenon appears to have been relatively rare in the late medieval period.” But the topos as such was still well-known and attested, e.g. in the works of Ibn ‘Arabī.

20 Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 77, Lāmi’ī, *Fütūḥ*, 710, Taşköprizāde, *al-Şakā’ik*, 110f.

21 Taşköprizāde, *al-Şakā’ik*, 110f.

22 The enumeration of the verses follows Çelebioğlu, *Muḥammedīye*, 1, 95.

manuscript glosses by the author's hand provide linguistic explanations.²³ For example the beginning of the chapter on the night journey (*mi'rāj*) of the Prophet reads as follows:²⁴

Ḥaber vèrdi resûlû 'llâh ki yatmışdum Ḥaremde ben
 Ḥatîmde ızţicâ' édüb êrişdürdi nazar Allâh
 İşâda êrdi Cibrâ'îl selâm êrgürdi Allâhdan
 Seni Allâh okur dèdi buyurmuşdur sefer Allâh
 Tütüb pes şadrumı yardı ki tâ göbegüme êrdi
 Çıkardı yüregüm derhâl daḥı diñle ne-dér ol şâh

The messenger of God told us, "I slept in the Ḥaram,
 and when I was lying at the Ḥatîm, God looked at me.
 That evening Gabriel brought greetings from God.
 'God calls you', he said, 'God orders you to travel.'
 He seized my chest, and tore it apart down to the belly,
 and pulled out my heart." Listen, what the king [Muḥammad] said.

In these three verses, two terms might have been difficult to understand to the reader – *Ḥatîm* and *ızţicâ'*. In the author's manuscript *Ḥatîm* is explained as "the upper side of the Ka'ba" (*Ka'benüñ uluḡı taraḡı*), and *ızţicâ'* as "lying on one's back" (*arḡası üstine yatmak*). *Ḥatîm* is indeed the proper name of a place near the Ka'ba; experts might have recognised *ızţicâ'* (verbal noun from the Arabic verb *iḡţaja'a*) as a reference to a particular *ḥadîth*:²⁵

According to Ḳatāda, according to Anas b. Mālîk, according to Mālîk b. Şa'sa'a, may God be pleased with them: "The Prophet, god bless him and grant him salvation, told them about the night, 'in which he was made to travel by night' [Q 17,1]: 'I slept lying (*muḡţajî'an*) at the Ḥatîm' maybe he said 'at the [black] stone', 'when somebody came to me and split me open from here to here' which is from the throat to the pubic hair 'and pulled out my heart'."

23 Cf. Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 185–92, for a detailed discussion of the vocabulary in the margins of the author's copy and later manuscripts and prints.

24 Çelebioḡlu, *Muhammediye*, 2, 133, VGM 431A, (090), Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 166.

25 For the Arabic version of the *ḥadîth* in Yazıcıoḡlu's *Maghārib al-Zamān*, cf. e.g. manuscripts Süleymaniye Library, Nuruosmaniye 2593, 218a, or Konya Yazma Eserler Kütüphanesi, Akseki 132, 464. This scene is the beginning of a narrative describing the purification of Muḥammad's heart.

In contrast to the narrative passages, which are written in a plain and easily understandable Turkish, the panegyric verses in Yazıcıoğlu's poem are very elaborate. One of the most famous texts is a *kaşide* in praise of the Prophet.²⁶ It is *müstezād*, which is a special poetic form where each of the two semi-verses includes an appendix (*ziyāde*). The text in question is even more densely structured, since each semi-verse is once more divided by an internal rhyme. Subsequently every verse consists of six sections. The first three verses read as follows:

Cihānuñ cānı ve cānuñ	Muḥammeddür çü cānānı ki kâṭı'dur maḳālātı
Ol ola çünki cānānı	nice sevmeye cān anı ki sāṭı'dur delālātı
Odur cānān yaradan cān	édindi çün anı cānān ki maḥbûb étdi zātına
Sever anı ḳamu cānān	odur bu cānlaruñ cānı ki cāmı'dür kemālātı
Odur bu cānlaruñ cānı	odur serverlerüñ ḥānı çün ol sulṭān-ı keveyndür
Odur gevherlerüñ kāmı	o bildi buldı sulṭāmı ki şādıḳdur risālātı

The soul of this world and the beloved of the Living Soul is Muḥammad. /
What he says is definite.
He is indeed the beloved, why should the Living Soul not love him? / The
evidence is obvious.
It is the Living Soul, Who created the beloved and adopted him as His
beloved. / He made him His beloved.
All souls [all beloveds] love him. He is the living soul of the souls. / Whose
perfections are encompassing.
He is the living soul of all living souls, he is the sovereign of all princes. /
Because he is the sultan of both worlds.
He is the mine of all gems. He found and knows the sultan. / His message
is true.

The *kaşide* plays on Sufi terminology – Muḥammad is characterised as the “living soul of the world” (*cihānuñ cānı*) and the “beloved of the Living Soul (i.e.

26 Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 95, cf. the short hagiography, which is part of all lithographic *Muḥammedīye* prints since 1262/1846 for a reference to this *kaşide* as one of Yazıcıoğlu's most famous texts.

God)" (*cānuñ cānānı*). Additionally, the poem focusses on the trustworthiness and definitiveness of Muḥammad's words.

3.1 *The Interrelation of Narrative, Rhetorical, and Graphic Aspects in Yazıcıoğlu's Muḥammedīye*

Compared with the other two poems, Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye* stands out due to the rich variety of graphic elements, which visualise narrative and rhetorical aspects of the text. Three main types are to be distinguished: the first follows the author's copy, which was venerated as a saint's relict, fairly closely. The second type is limited to a short period of approximately one century and is characterised by specific methods to visualise the rhetoric of the text. The third type is preserved in only two illustrated manuscripts, which both date from the first half of the nineteenth century. These latter illustrations, however, had a remarkable influence on the *Muḥammedīye* prints in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

3.2 *The Author's Manuscript and Its Influence on the Format of Later Copies*

The author's manuscript of Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye* was preserved at his tomb in Gelibolu (Gallipoli) until the Second World War. In 1942, it was transferred to the archive of the Directorate General of Pious Foundations (*Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü*) in Ankara.²⁷ The location of this copy at the saint's tomb in Gelibolu and evidence for its veneration by pilgrims have been documented in historiographic and hagiographic texts since the sixteenth century.²⁸ The manuscript is a draft with numerous additions and emendations in the author's hand. One double page shows scorch marks, which were interpreted as traces of the saint's miracle. A deep-drawn sigh, which he gave out of his enormous love for God, had set the page on fire. The manuscript also contains a sketch of the "banner of praise" (*livā el-ḥamd*), which Muḥammad will carry ahead of the believers when entering paradise on the day of judgement, and a calligraphy of the three lines which are written on the banner – the formulas of invocation (*besmele*), praise (*ḥamdele*), and creed (*ṣehādet*). The page with the banner bears traces of touching or kissing; it was obviously an object of an increased degree of veneration – probably because of its visualisation of the prophet's role on the day of judgement.

The banner of praise was seen as part of the (author's) text by most copyists and hence included in their manuscripts. In a smaller number of cases some space was left blank to complete the page later, or only the three lines were written in the *ṣülüṣ*-like calligraphy of the author's copy. The famous scholar

27 Çelebioğlu, *Muḥammedīye*, 1, 41, Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 322.

28 Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 322–33.

FIGURE 19.2 Yazıcıoğlu, *Risāle-i Muḥmediye*, author's copy, Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, MS. 431/A, fol. 221, banner of the Prophet on the right margin

and Sufi shaykh Bursalı İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı, who had copied Yazıcıoğlu's manuscript during his stay in Gelibolu 1121/1709, even wrote a marginal note next to his own sketch, in which he explicitly pointed out that it corresponded to the original.²⁹

Even if the sketch of the banner is included in most manuscripts, its overall shape varies considerably: some images remain close to the original, some are more elaborate, some are more naturalistic, and some adopt a totally different form. In a copy from 1057/1648, the banner of praise is depicted in the shape of a tulip, which again bears clear traces of touching and kissing.³⁰ The manuscript is therefore a telling example showing that the “banner of praise” was an object of veneration not only in the author's manuscript but also in some later copies. Sitting or standing in front of these images, the readers, viewers, and devotees came into contact and touched a copy of the Sufi shaykh's sketch, which released a blessing on its own. At the same time, the sketch of the banner – and object of veneration – is a visualisation of Muḥammad and his intercessory role on the day of judgement.

29 Bursalı İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı documented narratives about the manuscript in several marginal notes in his copy. These were orally transmitted at the tomb, cf. Heinzelmann, “Anfänge”, and Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 322–25.

30 Cf. Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 323, concerning Bursalı İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı's marginal notes about pilgrims touching or kissing the author's manuscript.

FIGURE 19.3 Bursalı İsmâ'il Hakkî's copy of Yazıcıoğlu, *Risâle-i Muḥammedîye*, İnebey Kütüphanesi, Bursa, Genel 58 (1121/1709), 133a; copy of the banner of the Prophet on the left margin with reference to the original

FIGURE 19.4 *Risâle-i Muḥammedîye*, Banner of the Prophet, Ankara, Milli Kütüphane, Ankara, B 960 (1057/1648), 152b

3.3 The *Faḫih* Tradition

A corpus of *Muḥammedīye*-manuscripts from the sixteenth century was – according to the colophons – produced in a *faḫih* context; a person in the patronym of the copyist bears the title *faḫih* (scholar of Islamic law”, or in Ottoman-Turkish in a broader sense “religious expert). I therefore call them “the *faḫih* manuscripts”. These are characterised by a distinctive graphic layout: the text is structured by calligraphic figures, which visualise the poetics and rhetoric of Yazıcıoğlu’s poem – e.g. rhyme, assonance, and iteration. Iterations at the beginning of subsequent verses or rhymes are in most cases written only once and the rest of each of the dependent semi-verses branches out from this single word or phrase. The verses thus assume the shape of a fan (see Figure 19.5 below). Additionally, iterations – e.g. the pronoun “He” for God – are written in red or in different colours, which helps to structure the text during recitation, especially in passages particularly dense with poetic figures. The manuscripts are not copied in one of the classic ductuses of Arabic calligraphy, but still in an attractive, fluent hand typical of the sixteenth century.

One of these manuscripts is preserved in the library of the private chamber of the Sultan (*hāşş odası*) at the Topkapı-Palace in Istanbul (TSMK HS 93). It

FIGURE 19.5 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye*, Fan-shaped arrangement of verses, Istanbul, TSMK HS 93, 241b–242a

FIGURE 19.6 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye*, oval, eye-shaped calligraphic arrangement of verses, with a dot in the middle of each oval visualizing the Prophet's vision of God, Istanbul, TSMK HS 93 (908/1502), 238b–239a

was copied 908/1502 by a certain Ḥacı Ya'küb b. Muṣṭafā Faḳīh. Apart from the title *faḳīh* in the copyist's patronym, we have no information about the social context or location. Later, the manuscript was donated as an endowment to the private chamber by a certain Sarıkkçı 'Alī Ağa, key bearer of the Sultan, who was by his rank one of the privileged few to be allowed to enter this part of the palace.³¹

The manuscript TSMK HS 93 shows the characteristic aspects of the *faḳīh* tradition – the fan-calligraphy visualising rhetorical figures. Though most of the manuscripts which originate from a *faḳīh* context feature elaborate illumination, the copy, which later ended up in the Sultan's palace, is extraordinary in terms of the materials used (the headings and illuminations in gold and various colours). Additionally, it is the most impressive example among the *faḳīh* manuscripts for the interrelation of theme, rhetoric and graphic. All the *faḳīh* manuscripts use an oval, eye-shaped calligraphy of two subsequent semi-verses, with a dot in the middle of the oval, to visualise Muḥammad's vision

31 TSMK HS 93 (908/1502), 273b.

of God (*rü'yet Allāh*). They also use a netted, interwoven shape of the semi-verses to visualise the *müstezād* pattern of the panegyric *kaşīde*. Special about TSMK HS 93, however, is the combination of both. Besides the first narrative of Muḥammad's vision of God in the chapter on the night journey, Yazıcıoğlu brings the topic up a second time in the eschatological part of his poem, following and complementing the panegyric *kaşīde*. In TSMK HS 93, a double page is filled with the netted interwoven structure of the *kaşīde*, which also picks up the eye-shaped arrangement of the semi-verses.³² On this double page the calligrapher not only visualises the rhetoric of the poem, but also connects and emphasises the author's praise of the magnitude and beauty of Muḥammad.

3.4 *The Illustrated Versions of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*

In March 1822 a certain Naşūḥ b. Şālih finished a copy of Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye*, which is outstanding due to its illustrations (DKM, Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22). The manuscript contains fifty schematic miniatures, which depict the narrative of Muḥammad's biography as well as the eschatological chapters in Yazıcıoğlu's work. It is the first manuscript copy of a graphic tradition, which had a significant influence on the printed editions of Yazıcıoğlu's work. But it is probably already a copy of an earlier version.³³ The colophon has neither a localisation nor any information about the social background of the copyist. The manuscript is part of the collection of Aḥmad Ṭal'at (d. 1347/1927) – a member of the Turkophone elite in Egypt – which is now preserved in the Egyptian National Library.³⁴

Some of the illustrations are based on earlier patterns – e.g., the sketch of the “banner of praise”, which is part of the author's text, or sketches of the Prophet's relics or topographic diagrams in the chapters about the biography of the Prophet, which are most probably adapted from the manuscripts of other texts.³⁵ The larger part, however, is to my knowledge unprecedented, as it uses small circles representing the Prophet Muḥammad and his contemporaries. These circles are situated in schematic sketches of buildings and places. The

32 TSMK HS 93 (908/1502), 238b–239a.

33 DKM Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22 includes a few short citations from Bursalı İsmā'il Ḥaḳḳı's commentary *Ferah er-Rūḥ*. It is also in the printed edition of İsmā'il Ḥaḳḳı's commentary, not in the printed edition Yazıcıoğlu's original, where we find the earliest published version of the illustrations. This might give us some – still rather vague – evidence that the illustrations are originally from İsmā'il Ḥaḳḳı's commentary.

34 Heinzelmann, *Populäre*, 29, Sayyid, *Dār al-kutub*, 60, Ziriklī, *al-A'lam*, 1:137.

35 On miniatures of the Prophet's relics or the topography of Mecca and Medina in devotional texts and prayer manuals, cf. Witkam, *Vromheed*, passim, Witkam, “The Battle”, passim, Gruber, “A Pious Cure-All”, passim, Maury, “Ottoman Representations”, passim.

circles may recall of name tags in diagrams visualising the lineage of ancestors (*silsile*), but they are something new as part of illustrating a narrative. In the same manuscript we have schematic illustrations of paradise and hell in the eschatological chapters of the book.

A closer look at four of the illustrations reveals the different strategies to visualise the dynamic of the narrative. The first two pictures depict Muḥammad's birth by a schematic sketch of a domed building, which contains two circles labelled *Āmine* (the name of Muḥammad's mother) and *resūl* 'aleyhi s-selām (the Prophet, peace be upon him). On the following page, a topographic sketch of the Ka'ba illustrates the verse that describes that Muḥammad prostrated himself in front of his Lord (*çünkü toğdu anasından secde kıldı rabbine*), when he left his mother's body.³⁶

The sketch of the Ka'ba is one of those based on earlier patterns, which can be found in manuscripts of other texts or on tiles, too.³⁷ The two sketches are part of a single narrative element, i.e. Muḥammad's reorientation at his birth from his mother to God – in the Turkish verse apparent due to the two cases,

FIGURE 19.7 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye*, Birth of the Prophet, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya (DKM), Cairo, Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, 48a

36 DKM Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, 48a–b.

37 DKM Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22 and SK İzmir 601. Cf. Maury, "Ottoman Representations", passim.

FIGURE 19.8 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye*, Prostration of the new-born Prophet at the Ka'ba, Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya (DKM), Cairo, Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, 48b

ablative “from his mother” (*anasından*) and dative “to his God” (*rabbine*). In the printed versions the two pictures are arranged in one line, side by side. In the print from 1300/1882–3 – and in later prints – the picture(s) are added captions, which read “Āmine”, “Picture of the Ka'ba”, and in the middle between the two the inscription “The Prophet”. It is striking, however, that the house, where Āmine gave birth, turned into her tomb – showing a sarcophagus inside. Muḥammad remains in this version present only in the caption, and the perspective is now that of contemporary believers looking at two locations for their pilgrimage.³⁸

Equally remarkable is the illustration in the chapter on the Prophet's night journey, which depicts the moment of Muḥammad's vision of God. Within a rectangular frame, three circles are arranged in a triangle; in the lower two corners two silver circles are labelled as “Gabriel” and “Messenger of God”, respectively.³⁹ In the middle of the upper side of the rectangle, two thin concentric golden circles remain unlabelled, obviously representing God. The text of the salutation formulas links the three circles and can be read as an illustration of the dialogue.

38 *Muḥammedīye*, print 1300, 76.

39 DKM Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, 66b.

FIGURE 19.9 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye* – The Prophet’s encounter with God during the *mi’rāj*, DKM, Cairo, Ma’ārif ‘Āmma Turkī Ṭal’at 22, 66b

In the chapter about the migration to Medīna (*Hijra*), the dynamic of the narration is emphasized by a special layout – two circles labelled “Prophet” and “Ebū Bekir” peregrinate across the pages, two thin lines marking their way. For example, the verses about Muḥammad and Abū Bakr hiding from their pursuers is accompanied by a picture of the cave at Mount Thawr as an abstract rectangle.⁴⁰ The circles of the two protagonists wander from the right to the left side of the page, change their direction several times and finally pass the rectangle. At the entrance of the rectangle the abstract representation of the spider is located, which by God’s miracle hastily built its web to hide the two, and a tree, which grew to hide the entrance. Above the rectangle two circles are labelled “Surāḳa” – one of the pursuers – and “Satan”.

The representation of the Prophet and his contemporaries by circles obviously reflects a hesitation to add figural or naturalistic pictures to Yazıcıoğlu’s text. Still, they indicate that there existed a desire to visualise the narrative about the Prophet, which had been transmitted for almost four centuries with only one single illustration – the “banner of praise”. To my knowledge there is only one other manuscript copy of Yazıcıoğlu’s *Muḥammedīye*, which includes

40 DKM Ma’ārif ‘Āmma Turkī Ṭal’at 22, 81a–83b.

FIGURE 19.10 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīyye* – The Prophet's and Abū Bakr's refuge in the cave during the Hijra, DKM, Cairo, Ma'arif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, 82a

the fifty illustrations (SK İzmir 601, 1260/1844).⁴¹ The structure is very similar, but the circles in some of the pictures are situated in a scenery that presents a certain degree of naturalism. Still, the enormous influence on the printed editions is striking. In 1258/1842 the printing shop in Bulāk/Cairo published *Ferah er-Rūḥ* – Bursalı İsmā'il Ḥaḫḫı's commentary on Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīyye* – with the illustrations in question. It was printed with movable letters, but the pictures were integrated as lithographic prints. İsmā'il Ḥaḫḫı's commentary was reprinted with the same illustrations in 1294/1877 in Istanbul. In contrast to the manuscript DKM, Ma'arif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22, the circles in the prints are not labelled, which means that the interpretation of these printed pictures required more imaginative power.

Between 1258/1842 and 1326/1909 more than 29 lithographic prints of Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīyye* were published in Istanbul, and between 1845–1903 more than ten prints with movable types were published in Kazan.⁴² These prints all included the illustration of the “banner of praise” and additionally in

⁴¹ Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 200ff.

⁴² The numbers refer to my catalogue from 2015, Heinzelmänn, *Populäre*, 451–7. Since then I have seen additional prints at old booksellers.

FIGURE 19.11 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye* – The Prophet's and Abū Bakr's refuge in the cave during the Hijra, from a print copy, Istanbul 1294/1877, 125

FIGURE 19.12 *Risāle-i Muḥammedīye* – The Prophet's and Abū Bakr's refuge in the cave at mount Thawr during the Hijra, hidden behind a spider's web; printed version, Istanbul 1300/1882–3, 129

a preface a schematic sketch of the different levels of paradise. The latter followed a pattern from manuscripts of Erzurumlu İbrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı's *Ma'rifetnāme* (Book of Gnosis).⁴³ This synthesis of two graphic patterns – the banner of praise from the *Muḥammedīye*-tradition and the levels of paradise from a different text – was, in contrast to others, obviously successful. These prints, however, were soon outstripped by the richly illustrated version, which adapted the sketches from the edition of İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı's commentary from Bülāk. Starting from the tenth edition from 1279/1863 all the lithographic prints of Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye* in Istanbul included these illustrations, in which the circles representing the protagonists were again not labelled.

In 1300/1882–3 the first edition with a variant of the illustrations was published in Istanbul. More prominent than in the manuscript SK İzmir 601 are the circles, which represent Muḥammad and his contemporaries, embedded in a

43 On Erzurumlu İbrāhīm Ḥaḳḳı and his *Ma'rifetnāme* cf. Çağrıncı, "İbrāhīm Hakkı Erzurumî"; Topaloğlu, "Mârifetnâme". On the diagrams in the *Ma'rifetnāme* cf. Karamustafa, "Cosmological diagrams"; Gruber, "Signs of the hour", 54f.

naturalistic scenery or in buildings foreshortened for perspective. The illustration of the migration to Medīna, in which Muḥammad and Abū Bakr hide in a cave, presents a naturalistic scenery, too. At the entrance of the cave, we can clearly recognise a spider web. In the scene of Muḥammad's night journey, we see a small white circle on a flying carpet above a naturalistic desert landscape.⁴⁴ The circles for Gabriel and God are lacking. The artist seems to have expected less imaginative power from his readers; however, the contrast between the schematic symbol of the circle and the naturalistic environment remains apparent.

3.5 *The Manuscripts DKM Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22 and SK İzmir 601 and the Two Prints of İsmā'īl*

Ḥaḳḳı's commentary also includes five *ḥilye*-illustrations – the *ḥilye* of the Prophet in the chapter on his passing and funeral, and those of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs in their respective chapters. The latter are adaptations of the Prophet's *ḥilye* with a description of their physiognomy in the central circle.

These *ḥilye* diagrams constitute a germane transition to the next section on the *Ḥilye-i Ḥāḳānī*. In the case of the *Muḥammedīye* and its commentary, these *ḥilye* diagrams are more than a straightforward illustration – they are more likely the interpolation of another text, since the diagrams include two *ḥadīth* texts, namely a *ḥadīth* about the meaning of the Prophet's *ḥilye* and the *ḥadīth* describing his physiognomy.⁴⁵ The *ḥadīth* on the meaning of the Prophet's *ḥilye* is, moreover, translated into Turkish *verses* imitating Yazıcıoğlu's style. The texts are neither part of Yazıcıoğlu's original or traditionally transmitted *Muḥammedīye* text, nor of İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı's commentary.⁴⁶ In fact the pages in question document a synthesis of different traditions to visualise Muḥammad.

In the manuscript DKM *Ma'ārif 'Āmma Turkī Ṭal'at 22*, heavy traces of touching or kissing indicate that in this case the *ḥilye* played an important role in the veneration of the Prophet. The printed versions of Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye*, however, adapted the illustrations without the *ḥilye* diagrams.

44 *Refref* is here interpreted as flying carpet. For *refref* as a means of travel on Muḥammad's night journey cf. Dehkhodā, et al. *Loghatnāme-i Dehkhodā*, s.v. "*raḡraf*". The depiction as flying carpet needs further research.

45 See the section about the *Ḥilye-i Ḥāḳānī* below.

46 Cf. the author's manuscript of the Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye*, Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 431A, ca. 196–99 (the manuscript is not paginated, therefore these are the numbers of the slide) and the author's manuscript of İsmā'īl Ḥaḳḳı's *Ferah er-Rūḥ*, İnebey Kütüphanesi, Bursa, Genel 61, ca. 593–626.

4 *Ḥilye-i Ḥākānī*

The author of the *Ḥilye-i Ḥākānī* lived more than 150 years after the other two poets. His text was widely read, yet never as popular as Yazıcıoğlu's. Ḥākānī Meḥmed Beg (d. 1015/1606–7) was an official in the Ottoman administration.⁴⁷ His *Ḥilye* includes a dating (1007/1598–9) and signature of the author under his pen name – Ḥākānī. The author and his work are mentioned in biographical encyclopaedias already in the seventeenth century. Even if there are some differences over his family background, they agree concerning his career: he held several offices at court and in the provincial administration (including the position of a *sancak* governor).⁴⁸ The text is based on al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892), *al-Shamā'il al-muḥammadiyya*. This author compiled – alongside his comprehensive *ḥadīth* collection – this smaller compendium devoted to *ḥadīth* texts about the physiognomy and character of the Prophet.⁴⁹

The title – *Ḥilye* – refers to a *ḥadīth*, quoted in the introduction, which relates that the Prophet presages the effect which a dream vision of his “sheen” (*ḥilya*) will have:⁵⁰

It is passed down according to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, who said: “The Prophet said, ‘if anybody sees my *ḥilya*, after I have passed away, it is, as if he sees me. And from those, who see it having a true desire for me, God will withhold the fire, and he will save them from the torment of the grave, and they will not be judged naked on the day of judgement.’ And according to another tradition he said ‘nude on the day of judgement’”.

Tirmidhī's collection *al-Shamā'il al-Muḥammadiyya* contains a whole chapter about dream visions of Muḥammad – especially the famous saying “whoever sees me in his dream, has seen me in reality, because Satan is not able to take my shape” (*man ra'ānī fī l-manām fa-ḡad ra'ānī fa-inna al-shayṭān lā yatamaththalu bī*).⁵¹ Although the *ḥadīth* at issue cannot be found in Tirmidhī's collection, it was central for Ḥākānī's text.

In his poem, Ḥākānī translates, paraphrases and comments on nine more *ḥadīth* texts depicting the physiognomy and the character of the Prophet Muḥammad. He follows traditions which are based on Tirmidhī's.⁵² Ḥākānī

47 Uzun, “Hakani”, 166–168.

48 Uzun, “Hakani”, 166ff.

49 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 276–88.

50 Ḥākānī, *Ḥilye*, Istanbul 1264, 12, Ḥākānī, *Ḥilye*, Istanbul 1308, 10.

51 Cf. the chapter on the vision of the Prophet, Tirmidhī, *al-Shamā'il*, 194–198.

52 On Ḥākānī's sources cf. Uzun, “Hakani”, 166ff.

cites the attributes of the Prophet from the Arabic original, then translates and comments on each of them in nine to twenty-three Turkish verses. The following example comments on the attribute *azhar al-lawn* (bright of hue):⁵³

Kāna rasūl Allāh ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam azhar al-lawn	
İttifāk étđi bu ma’nāda ümem	ezherü l-levni idi faḥr-i ‘Ālem
Yüzünüñ ḥālîş idi ağı katı	ruhları şâf idi şâfi şıfatı
Reng-i rüyu gül idi yek-dil ile	gül gibi kırmızıya mâ’il idi
Ḳaplamışdır yüzünü nūr-ı sürür	süre-i nūr idi yâ maṭla’-i nūr
Muşhaf-i ḥusn idi ol-vech-i cemil	ḥatt-ı ruḥsârası naşş-ı tenzîl
Gün yüzünden utanub âb-ı ḥayât	meskenin étđi verâ’-ı zulmât
Vech-i berrâkımnıñ aşḥâb-u şafâ	ḥumreti gâlib idi dër ḥattâ
Gökde olmuşdu o ruy-i rengin	şem’-i cem’-i ḥarem-i ‘illiyin
Aña vërmişdi kemâl-i zînet	Kâtib-i çehre-küşâ-yı fiṭret
Garḳ-âlüd olcâḳ ol sultân	Gül-i pür-jâleye beñzerdi hemân

In Elias John Gibb’s translation this passage reads as follows:⁵⁴

[The messenger of God – God bless him and grant him salvation – bright of hue]⁵⁵

All the folk hereon agree
That the Pride of the world was bright of blee.
Full sheen was the radiance of his face
His cheeks were lustrous with lustre’s grace
One of heart with the rose was his face’s hue;
Like the rose, unto ruddiness is drew
Yclad his face in the light of delight,
’Twas the Chapter of Light or the dawn of light.
The scripture of beauty was that fair face;
The down on his cheeks was the verse of grace.
Shamed by his visage bright as day,
Life’s fountain hid in the dark away.
Well may the comrades of joyance call:
‘The sheen of his visage conquers all!’
Yon radiant face shone in the sky
The light of the harem-feast on high.
The Portrait-painter of Nature gave

53 Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, 6, 178.

54 Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, 3, 197f.

55 Complements of the author.

Thereto all beauty that man may have.
 When the sweat upon that sultan stood
 He was forsooth like the rose bedewed.

In the last twenty to thirty years of the seventeenth century – a few decades after Ḥākānī's death – a type of panel calligraphy developed in the Ottoman Empire, which is also named *hilye* or more precisely *hilye-i şerīf*.⁵⁶ The central element of this type of calligraphic panel is a *ḥadīth* about the physiognomy of the Prophet Muḥammad. This *ḥadīth* is written in a circle in the middle of the panel, in the corners four smaller circles with the names of the Rightly Guided Caliphs are situated, and at the top and the bottom two rectangles with verses from the Qur'ān. The basic element – the *ḥadīth* in the middle of the panel – obviously provides a link to Ḥākānī's poem, as well as to the common source – a citation from the *Shamā'il*-literature. But apart from the common source the two are at first sight independent.

4.1 *Beauty as a Common Link*

In the manuscripts of Ḥākānī's *Hilye*, an interrelation between topic, rhetoric and graphic design is self-evident. The topic is the physiognomy of the Prophet, which is to say, his beauty. The poet desires to translate the beauty of the *ḥadīth* narratives into Turkish verses. The copyist and calligrapher pursue the same task when they write the verses down. Consequently, Ḥākānī's text became popular among Ottoman calligraphers. The beauty of the script visualises the beauty of the Prophet. As mentioned above, we have to distinguish here between Ḥākānī's poem *Hilye*, and *hilye* as a genre of panel-calligraphy. In fact, the calligrapher of the *hilye* panel omits the poet and refers directly to the *ḥadīth* text.

The interrelation of theme, rhetoric and graphic elements in the manuscripts of Ḥākānī's poem can be classified into three types: 1. manuscripts and prints visualising theme and rhetoric by classical calligraphy, 2. manuscripts including illustrations, which belong to a broader repertoire of calligrams and pictures as visualisations of the Prophet (e.g. the seal of prophecy and the blossom of a rose), 3. manuscripts combining Ḥākānī's text with calligraphic figures, known from the *hilye* panels.

4.2 *Poetry and Calligraphy*

Ḥākānī's *Hilye* was a popular text for calligraphers. But only a small number of the extant manuscripts (e.g., in collections like the Süleymaniye Library or the

56 Cf. Elias, *Aisha's Cushion*, 270–82, Gruber, *The Praiseworthy*, 285–301, Taşkale and Gündüz, *Hız. Muhammed'in Özellikleri*, passim.

FIGURE 19.14 *Ḥilye-i Ḥākānī*, selected verses as a panel (*muraqqāʿ*), by the calligrapher ʿArabzāde Meḥmed Saʿdullāh, SSM (Sakıb Sabancı Müsesi), 120–0379

library of the Topkapı Palace) were written by professional calligraphers. These usually wrote selected verses on panels (*levha*) and in albums (*muraqqāʿ*). In the latter, the topic – Muḥammad’s physiognomy – and the beauty of the language provided incentives to make the handwriting more elaborate).⁵⁷ Exercising handicraft and artistry was linked to reflections on the beauty of the Prophet.

The first printed version of the *Ḥilye-i Ḥākānī* has to be seen in this context. In the 1830s and 1840s, a competition on the most beautiful movable types had developed among the official printing shops in Istanbul and Cairo.⁵⁸ According to the colophon of the first *Ḥilye* print, it was the Ottoman Sultan who gave the order to the Imperial printing press in 1264/1848 to design new types for the ductus *taʿlīk*. The two pages of the colophon explained the task in detail. Due to the large number of ligatures, this had to be an extraordinarily elaborate type font.⁵⁹ The experts at the printing press designed it on the model of one

57 Derman, *Letters in Gold*, 102f.

58 Heinzelmann, “*Taʿlīk*-Drucke”, passim.

59 Ḥākānī, *Ḥilye*, Istanbul 1264, 53ff., Birnbaum, “An Ottoman printing puzzle”, passim, Derman, “*Yazı Sanʿatının*”, passim, Faulmann, *Das Buch der Schrift*, 108–111, Heinzelmann “*Taʿlīk*-Drucke”, 220ff.

FIGURE 19.15 Hākānī, *Hilye*, printed Istanbul 1264/1848, introductory pages

of the most famous Iranian masters of the *ta'liq* ductus (in Persian *nasta'liq*), Mīr 'Imād al-Ḥasanī al-Ḳazvīnī (d. 1024/1615).⁶⁰ When they had finished the task, they chose the *Hilye-i Hākānī* as the first text to be printed with the new font. The colophon of this first edition of the *Hilye-i Hākānī* reveals that it has to be seen in a long calligraphic tradition, where this text served to exercise the calligrapher's own handwriting – and offered during this process the chance to be inspired by the beauty of the Prophet.⁶¹

4.3 *Hilye Manuscripts with Illustrations*

Only a few manuscripts of Hākānī's *hilye* include illustrations.⁶² A luxury copy of the text is kept in the Hamidiye Library in Istanbul, as an endowment of Sultan 'Abdülhamīd I (r. 1774–89). SK Hamidiye 1075 is richly illuminated with floral patterns, using gold and different colours. It was copied 1130/1717 in an experienced, fluent *ta'liq*-ductus, and after the end of Hākānī's text the miniature of a rose covers two thirds of the page. The signature under the

60 On Mīr 'Imād cf. Blair, *Islamic calligraphy*, 437ff.

61 Cf. Gruber, *The Praiseworthy*, 301ff.

62 Cf. Gruber, *The Praiseworthy*, 297.

FIGURE 19.16 *Hākānī, Hilye*, Rose as symbol of the Prophet. Hamidiye Library, endowment of Sultan 'Abdülhamid I (r. 1774–89), SK Hamidiye 1075

rose – “work of Kelek Mehmed” (*eşer-i Kelek Mehmed*) probably refers to the whole manuscript; the wording, however, is more that of an artisan than of a “copyist” – even if it is not possible to draw a strict line between the two according to this colophon/signature. The rose must be read as a reference to the above-cited verse “One of heart with the rose was his face's hue / Like the rose, unto ruddiness is drew” (*Reng-i rüyu gül idi yek-dil ile/gül gibi kırmızıya mâ'il idi*). Additionally, in the eighteenth century, it is a familiar image used to visualise the Prophet and can therefore also be regarded as an associatively chosen illustration of *Hākānī's* text.⁶³

Hākānī's Hilye is a short text, which is frequently found as part of multiple-text manuscripts. Some of these collections contain a rich diversity of religious texts; some are exclusively *hilye* collections. The volume SK Şehid Ali Paşa 2755

63 Gruber, “The Rose of the Prophet”, 228.

FIGURE 19.17 Hākānī, *Hilye*, “Seal of Prophethood” (mühr-i nubuvvet), sK Şehid Ali Paşa 2755, Istanbul, completed Tuesday, 18 ZA 1075/2 June 1665

belongs to the former category.⁶⁴ It is part of the *vakf* library of the grand vizier Şehid Ali Paşa, (d. 1128/1716), and dated 1075/1665.⁶⁵ The first three texts are Hākānī’s *Hilye*, a poem on the *hilye* of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (*Hilye-i Çār Yār-i Güzîn*) by Cevri İbrâhîm Çelebi (d. 1065/1654), and a treatise in prose about the Prophet’s *hilye* by a certain Şemseddîn Sivasî – probably the famous Hâlvetiye shaykh of this name (d. 1006/1597).⁶⁶ The remaining 26 texts of the volume, however, constitute a heterogeneous mixture of theological and Sufi treatises – by authors such as Birgivi or Kemālpaşazâde.

The copy of Hākānī’s *Hilye* stands out due to a picture of the “seal of prophethood”, which follows the colophon of the text and covers the rest of the page.⁶⁷ (Figure 19.17 – Seal of Prophethood.) Above the picture, the seal’s apotropaic effect is explained: “Everybody who bears this picture upon him/her, and looks at it from time to time, will be saved from the fire of hell, and

64 sK Şehid Ali Paşa 2755, Tuesday, 18 ZA 1075/2 June 1665 (date on 34b).

65 Şemseddîn Sâmi, *Sicill-i Osmanî*, 1, 274.

66 Aksoy, “Şemseddîn Sivsâsî”, 523–526, however, the *hilye*-treatise is not listed among his works.

67 Gruber, “Go Wherever You Wish”, *passim*.

he/she will be respected among the people, and God will not deny those who write it and bear it upon them Muḥammad's intercession" (*her kim işbu mühr-i nübüveti yanında getürse ve gâh gâh nazar etsen haqq ta'âlâ anuñ bedenini cehennem odına haram eyleye ve halk içinde 'azîz ola ve yazanı ve götüreni haqq ta'âlâ hazret-i Muhammed şefâ'atından mahrûm eylemeye*). Like the *hilye* sketches in the *Muhammedîye* manuscripts, this picture of the seal of prophethood is not an illustration of Ḥākānî's poem in a narrow sense. We rather have to understand it as just one more text in this multiple-text manuscript. Still, the connotation of the Prophet's *hilye* with the seal of prophethood and its apotropaic effect is striking. In this context, the caption – as well as the instruction for its use – picks up the idea that God saves those who see Muḥammad's *hilye* in their dream – or the users of the apotropaic diagram of the seal – from the fire of Hell (*bedenini cehennem odına haram eyleye vs. harrama Allāhu 'alayhi al-nār*).

4.4 Ḥākānî's Text and the Panel Calligraphy

In contrast to the previous volume, SK Hüsrev 36 is a multiple-text-manuscript, which exclusively contains *hilye*-texts – two copies of the *Hilye-i Ḥākānî*, one copy with and one without vowel-signs, Cevrî's *Hilye-i Çār Yār-i Güzîn* (*hilye* of the four Rightly Guided Caliphs), Neşâtî's *Hilye-i Enbiyâ* and some unidentified, shorter *hilye*-texts in verse and prose. The whole volume is most likely copied by the same hand in an elegant *nashî*-ductus, and it is dated 1196/1781–2, and kept in the *vakf*-collection of grand vizier Hüsrev Paşa (d. 1271/1855). The manuscript SK Hüsrev 36 is one of the rare manuscripts that documents a synthesis of the traditional layout of Ottoman poetry and the panel calligraphy of the *hilye-i şerif*. In addition to the poems and treatises in prose, the manuscript contains several circular shaped calligraphies of *ḥadîth*-text about the physiognomy of the Prophet and the four Rightly Guided Caliphs in the original Arabic, clearly reminiscent of *hilye*-panels. I would not interpret these calligraphic diagrams as illustrations of one of the mentioned texts, but rather as texts in their own right.

SK Hüsrev 36 – as a *hilye* compilation – might therefore have functioned just like one of the *muraqqa'* albums. On the one hand, the copying of the *hilye* texts is an act that brings about blessing. On the other hand, it is a deliberation upon the aesthetic aspects of the script – and, concomitantly, the aesthetic of the language and the beauty of the Prophet. In this regard, the two copies of the *Hilye-i Ḥākānî* – one with vowel signs and another without – are especially striking. Most of the vowel signs are – due to the vowel harmony – not very helpful for Ottoman-Turkish, except for those marking the Persian *izāfet* or, in a few cases, those on the first syllable of a word. The vowel signs indicate

FIGURE 19.18 *Hilye* compilation, SK Istanbul, Hüsrev 36

rather the users' respect for certain texts – e.g., the Qur'ān. In case of the manuscript SK Hüsrev 36, they might also be the consequence of the calligrapher's deliberation on the vocalised text versus un-vocalised texts. In a further step, the calligrapher's process of aesthetic deliberation adapted the circular shaped diagrams of *ḥadīth* texts from the *hilye* panels. In contrast to the illustrations in Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye*, neither illustrations like the blossom of the rose nor the elaborated logograms found their way into the printed editions.

5 Conclusion

The manuscripts and printed editions of the three poems – Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesilet en-Necāt*, Yazıcıoğlu Muḥammed's *Muḥammedīye*, and Ḥāḳānī's *Hilye* – differ considerably in their graphic characteristics. In contrast to the other two texts the copies of Süleymān Çelebi's poem are characterised by their frugal layout, which follows the classical two-column structure for poetry and represents basic techniques employed by Ottoman book culture to visualise the interrelation of content, rhetoric, and poetic form – especially the aesthetic

aspects of handwritten calligraphy or markers like vowel signs. They indicate respect for the author, the text and the topic, and provided a visual marker of the authenticity for the copy.

The task of visualising the beauty of the Prophet through the beauty of calligraphy is quasi inherent in the topic of Ḥākānī's *Ḥilye*. Compared with Süleymān Çelebi's *Vesilet en-Necât*, copies of Ḥākānī's text developed more elaborate patterns of calligraphy, and became a preferred text for calligraphers. In some examples of multiple-text manuscripts, it is also combined with the *ḥilye* logograms already known in Ottoman panel-calligraphy. Ḥākānī's text is, in a few examples, also combined with other strategies to visualise the Prophet Muḥammad – a painting of a rose, and a sketch of the “seal of prophethood”. None of the latter was so influential that it was adapted in printed editions.

Yazıcıoğlu's *Muḥammedīye* is distinguished by a broader variety of strategies to visualise the interrelation between graphic, rhetoric, and theme (the Prophet Muḥammad). The “banner of praise” – as a visualisation of Muḥammad – can already be found in the author's manuscript but it is also a constant in the text transmission through the centuries. Some of the graphic patterns developed later were restricted to a short period – like the fan calligraphy of the *faḳīh* tradition which had been developed to visualise the rhetorical peculiarities of the text.

An extraordinary graphic pattern – the visualisation of the narrative of Muḥammad's biography through circles representing the Prophet and his contemporaries – is (virtually unprecedented) first documented in the early nineteenth century, but became remarkably successful in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century prints. These schematic illustrations differ in the manuscripts and the printed versions concerning the scope of captions and labels, and the (schematic or naturalistic) depiction of the environment/surroundings. This means that the interpretation of these pictures required a different scale of imaginative power from the readers. They reveal a figural impulse, which is subsumed in a schematic rendering.

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